

The White Ribbon

FOR GOD AND HOME AND HUMANITY

VOL. 26.—No. 303.

WELLINGTON, N.Z., SEPTEMBER 18, 1920.

3s 6d Per Annum, Post Free.
Single Copy, 3d.

PROHIBITION IN THE U.S.A.

SOME FACTS WE OUGHT TO KNOW.

HOW U.S.A. WENT DRY.

Prohibition was not, as the liquor press says, "put over" the people of America. The State Legislatures of 1918 were elected on the ratification issue. These elections practically amounted to a referendum to the people on nation-wide prohibition. The 18th amendment was submitted to the people by votes of 65 to 20 in the Senate, and 282 to 128 in the House; it was ratified within 13 months. Forty-five out of 48 States ratified this amendment; 5 Legislatures were unanimous, 14 Senates unanimous, 7 Houses unanimous, 13 State Legislatures had less than 10 negative votes in both Houses; 86 per cent. of State Senators and 80 of members of the Lower House voted to ratify.

LAWYERS WON'T CHAMPION "BOOZE."

The liquor interests are having a hard time to secure the assistance of reputable attorneys. The Christian Century tells us that, "When the liquor men began casting about for a man to contest constitutional Prohibition in the courts they decided to look for some one of social prominence. They laid down on a table in front of Charles Evans Hughes a cheque for 150,000 dollars. This great jurist replied: 'I would not champion this cause before the courts for any sum of money you could name.' Failing to buy Mr Hughes, they next went to William Howard

Taft, and placed before him a signed cheque, telling him to fill it in for any amount he wanted. The reply of this statesman will be memorable: 'Gentlemen, you couldn't pile enough gold on this continent to induce me to take your case before the courts and before the public, for I will have you know my conscience is not for sale.'

LABOUR'S VERDICT.

The labour leader of Seattle writes: "For thirty years I fought Prohibition on the stump, and through the press as relentlessly as my ability would permit, solely from the personal liberty standpoint. My views on the subject changed as a result of witnessing the wonderful contrast between a city drunk and a city sober. Coming to Seattle a year and a-half ago, which city I remember as one of the worst hell-holes in America during the Klondike rush, and seeing us go through a general strike a few weeks ago with 60,000 men on the streets, all with plenty of money in their pockets, and not even as much as a fist fight during the whole period of the strike, is what has changed my view on the question of Prohibition. In my opinion the Labour Movement will progress a thousandfold faster without booze than with it."

Here are a few testimonies from the Secretaries of different Labour Unions:

"I represent the attitude of the majority of the 30,000 workers in my organisation. There can be no question but that Prohibition is beneficial to working men and their families. We find our men want Prohibition for their children, but not for themselves."

An Illinois Secretary says that he is not a "dry man," but it is his honest conviction that "booze" will ruin the best of men.

Another Illinois union official from a coal-mining community states that they attribute the success of the coal miners' negotiations to the fact that Prohibition was the rule. "It kept men's brains clear and kept a little money in their pockets while the negotiations were going on," he adds.

Several Union Secretaries agree that "since Prohibition is in force, the workers are capable of clearer thinking and do more of it."

Others say "We are now building homes for families and children with the money which we used to spend in whisky, and our families are better fed and clothed."

Another writes: "Prohibition is a blessing to the working men of America."

A Maine Secretary believes that Prohibition "protects the weak man or boy, not only from himself, but from his friends, it is making new men out of derelicts every day."

The Literary Digest, of New York, a very high-class and well-known weekly journal, submitted the following question, by letter, to the duly elected officials of Unions representing about four millions. The replies from 526 Labour leaders were as follows:

Prohibition has been a benefit to working man	---	---	---	345
Prohibition not a benefit to the working man	---	---	---	143
Doubtful	---	---	---	31
Prohibition has not yet had a fair trial	---	---	---	7