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Says Church Is Dry Law Pillar

Farmington Resident Points To
Religious Bodies Supporting
Dry Law

The universal topic of conversation in America today is Prohibition. Neither spectacular events that crowd one another for attention, nor the thoroughness with which Prohibition is discussed, lessen the interest in this great question.

In the article printed below, the Farmington "Layman," whose articles have created much interest among our readers, takes up the question of Prohibition, and also the related topic which of late has come to command ever-increasing attention—the part of the Church in the establishment and maintenance of Prohibition.—Editor.

The Church and Prohibition
By "A Layman"

In article 2 of this series of articles on the Church, it was pointed out that the Church had firmly set its face against aggressive war; that it was not merely idealizing peace and good will but was also in this country at least, vigorously and effectively protesting against unnecessary increase in armament and against any governmental measures likely to cultivate the war spirit in our own country or to arouse antagonism abroad.

In another field also the idealism of the Church has ripened into persistent, intelligent action. The Church is today the backbone of all organized effort in support of the Eighteenth Amendment.

The influence of the Church in all matters relating to the prohibition of the liquor traffic is as great as was the political influence in their own interests of organized liquor dealers and saloon keepers in pre-Prohibition days, which is saying a great deal.

Eliminate the influence of the Church acting as an organization, of church members acting individually, of temperance and prohibition organizations within the Church or closely allied to it, such as Good Templars, the W. C. T. U., the Anti-Saloon League, etc., and the prohibition of the liquor traffic would be a dead letter and the open saloon, with all its attendant evils, would be again in our midst. There is no other organization strong enough that is able and willing to give the effort and money necessary to cope with the financially interested liquor interests.

To the W. C. T. U. and other temperance societies within the Church, and to the Prohibition Party must largely be given the credit of fostering prohibition as an ideal. The realization of the ideal was brought about by the Church acting through the Anti-Saloon League, more than by any other influence.

Irving Fisher, professor of Economics of Yale, in his book entitled, "Prohibition at Its Worst," makes the statement that the Anti-Saloon League proposed the Act submitting the Eighteenth Amendment and that the other important agencies which helped to bring the Amendment about were the W. C. T. U., the various temperance organizations, especially the Methodist Episcopal Church, The Methodist Church South, the Baptist and the Presbyterian churches, the Order of Good Templars, and the Prohibition Party.

All of these organizations were closely allied to, received their inspiration from, and were backed by the Church, except perhaps the Prohibition Party.

The Federal Council of Churches of America represents nearly if not every Protestant denomination in the United States. The following is a declaration by the administrative committee of the Federal Council of Churches.

"That the policy of Prohibition is the deliberate and firmly established policy of the Nation; that the policy has not failed but on the contrary has yielded results which fully justify its adoption; that the liquor traffic and saloon must not come back again; that the churches must set themselves with new purpose to see that prohibition is enforced by law and sustained by national conscience."

I have before me also the official utterances in national and international conventions of Young Men's Christian Associations, Christian Endeavor Societies and of 22 national conventions of Protestant churches and a Jewish Conference of American Rabbis, which set forth in no uncertain terms the firm opposition of their individual churches to the liquor traffic.

I have referred to the close connection between the Church and the Anti-Saloon League. The Anti-Saloon League is so indissolubly connected to and so wholly supported by the Church, that it is often referred to as "the Church in action against the liquor traffic."

In the state of Michigan, the Board of Trustees of the Anti-Saloon League is composed of

representatives from twenty-two different denominations, one to four from each denomination according to its size. With two or three exceptions, the representatives are appointed by the several denominations at their state or district conferences. In these exceptional cases the representatives are appointed by the League itself. The League reports annually to the churches on work undertaken, accomplished and in view. The president of the board of trustees of the Anti-Saloon

League of Michigan is Bishop Nicholson of the Methodist Church. Bishop Nicholson is also president of the Anti-Saloon League of America, the National organization.

The Anti-Saloon League is therefore not only allied to the Church. It may truly be said to be "the Church in action." It has had a well conceived plan. It has had on the whole a devoted, conscientious, intelligent and vigorous leadership. It has the backing and support in the United

States of over twenty Protestant denominations with a total membership of over two million and is the effective instrument for realizing their ideals.

The Church has set itself to see that prohibition is enforced, and as in its efforts for international peace, it is obtaining results.

The next article of this series will deal with the Church and its efforts for social and economic justice.

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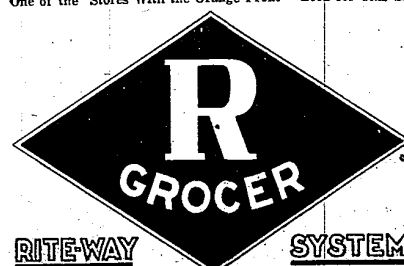
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