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U. S. Army Canteens.

The last annual report of the United States Secretary of War Stimson is an interesting document; not of the sort, however, to find much favor with the "Whole Ribboners" of that country who were primarily responsible for the doing away of beer in the U. S. army canteens.

Mr. Stimson states that he has visited forty-nine of the army posts, and in every instance he found a nest of vile and filthy dens just beyond the reservation gates placed there for the purpose of selling to the men of the army. In these dens of iniquity were sinews patronized was only too evident, not only was drunkenness prevalent, but innumerable diseases were claiming more victims than all the other important diseases combined. The Secretary of War has no hesitation in stating that the chief, indeed the only cause for this deplorable state of affairs is the abolition of the army canteen, coupled with the fact that soldiers are not slaves, and if a certain amount of latitude is not given them in the clean, wholesome surroundings of the post, they are bound to seek it elsewhere.

Commenting on the subject, the San Francisco Argonaut in a recent number went on to say:

"Men who pass women by the score in a day cannot be able to regard the barrack life of soldiers and to induce their own will against experience and prudence is one of the marvels of our civilization. If it were a crime it would be laughable. It is not laughable that a small knot of reformers should stand absolutely as a barrier between the soldiers and protection from the most galloping leaders of all.

"In the old days the soldier drank because the army cost him and presumably was good beer. He had neither inclination nor the opportunity to go to the saloon and fill his to do. Left to him, it and [illegible] would lead him to neither the saloon nor the church. And it may be said definitely that the soldier has a right to drink a glass of good beer. To say that he shall not drink a glass of beer because he may be the victim of intemperance is no more than to say that he shall not walk around the reservation gates and there meet people. Then monastic cells in the variety of moral and physical degeneration that this would produce.

"Mr. Stimson has said no more than his predecessors have said for years, and yet he finds himself in the position of the dude who, having discovered that a small earthquake in Japan proves that there is no such organization as the universe, provides and [illegible] to demonstrate that the world is flat. But it may well be doubted that the dude will be able to find a scientific man who will be willing to demonstrate that the world is round. But it is not to be doubted that there will be people