

Intemperance: The Lost War Against Liquor. By Larry Engelmann. (New York: Free Press, 1979. Pp. xvi, 252. Sources, index. \$10.95.)

Repealing National Prohibition. By David E. Kyvig. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1979. Pp. xix, 274. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$21.00.)

These two volumes contribute to our knowledge of national prohibition during the 1920s. In common, they are revised doctoral dissertations that begin with the newer understanding of the prohibition movement as a mainstream American political and reform phenomenon, a response to the perceived social problems associated with the saloon and the liquor traffic. They differ in focus, audience appeal, and interpretive significance.

Intemperance suffers only in comparison with *Repealing National Prohibition*. Larry Engelmann has chosen to address a popular audience, and his book tells the dramatic and colorful stories that were so much a part of the resistance of drinking Americans to the imposition of prohibition. He concentrates on Michigan, both because it was the first industrial state to enact prohibition (in 1916) and because it was a center of rum-running during the 1920s. Well written, if atrociously proof-read, it suffers from an overdramatization at the outset that is simply incorrect. "The Eighteenth Amendment, [the prohibitionists] assumed, was a final treaty of peace with the liquor traffic. They were wrong" (p. xi). On the contrary, anti-saloon leaders suffered no illusions that the evils of the liquor traffic would disappear with a change in the law. They thought of the amendment as one major step to be followed with a sustained attack on the international traffic and with either vigorous law enforcement or educational programs, or both, at home. Nevertheless, the author is aware that the prohibitionists were reformers genuinely interested in addressing a widespread problem of drug abuse, and he makes it clear that if their solution was unworkable, subsequent generations have failed to provide entirely satisfactory answers. His thoughts deserve our attention.

David E. Kyvig's work should have a greater impact on the interpretation and teaching of United States history. Granted access to the papers of the organized repeal forces, especially the Association Against the Prohibition Amendment (AAPA), he shows that it was a compactly organized movement that questioned the entire progressive faith in mitigating social ills through law. The AAPA had a stroke of good fortune after 1928

when it captured the headquarters of the Democratic party. The Democrats posed as the party of repeal, to Franklin Roosevelt's discomfort, and both came to power in the post-1929 economic catastrophe. Kyvig argues that Roosevelt's awareness of the anti-reform ideology of the repealers and the rapidity with which they gained enormous public favor constrained the New Deal to making institutional changes until after 1936, when Roosevelt defeated the AAPA, by then called the Liberty League.

Although this interpretation may attract the most attention from historians, the work has other merits. It clarifies the whole legal and constitutional story of prohibition. It shows the irony of prohibition's reputation as a political failure when, insofar as it is susceptible to measurement, it cut alcohol consumption at least in half. The AAPA concentrated on the lawlessness that prohibition produced and turned the economic benefits argument of dry leaders around after the onset of the Depression.

With the availability of these two well-researched and thought-provoking books on the 1920s and repeal, a number of new questions arise about the prohibition movement itself. They involve what happened to the Anti-Saloon League, so powerful in mobilizing popular sentiment and political action from 1916 to 1919 and so helpless in resisting the AAPA after 1929. The newly available League records in the Ohio Historical Society will reveal answers and provide a fresh perspective on the dry side of the episode.

Ohio State University, Columbus

K. Austin Kerr

The Politics of Soft Coal: The Bituminous Industry from World War I through the New Deal. By James P. Johnson. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1979. Pp. xii, 258. Notes, figures, tables, bibliographical essay, index. \$13.50.)

James P. Johnson has made an important contribution to the historical literature on the American coal industry. Despite certain difficulties his book is both readable and informative and provides much more than a chronological narrative of the coal industry from 1914 to 1940. Johnson's purpose is to show how the history of the bituminous industry fits into the debate between the so-called liberal historians such as Charles Beard, Richard Hofstadter, and Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., who have argued that government has regulated American corporations in the public interest, and James Weinstein, Gabriel Kolko,