

East St. Louis, Ill.

Sept. 23, 1917.

To the Anti-Saloon League or to whom it may concern.

Dear Sirs:

I would like to let you know a little of the many happenings in this wicked city, hoping it may be of a little benefit some way.

This is Sunday morning. Before seven o'clock this morning I saw two men so drunk they could hardly see their way. One of them is sitting at my table so drunk he can not get away. The other was a stranger on the street. A prominent man two blocks from here committed suicide last Thursday on account of drink. Gambling of all kinds is going on in all parts of this whiskey soaked city. Another young man drew his money and went home and paid his board, went out to get him some things he needed, but as usual, went to the saloon with twelve dollars and went back in a few minutes and told his poor old mother that he had lost every cent. Some one took it out of his pocket or he lost it in some kind of a game.

One lady near here has a husband in jail at Belleville because all he did was to work and come in drunk and sit down and eat what the rest of the family brought in and fuss because they did not have a different variety. She got out a state warrent and had him locked up. She has two sons who have just gone to the front and a mother eighty years old to support. This is only few of the many cases.

Some girls here have to work and support their father and give him \$2.00 a week to drink. When they come home at night they have no sleep on account of the drunken father and brother, both sometimes in the same condition.

There are more despondent, neglected women and children in this place than one could imagine. There are plenty of respectable people here, just waiting for a chance to do something to help the town. The Temperance Union is getting new members and getting ready for any new petitions that may come up, hoping and waiting and praying for something to happen in the right way. Our new President's address is 720 North 15th. Street, - it was 724 - Mrs. G. Smith, a sister of Cameron Harmon. I hope this letter will not be out of place. Any work we can help in we will be glad to do. Our convention is at Lebanon the first of October. If there is a worker out we would be glad to hear him.

One object I had in view when I wrote this letter was to ask a question concerning my own experience in my own home that might be a benefit in some way or other. My husband has almost drunk his last by the way he has to suffer every time he gets paid. The week of Sept. 7th he was near death. Now I am in the same trouble. He is sixty-three years old.

My son is thirty-four, in his fathers steps for seven years and at times crazy. He worked for the terminal twelve years until he started to drink and then quit. Since then he has worked eight times for the same yard master. Two weeks ago he got a position on Hady bridge, the most responsible position of any in the yard. He worked faithful till on Sunday night the operator who had gone on his job took a quart of whiskey. This man was relieved at eleven o'clock and another came on. As he left he slipped the quart, or the most of it, to my son. Of course he drank it and the eleven o'clock man reported my son for being drunk on the job so he lost his job. That is the way it is, Mr. Boyer says all over the yard.

So my son, the next day, went over as usual to the office to get what he had coming. Mr. Johnson, the paymaster asked my son what was the matter. He got up and told it before the whole office. He said "it has got me as it has got thousands. I cannot master it". Mr. Johnson asked the men to listen. Everything stopped and Mr. Johnson then gave a little talk to his office force and said "Look at all these men, they are in the same boat. Soon we will not need to send out a pay-car if something isn't done."

What can we do, brother co-workers? We sit idly by with our hands folded, I mean here in this place, and can not help ourselves. If the stuff was seized by the government the Woman's Christian Temperance Union will do their part. We have succeeded in raising money for ambulances, as you know the quickest way is to destroy it. I search the headlines of the daily newspapers for the news of some chance to do some thing to help the Temperance cause. Last March my son got so bad off he begged me to lock him up or have it done. I went to different ones, even to the judge of the court at Belleville. They would do nothing. One day I got a lady to go with with me to Belleville. We went with him. They would hardly do anything. When they did they wrote up a great piece. My son said they would sell the stuff. They ought to keep all of it away from the men who are trying to quit and cannot. He has been wanting to go to a dry town and work. He is a willing worker and could have the best recommendations, only the drink. He is glad when Sunday comes because the saloons are closed and no one says "come on and have a drink". There are lots of men who drink and who will vote for prohibition. One day I was on the car and had some Anti-Saloon League Issues, as I always do. I left one in the seat opposite me. An old man come in and picked it up and read a little, looking around as though he had found a treasure, rolled it up and stuck it in his pocket.

I hope this will be of interest to your work. My heart is so burdened with drink, I could fight it day and night. Have been reading the law to the saloon keepers in the neighborhood. There are more than I after them.

I must stop for this time.

Mrs. Mary Petty,

1519 Hall Ave.