

Other's Opinions

SO WE MAY CHEER UP!

May 5, 1930.

Editor, The Daily Illini:

The term 'liberal' is too often applied in self-compliment by a person who thinks that his superior wisdom enables him to see that any other way of doing things would be better than the way in which they actually are done. Anyhow, I do not agree with that man "who is noted for his liberal thought," and who illustrates the broadness of view, generosity of spirit and emancipation from prejudice which liberalism is supposed to mean by saying, according to Saturday's Illini: "It is almost safe to say that whatever opinion or stand an American newspaper editor takes on a subject, the exact opposite will be most logical." On the contrary, I think that you and other editors often write sound sense.

But why do you say, "Drunkenness is a sin, but drinking is not?" With our Anglo-Saxon ancestors it was a moral duty to get drunk every so often. It was a part of their religious ceremonies. The confessed practices of 787 students shows that among the young this view still has some standing. But most persons of experience nowadays think it inexpedient to get drunk. If so, perhaps it is also inexpedient to drink. Is gambling inexpedient only when you reach the point of going broke?

And why do you say: "When legislatures pass a law prohibiting drinking they make a crime of a thing that is not a sin. A person will take a drink only to realize that he has broken a law, and naturally his respect for the prohibition law drops. Soon we have the open ignoring of all laws that is prevalent at the present time." I did not know it was a preva-

lent custom to ignore all laws. But we do ignore the prohibition law, if we don't know what it is. It seems to be ignored by many drys. No law prohibits drinking. The eighteenth amendment says that the manufacture, transportation, and sale of intoxicating liquor is unlawful. The Volstead act aids the enforcement of the amendment by adding a prohibition of the possession of liquor under most circumstances, but neither of them makes it unlawful to drink. The framers of the Volstead act agreed with you that drinking ought not to be a crime. They went farther and conferred a privilege of drinking, for the Volstead act provides that "it shall not be unlawful to possess liquors in one's private dwelling while the same is occupied and used by him as his dwelling only . . . provided such liquors are for use only for the personal consumption of the owner thereof and his family residing in such dwelling and of his bona fide guests when entertained by him therein." The Illinois statute contains the same provision as to liquor "lawfully acquired." There is little ground for thinking it unlawful to buy liquor unless it is bought for some other purpose than drinking it. So at a friend's house, or in your own room you may lift a glass and toss it off without breaking any law. But you must not possess liquor at a public dance hall, soft-drink parlor or football game. You may transport it from your hip pocket to your mouth, but may not carry it in an automobile. You may drink anywhere from a bottle held by a friend. When such liquor passes into your possession it is no longer fit for beverage purposes. It is also expressly permitted to manufacture non-intoxicating cider and fruit juices exclusively for use in one's house. The purpose seems to be to make it plain that if contrary to expectations, age should change the quality of the juice, the maker, if not privy thereto, is not thereto privy.

So let your drinking friend cheer up. Drinking is not what makes him a criminal.