

Washington, Spring Aug 27/94

Hon. A. B. Sargeant

Dear Sir

I have been a reader of the *Inter Ocean* for many years & always turn with eagerness to the *Bystander's* notes & have come to consider them an authority on economic & ethical questions. In your article on U. S. Citizenship for ex. "Prohibition is nearly one specific method of restricting the evils of intoxication. It is not the only method, it is not yet certain that it is the best method. The moral question is, Ought drunkenness to be restricted & its harmful results avoided by the exercise of government power? Very few reasonable people are inclined to doubt this. Many question whether it can be done, others doubt whether prohibition is the most effective remedy." Pardon me but has not the *Bystander* unwittingly fallen into the common error of confounding the moral effect of prohibition with its legal phase.

Prohibition is a definite legislative enactment directed toward the removal of certain specific evils - not drunkenness but the saloons. It deals with the traffic, not the personal habits of men. The question then is, does it best secure the purpose for which government exists; the protection of life & property, the administration of justice, the development of society & the greatest good to the greatest number? Is it in harmony with wise principles of state-  
-manship & in this age of intense practicality is it practicable & efficient. You would not class these questions all involved in prohibition with "purely

intellectual questions as to methods "linked with particular moral aims". There is not prohibition a question that comes within the province of law & the legislative power of the State. The educational power & moral effect of prohibition is the same as the educational <sup>& reforming</sup> power of all laws enacted to protect society. Law creates certain conditions, these changed conditions make it easier for the drunkard to reform, hence we see the beauty of Gladstone's Aphorism, "Law is to make it easy to do right & hard to do wrong".

I wish since you have touched what appears to some to be the great moral issue before the American people the liquor problem & recognizing its almost supreme power in our municipal, state & national politics you would at some time write an article showing ~~it~~ how it can be best handled in order to protect the wage-worker as well as the State from the ruin that follows in its trail.

Very Resp<sup>ly</sup> Yours  
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