

## REVIEWS

### *“Prohibition Is Here To Stay”*

*The Reverend Edward S. Shumaker and the Dry Crusade in America*

By Jason S. Lantzer

(Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2009. Pp. ix, 306. Notes, bibliography, index. Paperbound, \$35.00.)

Prohibition is often dismissed as an unfortunate aberration in the American reform tradition, led by fanatics, and doomed to failure. Jason S. Lantzer seeks to correct this impression in a well-written and thoroughly documented study on the life and career of Edward S. Shumaker, state superintendent of the Indiana Anti-Saloon League from 1907 until his untimely death in 1929. Drawing on a wide variety of secondary and primary sources, including Shumaker's personal papers, Lantzer stresses the deep link between evangelical Protestantism and American politics, and the need to view the dry movement within this context. Shumaker, who had earlier served as a Methodist minister in several Indiana communities, is lauded as “a first-rate political tactician” whose life “is a shining example of the dry crusade,” illustrating “the evolution of prohibition over time” (p. 3).

Lantzer is particularly effective in his discussion of the intricacies of the IASL's involvement in Hoosier politics, and in describing how its goals and strategies sometimes conflicted with those of other dry organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance League and the Prohibition Party. He also considers tepid attempts of Shumaker and the IASL to cooperate with African American church groups, and alliances formed with Roman Catholics. If some national Anti-Saloon leaders were lividly anti-Catholic, Shumaker cultivated cordial relations with Catholic dries; indeed at one point a priest served under him as IASL vice president. But the appearance of the Ku Klux Klan brought complications.

The Klan became a significant social and political force in Indiana during the early and mid-1920s, not too long after the Anti-Saloon League and other dry groups had ostensibly

attained victory with the passage of statewide prohibition in 1917 and the implementation of the Eighteenth Amendment nationwide in 1920. Indiana's adoption of the strict Wright "bone-dry" law in 1925 was perhaps the IASL's crowning achievement. Effective enforcement was difficult, but Lantzer argues that prohibition significantly reduced alcohol consumption and that "crime stayed remarkably in check" (p. 3). The author needs to present more evidence to support such broad assertions, yet Lantzer convincingly demonstrates that Shumaker's ties with the Klan were tenuous. The IASL and Klan overlapped in their constituencies, with both organizations appealing to Protestant congregations. Both supported the enforcement of prohibition, but the Klan utilized militant and even violent tactics shunned by the IASL, and Shumaker pursued his own independent political course. Lantzer acknowledges, however, that "both real and imagined associations between the ASL and the Klan hurt the League," (p. 131) and destroyed any possibility of maintaining a constructive coalition of evangelical Protestants, Catholics, and African Americans.

A vicious political dispute with state Attorney General Arthur Gilliom involving the election of an Indiana Supreme Court justice and the enforcement of dry statutes led ultimately to Shumaker's conviction on

contempt charges and a sixty-day prison sentence. Shumaker became, in Lantzer's words, "a martyr for the dry cause" (p. 157). Released from jail in April 1929, he soon fell seriously ill with a variety of maladies, and died from a malignant tumor in October at age 62, a few years before repeal.

This work should be an extremely useful resource for those wishing to learn more about the dry movement, Indiana politics, and Shumaker's life. It is hence a shame the book's index is so perfunctory. Some may disagree with this sympathetic portrayal of Shumaker or with the author's claims regarding the merits and accomplishments of prohibition, yet few would doubt his contention that substance abuse remains a daunting problem today. Lantzer helps us better understand Shumaker's perspective, the religious culture that nurtured him, and the important role that the Anti-Saloon League played in Indiana.

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