

# FOOLING WITH GUNPOWDER

REPLY TO THE PIERRE S. DU PONT ARTICLE IN THE APRIL, 1928, CURRENT HISTORY

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The name du Pont is almost synonymous with gunpowder and other high explosives. One would think that the chairman of the Board of Directors of a great manufacturing concern whose product is a dangerous commodity like explosives would naturally be of a cautious bent and be careful about "rushing in where angels fear to tread." Not so, however, with Pierre S. du Pont. Perhaps a life-long contact with a dangerous commodity has made him reckless in dealing with other dangerous subject matter. It may have engendered a spirit of courage and driven out fear.

As one reads Mr. Dupont's article, "*The Eighteenth Amendment not a Remedy for the Drink Evil*," in the April, 1928, number of *Current History*, one is somehow driven to feel that men of great affairs who usually like to be considered hard-headed, cold-blooded, clear-sighted, logical and certain, seem to leave behind all their native and acquired characteristics which have made them so successful in the business and industrial world when they enter upon the consideration and discussion of the drink question. Facts which must be ordinarily sifted to the last grain in determining the business course of a corporation may be utterly ignored or accepted without question if liquor is involved. Conclusions are hastily drawn. Generalities are broadly and frequently stated, and when there is no other corner in which to hide, indefinite and elusive questions are resorted to. The whole history of the drink evil and the attempts to restrict or eliminate it are briefly ignored. Such at least is the impression one gets in reading the above article by Mr. Pierre S. du Pont.

## RECOGNIZES EXISTENCE OF "DRINK EVIL."

Mr. du Pont at least furnishes one common ground for agreement in the statement of his subject, in that he does recognize the fact that there is such a thing as the "drink evil." Now, that being admitted, then the questions which naturally arise are, What are the causes producing the drink evil? What are the

methods which have been tried to reduce or eliminate the drink evil? What is the history of that evil? And have we found the best remedy to date? Or is there some other method that as yet has not been proposed and thoroughly tried?

It may be interesting to take up one by one the statements made, propositions advanced or questions asked by Mr. du Pont and find to what extent there is a degree of truth in what he says, a soundness of logic in the proposals he makes and the legitimate character of the questions which he asks. And we shall expect to hold Mr. du Pont to as strict account for what he says as if he were advising the Board of Directors of E. I. du Pont de Nemours and Co. In fact we should hold him to much stricter account for the issues involved are incomparably greater than any issues which Mr. du Pont has ever been called upon to pass judgment upon or rather advise upon. The matter about which he so smoothly writes involves the happiness, the health, the wealth, the material and the spiritual prosperity of 120 millions of people, possibly of the world, whereas a right or wrong policy of the du Pont Co. determines only a matter of dividends for a handful of people.

## THE POWER TO PROHIBIT

Mr. du Pont launches into his article with a broad sweeping statement that during the past eighty years it has never been proposed in any of the United States to "forbid the use of intoxicating liquor for beverage purposes." Mr. du Pont could just as truthfully have said that no state prohibits the use of putrid meat or decaying oysters or the drinking of water with typhoid germs in it, but Mr. du Pont and everyone else knows that the sale of any kind of food deleterious to health, whether the individual to whom it might be sold knows of its dangerous character and is willing or not to take the risk of eating it, is nevertheless subject to the most rigid kind of regulatory and prohibitory laws. One may eat putrid meat if he is foolish enough to do it, but one may not sell it to one who may be foolish enough to buy it. One may drink typhoid-



charged water from a well, but the public claims the right to seal that well on the public highway so that the passing throng may not be menaced thereby. Even gunpowder cannot be sold to any and all parties applying in any quantity to be used for any and every purpose, for it is recognized that in gunpowder there are extraordinary possibilities in which the public is directly concerned, and therefore its use even for such a patriotic purpose as fireworks, cannon crackers, etc., is limited at the point where it interferes with the safety, peace and good order of the general public. Gunpowder is a very useful commodity, but even after having been lawfully acquired it cannot be used for any and every purpose which the purchaser may conceive of, but only for such purposes, at such times and such places and under such regulations and restrictions as will promote the purpose and best interests of society.

Now, intoxicating liquor in which the primary constituent is alcohol is likewise a dangerous commodity. It has been so recognized from the beginning of time and from the days of Noah until now. From the days of light natural wine which made Noah's sons ashamed of their father down to the days of Pierre S. du Pont alcohol by all the sages of the passing ages has been declared an enemy of man. With all this Mr. du Pont will probably agree.

#### MIXED IN HIS PHRASEOLOGY

Mr. du Pont says:

"Prohibition is a means of procedure only; in it there is nothing of morality, nor is it really a social or political question; nor is it the first time that the importance of a remedy has been raised to exceed that of the disease to be cured."

Now, not to be too critical, one may nevertheless say that Mr. du Pont is slightly mixed in his phraseology. In the quotation above his subject is prohibition and "it" in the following clause refers to prohibition, when what he evidently means is the liquor question is not a social or political question. Now is it? If the statements made in the opening paragraphs of this article are true, namely, that one may not permit an open well filled with typhoid germs to be accessible to the passing public or may not sell putrid meat or even give it away because of the effects upon either the ignorant or the wise public, and if one may not sell explosives indiscriminately and if one may

not use them indiscriminately because of the effect upon the rights of others, generally called the rights of society, is it not quite possible that there may be some similar reason for prohibiting the kind of use which may be made of alcohol? Time was when the only known uses of alcoholic liquors were beverage and to a less extent medicinal. Now there are many other and legitimate uses.

#### WHAT THE COURTS HAVE SAID

Along with many others, Mr. du Pont seems to think that all of the things that have been said about alcoholic beverages may be traced to reformers. The Supreme Court of the United States long before an Anti-Saloon League was even dreamed about, before the days of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, before the days of the Prohibition party, as far back as 1847, eighty-one years ago, the highest judicial tribunal in Christendom, in the famous license cases (5 How. 504) through Chief Justice Grier said,

"It is not necessary for the sake of justifying the state legislation now under consideration, to array the appalling statistics of misery, pauperism and crime, which have their origin in the USE or ABUSE of ardent spirits."

A few years ago the same court, speaking through Mr. Justice Harlan, in the case of *Mugler v. Kansas*, 3 Sup. Ct. Rep. 297, said:

"We cannot shut out of view the fact, within the knowledge of all, that the PUBLIC HEALTH, the PUBLIC MORALS, and the PUBLIC SAFETY, may be endangered by the general use of intoxicating drinks; nor the fact established by statistics accessible to every one, that the idleness, disorder, pauperism, and crime existing in the country, are, in some degree, at least, traceable to this evil."

Only a few years later, in the case of *Crowley v. Christensen* (137 U. S. 86, 11 Sup. Court Rep. 13), the Supreme Court left no doubt about the status of the liquor traffic, declaring that to the use of ardent spirits obtained at the retail liquor saloons of that day more than to any other source was attributable the crime and misery of the time, and then settled once and for all the broad fundamental constitutional question that

"There is no inherent right in a citizen to sell intoxicating liquors by retail. It is not a privilege of a citizen of the state or of a citizen of the United States."

In later decisions it has been held both by state and federal supreme courts that there is no inherent right in a citizen to purchase intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes. Why? The reasoning of all of these courts is based upon the broad principle that under the social compact upon which civilization rests in its organic relations the admitted rights of individuals as such are subservient to the rights of the group as a whole. The illustrations of the operation of this principle are almost without number and so generally recognized and accepted that the matter is no longer open to controversy. Even one of Mr. du Pont's powder houses cannot be placed when and where Mr. du Pont's agents or representatives may most desire. It is a commodity with a recognized hazard attached and therefore cannot be used for any and all purposes at any and all times. The right of the individual to use du Pont powder is subject to the larger, more comprehensive and equally well-established right of the group to protect itself.

#### SOCIETY HAS RIGHTS

Mr. du Pont says that the "drinking of liquor in moderation is no crime, not even a proved injurious act." Much often depends upon one's definition of "crime." The anti-prohibitionist is wont to set up straw men to knock them down, then point to his valorous deeds. The sale of alcoholic liquor for beverage purposes is not based upon any assumption that the drinking of liquor either in moderation or excess is a crime *per se*, but it is based upon the anti-social character of the act of drinking which renders the individual who drinks unfit to perform his positive obligations to society and which may make him a positive menace to society. It is in the "may" of the matter that the right to prohibit the manufacture, sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages rests. It is because there is a *possibility* of harm coming to the group from the use of liquor by an individual that the manufacture, sale and distribution of it is prohibited. We do not wait until a man armed to the teeth runs amuck upon the public streets and actually kills somebody before his weapons are taken away from him. We prohibit the individual from having the arms in his possession because of the possibility of even a sane man using them improperly and with danger to the safety of the general public.

#### THE SCIENTIFIC TRUTH

But Mr. du Pont says, "The drinking of liquor in moderation is not a proved in-

jurious act." Injurious to whom and how much? In the case of *Crowley v. Christensen* above cited, the Supreme Court said:

"It is urged that as the liquors are used as a beverage and the injury following them, if taken in excess, is voluntarily inflicted and is confined to the party offending, their sales should be without restrictions, the contention being, that what a man shall drink equally with what he shall eat is not properly a matter for legislation. *There is in this position an assumption of fact which does not exist—that when the liquors are taken in excess, the injuries are confined to the party offending.* The injury, it is true, first falls upon him in his health, which the habit undermines; in his morals, which it weakens, and in self-abasement, which it creates. But, as it leads to neglect of business and waste of property and general demoralization, it affects those who are immediately connected with and dependent upon him."

But says Mr. du Pont:

"This refers only to liquors 'taken in excess.' I said 'the drinking of liquor in moderation is not a proved injurious act.'"

Now Mr. du Pont and his organization undoubtedly employ highly-trained chemists. Mr. du Pont undoubtedly has a personal physician to look after his health. Will Mr. du Pont be willing to accept the scientifically trained judgment of these men as to whether or not he is right? The success of the du Pont Powder Co. is dependent largely upon the fact that it has accepted and adapted to its use information of a scientific and of an economic character. Is Mr. du Pont willing to accept scientific truth only for business reasons because it makes him dollars and does he reject it when it interferes with his personal views upon the subject of prohibition? Why is it that men refuse to accept truth because they do not like it? Is Mr. du Pont not aware that scientists of Germany, as well as of England and America, join in the irresistible conclusions from myriads of experiments and have established as beyond question the fact that the use of even so-called light alcoholic beverages such as beer and wine is a menace to the human body and its functions? Why will Mr. du Pont accept scientific truth in the business world and refuse to accept it as applied to the liquor problem?



## PROVINCIALISM OF MR. DU PONT

Mr. du Pont says:

"The great majority of our people have no respect for this kind of a law (prohibition) even if they think good has come of it or are willing to observe it."

Does Mr. du Pont mean to say that all prohibitory laws acquire this status in the minds of the American people or just laws prohibiting beverage alcohol? If he means only the latter, Mr. du Pont ought to get away from his Eastern Philadelphia environment long enough to know that there are many millions of adults in the United States who believe in prohibition just as conscientiously and have just as much respect for their theories about the Eighteenth Amendment. Provincialism is no longer a distinguishing characteristic of the backwoodsman. Of the percentage of the people who believe in this we will say something later in connection with Mr. du Pont's other statements regarding the majorities back of prohibition.

Mr. du Pont further says:

"Those who formerly drank to excess may now do so and, if the record of drunkenness is a criterion, they are still active in their old time pursuits."

If any one is really interested in knowing something about the barest facts on this particular phase of Mr. du Pont's contention, one should read the companion article in the same number of *Current History* in which Mr. du Pont's article appears, by "Pussyfoot" Johnson, the title of which is "European Drink Evil an Object Lesson to America." There are tables showing that in 1926 the total number of arrests per ten thousand population in the city of New York itself was only 14.26 as against actual convictions for drunkenness in greater London of 48 per ten thousand, or less than one-third, even assuming that all of those arrested in London were convicted. If they were not, the ratio would be larger. Even Paris shows from 1920 to 1924, inclusive, nearly three times as many arrests for intoxication per ten thousand of population as were made in New York, and this is the capital city of the greatest wine country of the world. Glasgow, Liverpool and Edinburgh show a much larger percentage of arrests for drunkenness than does New York City. If one were to accept the force and follow the logic of Mr. du Pont's reasoning, all laws—regulatory, administrative or prohibitive—should be repealed because, perforce, people scoff at the law and get drunk now.

Prohibition may not be perfect. It may not be accepted 100 per cent any more than the Ten Commandments are. And yet, according to the tables of Mr. Johnson, or even those to be found in the 1928 World Almanac, published by the wet New York *World*, there is only a small portion of the same number of drunks in that great cosmopolitan city of New York where people really must be *voluntarily observing* the Constitution because there is no state law to be obeyed and there is only a handful of federal agents to enforce the federal law.

## DU PONT ON THE CONSTITUTION

Mr. du Pont says that after the adoption of the Eighteenth Amendment "Congress proceeded to disregard the Constitution of the United States just as the legislatures had disregarded the mandates of the state Constitutions and expressed wishes of the people." The best, the only complete answer to Mr. du Pont's ideas about the constitutionality of the acts of Congress is the series of about fifty decisions of the United States Supreme Court which has passed upon every phase of the Eighteenth Amendment and the laws for its enforcement which the ingenuity of man could bring up for discussion. All of those decisions have held both the amendment and the laws constitutional in every detail. Yet Mr. du Pont says they are unconstitutional.

## BEGGING THE QUESTION

Mr. du Pont is apparently not above begging the question, for he says:

"Though sale for all beverage purposes is forbidden by Constitution, this law (Volstead Act) permits it if the beverage be sacramental in character."

We submit that this is a plain begging of the question, for Mr. du Pont to insist that the sacramental use of alcoholic liquors is a beverage use.

Then, again, Mr. du Pont is much disturbed by the fact that the Constitution prohibits only the use of alcoholic liquors for beverage purposes but that "this law (Volstead act) forbids manufacture, sale and transportation for use in cookery." Does not Mr. du Pont know that denatured alcohol may be used for cooking vegetables if applied in the right way; that is, as a source of heat rather than as a chemical compound of the food?

The Supreme Court has sustained all of the regulations incident to the enforcement of the constitutional amendment because the Supreme Court says that Con-

gress and the legislative bodies are the judge of the necessities for such regulations and that all that Congress has thus far done is not a violation of their powers under the Constitution. Mr. du Pont ought to write a brief and submit it to the members of the Supreme Court to show them how wrong they are. For business advice we should be inclined to consult Mr. du Pont, but on questions of constitutionality of acts of Congress we shall still go to the Supreme Court.

## REVOLUTION BUGABOO

We are solemnly warned that "the United States is in the throes of revolution." The cause for this upheaval seems to be that the fundamentals of government have been disregarded in the admittedly desirable abolition of the saloon and the attempt to stamp out drunkenness. We are informed that the people generally are not "so very much concerned with the question of drink" but because the Declaration of Independence has been dragged in the dust. What a sweet morsel this is:

"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Yes, this is a sweet morsel, unknown in thousands of homes before the Eighteenth Amendment was adopted. Yes, the lives of the mother and the children were at the mercy of the drink-crazed father. Liberty—something to be dreamed about but never realized, and happiness was to be found only beyond the Jordan.

## WHOSE RIGHTS ARE IN JEOPARDY?

Whose rights are to be considered now? Let us face this question frankly. The right of the brewer and the distiller to manufacture the liquor? The right of the saloonkeeper to sell it? The right of the drinker to buy it? Or the right of society as a whole or the drinker's family in particular, to be protected from the manufacture, the sale and the drinking? Mr. du Pont thinks only of one group. We have previously cited the decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States to show that the right to manufacture, to sell and even to buy is not one of these inalienable rights which our forefathers said were endowments of their Creator. Why do sane business men talk such foolishness? Why can't they think straight about prohibition as well as about business?

We will pass over Mr. du Pont's inadvertence regarding the reason for the Declaration of Independence. The tyranny of the majority. What majority? The old and threadbare fallacy that a majority of our people are forbidden against their express wish to manufacture, sell and transport beverage liquors? This is the first time we knew that the 178,000 saloonkeepers and their bartenders put out of business by the Eighteenth Amendment, the 1,247 brewers and their employees, and the 507 distillers and their employees were a majority of 110 millions of people in 1920, but Mr. du Pont contends,

"So today a great number of our people, perhaps a majority of them, forbidden against their express wish to manufacture, sell or transport beverage liquor, are revolting against the tyranny of their fellows."

## WHENCE CAME THIS MAJORITY?

But perhaps this is a new crop of individuals that has sprung up since the Eighteenth Amendment was ratified, for the Eighteenth Amendment must have been adopted by a constitutional majority which required three-fourths of the states to ratify the Eighteenth Amendment before it could be put into the Constitution; but Americans never do things by halves, and so New Jersey, yes, *New Jersey*, became the 46th ratifying state in 1922. The total number of votes cast for the ratification of this amendment in these 46 legislatures was four times as many as the number of votes cast against it. More than a score of the legislative bodies cast a unanimous vote for the amendment. Whence came all of this overwhelming sentiment in state legislatures for the Eighteenth Amendment? Are Congressmen and legislators likely to be so utterly ignorant of the wishes of their constituents and so wholly unmindful of the wishes of the voters at home? Something ought to be done about it and something probably would have been done about it if Mr. du Pont's contentions were true, but each succeeding Congress has had larger majorities on this identical question than the Congress that submitted the Eighteenth Amendment. The people of the United States have had five successive biennial opportunities in which to change the personnel of Congress if they were not in favor of what had already been done. Something's wrong somewhere. With rare exceptions most of the states have very emphatically approved of more effective and stringent regulations by their legislators each succeeding year.



## Du PONT VS. Du PONT

Mr. du Pont speaks about the "express wish" to manufacture, sell and transport beverage liquors. Who has expressed such a wish? When and where and how did they express it? Will Mr. du Pont put his hand upon the facts and enlighten the general public? This majority, whoever they are, "are revolting against the tyranny of their fellows." This would not be so impressive were it not for the fact that later on in his article Mr. du Pont sagely remarks that one of the groups of supporters of prohibition is the bootleggers. Now, bootleggers are those who sell beverage liquors, because nobody but a bootlegger sells beverage liquors today. Either bootleggers who sell the beverage liquor and rumrunners who transport it and the moonshiners who manufacture it are revolting against the prohibition law, or else they are supporting it. They cannot be doing both of these things at the same time. Yet, Mr. du Pont says that the bootleggers are "in active cooperation with those who have made prohibition a semi-religious issue." Just another illustration of how loosely this business man thinks when he thinks about something other than business.

## FRANKNESS OF MR. Du PONT CONSIDERED

The frankness of Mr. du Pont must be commended in his admission that during the first year under national prohibition the number of arrests for drunkenness fell to only 44 per cent of the 1914 number. If Mr. du Pont, however, had made a comparison of the number of arrests in the last year preceding the beginning of the war-time prohibition restrictions in 1918, the per cent would have been much below 44 per cent, usually fixed at about 25 per cent. Mr. du Pont naively says,

"Gradually as various sources of liquor supply have increased in the United States, arrests for drunkenness have also increased, until the total in recording cities is now equal to that in pre-war times."

Mr. du Pont probably says more than he intended to say, for what he really says is that the more liquor there is available the more drunks there will be, and he admits that drunkenness is an evil, for the title of his article is concerned with "a Remedy for the Drink Evil." Now, if prohibition could reduce the number of arrests for drunkenness in 1920 to 25 per cent of what they were in 1917, then prohibition enforced would clearly be a dis-

tinct boon to society as a whole. And after all we can ignore Mr. du Pont's claim of the majority who wish to manufacture, sell and transport beverage liquors, for they are the commercial class who seek to profit by violating the law and who, common sense tells us, are in a mere fractional minority of the nearly 120 millions of people of the United States.

## DRUNKENNESS CASES DECREASING

But Mr. du Pont says that in these recording cities the number of arrests for drunkenness is now as large as it was in pre-war times. If one were to make the comparison between 1914 and 1926, let us go to the wet New York World *Almanac*, page 506, and we will find that in New York City, according to the official figures furnished by the Police Commissioner in 1914, there were 23,122 arrests for intoxication, while in 1920 there were only 7,804. Evidently those who "wish to manufacture, sell and transport beverage liquors" and therefore "are revolting against the tyranny of their fellows" had not yet gotten into action in 1920, but little by little they established their lines of communication and discovered year by year, a little better each time, how to evade the law, defy the Constitution and break down the morale of the officials with whom they came in contact. But it is quite significant that the peak of this increase was reached in 1923, since which time it has decreased to 12,330 or just a little more than one-half the number of arrests in 1914.

Yes, and there is another thing to keep in mind, that in the twelve years from 1914 to 1926 the population of New York increased almost 750,000, three-fourths of a million people, or about 12 per cent, but the number of arrests for drunkenness in 1926 was only a little more than one-half of the number of arrests for the same cause in 1914.

Moreover, the additional fact must be borne in mind that while under the state law of New York the manufacture, sale and transportation of alcoholic liquor is not forbidden, drunkenness is still a crime and that the degree of drunkenness calling for arrest is much less today than it was ten years ago, yet in spite of these circumstances the decrease is very remarkable.

## AN UNFORTUNATE SELECTION

Mr. du Pont is rather unfortunate in his selection of England, or in fact any other European country, as a basis of comparison as indicated in the tables of

Mr. Johnson's article above referred to. American cities with their newly met and widely diverse nationalities, subjected in a peculiar sense and to an unusual degree to the political influence of their new and adopted country, nevertheless are leaving their European sister cities behind in their advance toward sobriety. This is so apparent that further attention need not be given to this phase of Mr. du Pont's contention.

Mr. du Pont is mildly enthusiastic over the fact that England has taught us a lesson by "reducing the consumption of alcohol to one-half of what it was before the world war." I have before me the April, 1928, number of the *Alliance News*, which is the official organ of the United Kingdom Alliance, an English temperance publication, containing an elaborate display of detailed statistics with tables and charts enabling one to get at almost any phase of the English drinking situation. We pass on a few facts which may throw some light on this alleged decrease. The fact of the matter is that the high peak year of consumption of beer, wine and spirits in the United Kingdom was reached in 1874 and '75. From that period wine has shown a more or less consistent, very gradual decrease from approximately 55 gallons per capita per year to less than 30 gallons per capita in 1917, then a sudden rise to 40 gallons in the years 1918 and '19, and some variation to 1927 where the consumption is about 38 gallons. The consumption of spirits has declined from the end of 1875, when it reached the high peak of approximately 128 gallons per capita, to the next high peak in 1899 and 1900 when it stood at about 111 gallons, with a rapid decrease in 1915 when it stood at approximately 75 gallons, with a sudden drop during the war to the low point in 1918 of approximately 34 gallons. In 1919 and '20 it reached the level of approximately 48 gallons per capita and has gradually declined to approximately 29 gallons per capita in 1927. There were manifest reasons for a sharp decline in England in the consumption of all liquors from 1914 on. Beer especially from its high peak of 1874 and '75 fell and rose again to a lower peak in 1899 and 1900 and then fell off very rapidly to the beginning of the World War, at which time the consumption fell off from 27 standard gallons per capita to 10 gallons in 1918. Consumption more than doubled between 1918 and 1920, jumping from 10 to 20½ gallons. The 1927 consumption was approximately 17 gallons. The figures above given for wine are based upon wine gallons, that of spir-

its upon proof gallons. Incidentally this means that with the dilution of these spirits to their commercial strength the quantity of spirits purchased and drunk was much larger. The beer measure is the standard gallon.

Compare the per capita consumption of wine, spirits and beer in the United States for any period prior to national prohibition.

Now, in the face of these facts what becomes of Mr. du Pont's claim that England has reduced to one-half its consumption of alcoholic beverages prior to the World War? The fluctuation previous to 1914 varies according to the material prosperity and the purchasing power of the drinking public. The high peak years 1874-'75, 1899-1900, and 1913 were years of industrial prosperity, but each succeeding high peak period was lower than for the preceding high peak period. Mr. du Pont must be perfectly well aware of the fact that England has been passing through a severely abnormal industrial and economic period since the war. This had its immediate effect upon the consumption of liquors throughout Great Britain.

## THE REVENUE LURE

Mr. du Pont is attracted by the revenue-producing features of the English revenue system. This is a natural viewpoint for Mr. du Pont to take. He reckons that "with a population of 42 million this means 3,200,000 pounds (or \$16,000,000) each year from one million inhabitants." In other words, \$16.00 per capita. Now, what would this mean for the United States? It means that if we were paying revenue at the same rate on intoxicating beverages under an internal revenue system, our 118 millions of people would have paid in liquor tax alone \$1,888,000,000. Mr. du Pont, evidently basing his figures upon a smaller population, says that the return would be \$1,850,000,000 a year. From whom would this come? It would come from the drinkers. It would come from the families represented in 1926 in the 46,762,240 savings depositors of this country. It would mean that thousands of families would have gone without their flivvers. It would mean, aside from the evil effects of the drink itself promiscuously distributed and consumed, the decrease of manpower, which would put us back on a level with the drinking countries of Europe. Mr. du Pont ought not to forget that fact. Lloyd George and other British statesmen have sounded the warning to their fellow countrymen that "England drunk cannot com-



pete with America sober." We cannot have our pie and eat it. We cannot have our prosperity in the forms of multiplied comfortable homes for the common people, automobiles, radios and telephones for everybody, building and loan and savings bank deposits beyond parallel in the history of the world, and at the same time raise nearly two billions of dollars of revenue by taxing the sale of a commodity the consumption of which would not only decrease tremendously our producing power but also divert the fruits of that producing power from automobiles, savings banks, building and loan companies and the education of our young people to the coffers of the brewers and distillers and saloonkeepers who formerly waxed fat in America. Why is it that a man who thinks straight on his own business lines can't think straight when he deals with the economic issues involved in the drink question?

#### THE CRUX OF THE WHOLE MATTER

But perhaps Mr. du Pont is thinking straighter than we suppose. Perhaps the answer, however, may be found in the following remarkable statement by Mr. du Pont. We will let him speak for himself:

"As our average income tax collections for the years 1923-1926 from individuals and corporations were \$1,-817,000,000, resulting in a considerable surplus, it is fair to say that the British liquor policy applied in the United States would permit of the total abolition of the income tax both personal and corporate. Or, this liquor tax would be sufficient to pay off the entire debt of the United States, interest and principal, in a little less than fifteen years."

DO WE NOT HAVE HERE THE GIST OF MR. DU PONT'S THINKING? He, forsooth, would like to be relieved of the payment of his income tax and take it out of the drinkers' homes of America. Such drinking as is being done today is admittedly being done largely by the rich. The actual economic loss to the world in general caused by those who drink today is not so great as it would be if taken from the earnings of the man who has only sufficient for the necessities and the comforts and a few of the minor luxuries for himself and family. Economically considered, what does it matter if Mr. du

Pont's income tax-paying friends with an income of a million or so should spend ten, twenty-five or fifty thousand a year for booze and on that should pay a tax levied by the government? That would be a mere bagatelle as compared with release from the payment of income tax on million dollar incomes, and Mr. du Pont's income tax-paying friends for whom he apparently holds a brief would gladly exchange position with their English tax-paying brothers. *Do we not have here the crux of the whole matter?* This is not the first time that such an argument has been advanced. An employer of labor about a year ago advanced the same theory that if we were to place Great Britain's tax upon and permit the sale of liquor, the employees of the factories could pay the taxes now being paid by the employer. This is indeed a sordid argument and does not belong to the twentieth century, but it is the plain unvarnished argument of this chairman of the Board of Directors of a great corporation.

No wonder that the rank and file of the producing class of America do not respond to that kind of an argument. No wonder that this numerically large group has seen and appreciates the value of the prohibition policy and has at each succeeding election registered their approval of the men who have given America a chance to accept prohibition and who also endorse those men who stand for its rigid application and enforcement.

No, Mr. du Pont, you cannot fool the people of America. That kind of financial, economic sophistry will not find its way into their pocketbooks. To use an old American phrase, the average American head of the family and the average co-partner in that headship, recently endowed with suffrage, know very well "which side of their bread is buttered." No, Mr. du Pont, you will have to figure some other way to get rid of paying income tax without unloading it on a new crop of drinkers in America. Is this the reason why the president of the Pennsylvania Railway Company and other representatives of great corporate interests with stupendous incomes often avowing total abstinence as the rule of their own lives are yet insisting upon the right of the poor man to drink good liquor—if only he will pay in that way the expenses of government?

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