

Document A: Prohibition and Health (Modified)

Alcohol poisons and kills; Abstinence and Prohibition save lives and safeguard health.

Dr. S.S. Goldwater, formerly Health Commissioner of New York City, stated the decision of science, the final opinion of our nation after a hundred years of education upon the subject of alcohol.

“It is believed that less consumption of alcohol by the community would mean less tuberculosis, less poverty, less dependency, less pressure on our hospitals, asylums and jails.”

“Alcohol hurts the tone of the muscles and lessens the product of laborers; it worsens the skill and endurance of artists; it hurts memory, increases industrial accidents, causes diseases of the heart, liver, stomach and kidney, increases the death rate from pneumonia and lessens the body’s natural immunity to disease.”

Justice Harlan speaking for the United States Supreme Court, said:

“We cannot shut out of view the fact that public health and public safety may be harmed by the general use of alcohol.”

Vocabulary

Abstinence: Stopping yourself from doing something (e.g., drinking)

Consumption: eating or drinking

Source: Statement read at the Eighth Annual Meeting of the National Temperance Council, Washington D.C., September 20, 1920. The National Temperance Council was created in 1913 to work for Prohibition.