

PLANS FOR DRY NEW YORK

Saloon-Substitutes for City's Ten Thousand Drinking Places Doomed
to be Liquorless On and After July 1

WHAT will New York do to replace the saloon?

Many organizations and individuals are trying to answer that question. As yet little of a definite nature has been done. The fact is that nobody appears yet to have visualized just what New York City will be like without its ten thousand places where liquor is sold. Saloons have been so much a part of the metropolis, either as to something to use, denounce, or simply ignore, that their imminent disappearance from our street corners has rather a destructive than a constructive effect in a New Yorker's thoughts; he is more likely to think of the thing that is doomed to vanish rather than of that which may spring up in its place.

Despite this bewilderment, however, regarding the most drastic change ever decreed here, there are some who look upon its effects from the constructive point of view, and are already busy figuring out what can be created to replace the saloon that will salvage from its shipwreck the good elements and make their survival conceal the absence of liquor dispensing in such a way that the substitute need not be a case of "Hamlet" without Hamlet.

The Salvation Army, for one, is getting ready to enter the field. It will run substitutes for saloons, which, it is hoped, will preserve the opportunities for sociability and innocent forms of recreation presented by the saloon, as we have always known it, without the aid of the cup that cheers and likewise inebriates. The Salvation Army chiefs are believers in what they term "the psychology of the brass rail." They feel that it would be short-sighted to sweep away the general makeup of the saloon along with the bartender and his insistent "What's yours?" So there is already one Salvation Army "bar," with a genuine brass rail and everything in the way of drinks except alcoholic ones. And there is a representative looking up suitable opportunities for the investment of Salvation Army money in the leasing of sites of former saloons that seem suitable for transformation into sociability—and—soft drink saloons.

Owing to the fact that every Salvationist able to stand was pressed into service for the great home fund drive which closed a few days ago not as much could be done toward the acquisition of these moribund saloons as the army's leaders wished. But now that the drive is over, they not only have the time, but plenty of money to invest in the new venture.

The Salvation Army "bar" already running is that of the Argonne Hotel, in West Forty-seventh Street, recently taken over for the accommodation of soldiers and sailors. A cursory look at the said "bar" shows nothing out of the ordinary to the visitor. The counter, fin-



"BUSINESS AS USUAL."
Salvation Army's Hotel Argonne.

Brown Brothers

ished in dark wood, seems to be concealing untold wealth of hard drinks; the brass rail is aggressively anti-prohibition in appearance. But if anybody, misled by these appearances, asks for a highball or a gin fizz he will get a severe shock. Behind that "bar" there is nothing but coffee and buttermilk and ginger ale, and the sisters, cousins, and aunts of these beverages.

The Salvation Army has options on five places now run as regular saloons and may soon have twenty-five liquorless saloons in operation in New York ready for the drought after July 1.

"We do not intend to eliminate the name 'saloon' from these places when we take them over," said Elmore G. Leffingwell, Publicity Director of the

Salvation Army. "Our theory is 'Once a saloon always a saloon.' Experience has shown that landlords find it hard to rent a place that has been used as a saloon to anybody wishing to install another line of business. It's hard to run a shoe store successfully on premises over which hangs the taint of liquor.

"But if the places continue to be known as saloons, and aim to get the same frequenters, even if no liquor is sold in them, we feel that they may continue to be run successfully. There is a great deal in a saloon besides the drinking of liquor. Men go there for sociability, to meet their friends, to play games, to read. We expect to keep the saloons which we take over just as they are, except that we insist on there being

no booze and no profanity. There will be papers and magazines for the men to read and games for them to play. We think that many of those who have been frequenting the corner saloons did not go there solely for the liquor, by any means, and that they will continue to drop in to see their friends and spend a quiet hour without the feeling that the old place has changed for the worse.

"And people need not think that the Salvation Army is going to spend foolishly any of the home fund which it has just acquired. We are going to purchase defunct saloons, but we are looking for bargains. We mean to have our 'saloons' paying investments."

The Community Councils of National Defense are also looking forward with deep interest to the possibility of finding substitutes for the saloon. This organization, in touch with local organizations and with public-spirited individuals throughout the city, believes that the community idea, which it has been sedulously fostering, can be successfully applied to the salvaging of the good side of the saloon, the continuation in the "dry" city of the opportunity for association which it gave to its habitués.

The organization has not as yet formulated anything concrete in the way of saloon substitutes, but its representatives are holding conferences with clergymen and laymen, and hope soon to see their efforts bear fruit. Just how the Community Councils look upon the problem before them was expressed the other day by the director, Dr. John Willis Slaughter, in these words:

"The saloon has been diagnosed as a social disease, an institution which, in its present form, can no longer be tolerated by a civilized community. The chief objection to its existence is, of course, that it dispenses drink. A still greater evil is, perhaps, that it is the door to the whole underground world of vice.

"The saloon is marked and known by the evil it does. It is unpopular to regard it as having any good qualities. The present situation demands an analysis of the saloon for the elements that have made it successful. In so far as it is an instrument of evil, the better sense of the whole community is justified in wiping it out of existence without consideration for the feelings of those who use it; in so far, however, as no evil elements are involved, the destruction of the saloon is an unwarranted piece of coercion inconsistent with every principle of Americanism.

"It may be that the exhilaration of moderate drinking is completely legitimate. It may be that the fact that a few persons drinking to excess is wholly irrelevant; that excess drinking is the symptom of disorder that will speedily express itself in some other form of vice. What is evident is that the saloon is a

complex of factors good and bad. It is consequently evident that a wholesale piece of destruction, without an endeavor to salvage the good elements, is unjustifiable.

"What the saloon provides is a little road to freedom from the world of work. After eight hours of activity as a cog in an industrial or other machine, the greater part of human nature is left over and pressing for utilization. The hours of leisure become, on this account, far more significant for life as a whole than the hours of work. What is known as recreation—which is, specifically, the means of employing leisure—is, therefore, deserving of the best thought and of the most persistent activity on the part of the socially minded. The present is the golden moment of opportunity for modifying the whole system of recreation.

"What is wrong with it? First, it is made to appeal to individuals singly through the medium of commercialized amusements. When a man goes out, after his day's work, as an individual, in search of recreation, which he is to purchase, so to speak, over the counter, he will, in the mass, choose the worse instead of the better. The tendency of recreation will, therefore, be reversionary. On the other hand, if amusement is a matter of group action, social and active, instead of individual and passive,



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Sample Dry Saloon, Hotel Argonne, in West Forty-seventh Street.



Brown Brothers.

Behind the Bar.

the constructive tendency is at once evident.

"For these reasons, co-operative neighborhood action is indicated as the way out of the difficulty. Clubs, not merely for loafing and gastronomic purposes, not only for the usual silly games, but as providing opportunity for music in community choruses, for dancing, for community drama—such institutions can meet the modern need. They must be self-maintaining and self-determining.

"The Community Council, as a neighborhood organization par excellence, will endeavor to handle this problem of recreation by the recreation centre method in a creative way that will contrast with the mere act of destruction by which the saloon is being eliminated."

Among those who also see in the disappearance of the saloon an opportunity for excellent constructive substitutes are the workers in those settlements which for years have sought to ameliorate the condition of the city's poor. Of these, the Lenox Hill Settlement has already started upon a definite campaign for providing substitutes for saloons. It has just opened at 95 East End Avenue a club for Hungarians, a great number of whom reside in the neighborhood, in which it is planned to combine all the best features of the liquorless saloon. Summer garden, bowling alley, reading room—all these things, combined with soft drinks, are to be provided in the very space which for a long time was one of the most popular hard drink emporiums of the neighborhood.

"We expect a big attendance here after the city goes dry," said E. F. Hanaburgh, who runs the club for the Lenox

Hill Settlement. "And we expect to prove that men do not need liquor in order to enjoy sociability."

Besides its Hungarian-American club, the Lenox Hill Settlement is preparing to entertain a greatly augmented influx of customers at its clubrooms at 404 East Sixty-fourth Street, which will be running as a full-fledged liquorless bar after the first of July. This place is in the heart of an Italian quarter, and caters particularly to Italians. One of them, a resident of the neighborhood, has been busy for some time decorating the walls of the place with frescoes to welcome the nonalcoholic trade. "Antony and Cleopatra" and "Romeo and Juliet" already grace the walls, and there will be other Shakespearean scenes to help along the consumption of soft drinks.

In spite of the lack of concreteness which still characterizes most of the plans of those who would provide something in place of saloons, there is nothing

vague about their high hopes. They feel confident that, after the city has been dry for a while, many substitutes will be in successful operation, triumphantly proving their contention that it isn't the booze alone that makes saloons attractive.

Broadway of Old

It is interesting to note, in view of the renewed efforts being made to get New Yorkers to think of the present condition of Broadway as an incentive to improving it, that foreign visitors in earlier times invariably found Broadway a dignified and bustling thoroughfare.

Charles Mackay, the English author, lecturer, and London Times war correspondent in this country during the civil war, was especially pleased with Broadway during his first lecture tour here in 1857.

"Bond Street is no more to be compared to Broadway," he said, "for beauty, extent, life, bustle, and wealth than a dingy old farthing of the reign of George III. to a bright new sovereign of Queen Victoria. There is no street in London that can be declared superior or even equal, all things considered, to Broadway. It is a street 'sui generis,' combining in itself the characteristics of the Boulevard des Italiens at Paris and of Cheapside or Fleet Street in London, with here and there a dash of Whitechapel or of the Minorities. Its aspect is, thoroughly Parisian. * * *

"Broadway monopolizes nearly all the good pavement as well as cleanliness of New York, and the streets that branch off from it on each side are uneven, dirty, and full of deep holes and ruts. If there be any exception it is Fifth Avenue, where the richest people live in marble and stone palaces, not quite so large as the business palaces of Broadway, but sufficiently luxurious and imposing."

Fanny Kemble, the celebrated English actress, who made her debut in the old Park Theatre in 1832 and afterward married a Southern plantation owner, had a good word for Broadway at that period, although many of her American criticisms were severe.

"Broadway is a long street of tolerable width," she says in her journal, "in short, the American Oxford Road, where all people go to exhibit themselves and examine others. We walked to the end of Broadway, a distance of two miles. It is finer than any I have yet seen in New York. The street was very much thronged, and I thought the crowd more civil and orderly than an English crowd."



John Held jr.

The Bartender of the Future.