▸▸ Congress Dodges Enforcement ◂◂

By CHARLES MERZ

In the fourth chapter of The Dry Decade, Mr. Merz takes up the attitude of Congress to the problem of enforcement. By doing lip service to the drys and not appropriating enough money to antagonize the wets, Congress managed to avoid the issue very successfully.

THE key to the story of prohibition lies in the record of Congress. The States, to be sure, ratified the Eighteenth Amendment, but it was Congress that had chosen to initiate the experiment and Congress alone that had power to carry it through to a conclusion. There is no better way to understand the situation we have reached today than by going back to the start of this adventure and following the work of Congress through the first critical years when a precedent was being set not only for the States but for all future efforts at enforcement.

Congress was in session when the Eighteenth Amendment took effect on January 16, 1920. It had met in December, 1919, and it remained in session until June, 1920. It had an excellent opportunity to watch the first efforts to enforce the law. It was in a good position to measure the difficulties which had appeared so promptly. Between January and June, as an earlier article has pointed out, Congress had seen the first signs of congestion in the courts. It had learned from the Customs Service that liquor was flowing easily across the borders. It had heard the complaint of the Prohibition Bureau that the law was being flouted in many of the larger cities and it had observed the failure of local officials to co-operate with federal authorities.

THIS was the situation which confronted Congress in the first six months of national prohibition. The extent of its interest in this situation may be judged from the fact that only six times in these same six months was prohibition referred to, even casually, on the floor of either House of Congress.

Mr. Volstead made one speech in praise of the law and Mr. Babka of Ohio one speech in opposition to it[1]. An impromptu attempt to repeal the Volstead Act by attaching a rider to an appropriation bill was defeated by a vote of 60 to 38[2]. Mr. Warren of Wyoming suggested in the Senate that a serious effort to enforce the law might ultimately cost as much as $50,000,000 annually, whereupon Mr. Sheppard read into the record Mr. Wayne B. Wheeler's estimate that $5,000,000 would be ample[3]. Late in the session the Senate spent five minutes arguing whether or not to believe a newspaper report that counterfeit certificates had been forged to take whisky out of bond[4].

At this point Congress adjourned. It had been in session during the first six months of prohibition. Its own attitude inevitably established the pattern of enforcement. Not once in these first six months had any member of either House proposed to increase the meagre appropriation of $2,000,000 with which the Prohibition Bureau was attempting to make the law effective. Not once had any member of either House discussed on the floor of Congress the question of prohibition on the border or prohibition in the cities or prohibition in the Attorney General's office or prohibition in the courts. Not once had Congress taken any step or shown that it contemplated taking any step which might have convinced skeptical sections of the country from the very start that this law was intended to be taken seriously.

From January to June in 1920 Congress showed less interest in the law than many church societies, many women's clubs and many Chautauqua circuits, at this time earnestly and in all good faith debating the benefits to be achieved by prohibition, thanks to the foresight of the authors of the Eighteenth Amendment.

IF WE follow the work of Congress into a second session, the pattern does not greatly change except in one particular. By this time, back in Washington after a summer holiday, Congress now had before it certain official summaries of some of the handicaps under which the government had labored.

The Commissioner of Internal Revenue had now filed his first report and pointed out the difficulty of enforcing the law with an inadequate staff of agents. "It was found impossible to establish a salary scale that would compare favorably with salaries paid in other occupations and which would prove sufficiently attractive to enable the Department to secure the number and type of men needed[5]."

These men were expected to be intelligent enough to understand the law, honest enough to play no favorites in its administration and content enough with the terms of their employment to resist the bribes certain to be offered them by an enormously successful industry. For the purpose of finding such men Congress had appropriated sufficient funds to pay a salary of $33 a week.

Meantime, appearing before the Appropriations Committee of the House of Representatives in December, 1920, Attorney General Palmer had unbosomed himself of a long list of troubles acquired by his own Department in its experiment with enforcement. There had been an alarming increase in federal police activities. The Attorney General's office was now being asked to prosecute cases at the rate of three thousand a month. "It is totally and absolutely impossible to prosecute those cases successfully unless we have more help[6]."

Nevertheless, despite this official information, now brought forward to corroborate the obvious evidence of the government's experiences earlier in the year, the second session of Congress passed with as little stir about enforcement as the previous session. The House spent two hours on one occasion debating an increase in the appropriation of the Prohibition Bureau[7], and fifteen minutes on another occasion debating an increase in the appropriation of the Department of Justice for legal work on prohibition cases[8]. The sums of money at issue in these debates, however, were scarcely important enough to raise large questions of public policy: being $600,000 in one case and $200,000 in the other.

In the Senate, meantime, not a word was spoken of prohibition during the entire session from first to last, except on January 14th, when Mr. Sheppard

1. *Congressional Record*, 66th Congress, 2nd Session, pp. 8936, 9051.
2. *Ibid.*, pp. 3472-4.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 3108, 5655.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 8049.
5. *Report of the Commissioner of Internal Revenue*, Fiscal year ended June 30, 1920, p. 30.
6. *Associated Press dispatch*, Washington, December 29, 1920; *New York World*, December 30, 1920.
7. *Congressional Record*, 66th Congress, 3rd Session, pp. 1224-6, 1229-33, 1328-30.
8. *Ibid.*, pp. 1016-17.

called the attention of his colleagues to a telegram which had reached him from Bishop James Cannon, Jr., urging strict enforcement[9].

At this point prohibition in the United States was a little more than a year old. The sum of $4,575,000 had been spent on its enforcement. This sum was demonstrably inadequate. The Prohibition Bureau was still without the staff it needed. The border was unprotected. No police force had been organized on a large enough scale to suppress illicit stills. Not an hour's time had been spent on the floor of either the Senate or the House, discussing the precise responsibility of the States or the question of what the federal government would do in case the States did nothing. The law was being disobeyed in many places. Congress seemed to take small interest.

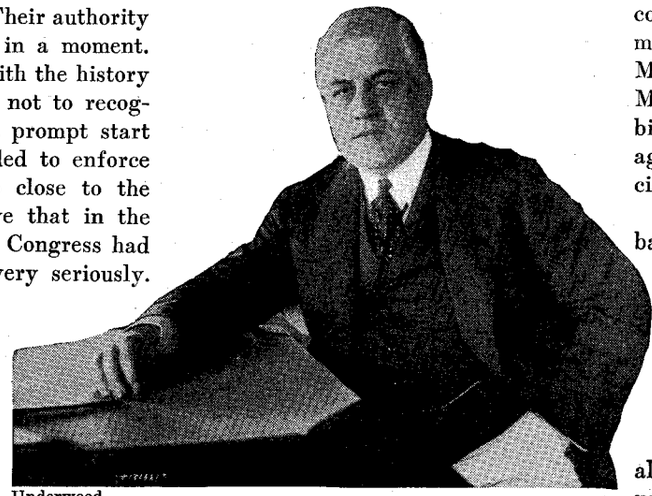
The question arises, where were the militant prohibition organizations which had played so large a part in the enactment of this legislation? Their authority could not have vanished in a moment. They were too familiar with the history of prohibition legislation not to recognize the importance of a prompt start if Congress really intended to enforce the law. They were too close to the scene of action to believe that in the first year of enforcement Congress had taken its responsibility very seriously. Why had they failed to rouse Congress from its lethargy and stir it into action?

The fact of the matter is, that the militant prohibition organizations found themselves in a somewhat equivocal position. They devoutly wished the law to succeed. They were apparently reluctant to bring too much pressure to bear on Congress, in the hope of making it succeed, lest they invite the country to believe that they regarded the first year's experiment as a failure. To ask Congress for drastic action to enforce the law would have been to admit that enforcement required large sums of money. To ask Congress to appropriate this money in the first year of prohibition would all too probably have created fresh opposition to the law precisely at the time when the chief political interest of the country lay in the prompt reduction of its post-war taxes.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 1393.

Confronted by a choice between arousing Congress and reassuring the country, the prohibition organizations chose the second of these two alternatives. Aside from making a scant five million dollars available for the purposes of the Prohibition Bureau, Congress had done literally nothing at the end of a year to enforce the law. The prohibition organizations chose nevertheless to hail the results achieved by Congress as little short of astonishing.

So well had Congress done its work, in the opinion of the Anti-Saloon League, that in this first twelve months the country had saved "at a conservative estimate . . . . more than a billion dollars[10]." Nor need the country fear that against this saving would be charged higher taxes to cover the cost of enforcement. Mr. Wayne B. Wheeler, who had been ready to predict in 1920 that the law could be enforced at an annual cost of five million dollars, was now ready to predict in 1921 that it could be enforced without any cost whatever. The law would actually pay dividends. "There will be collected in fines, forfeited bonds and prohibition taxes more than it costs to enforce the law. . . . This appropriation is different from any other appropriation, because it returns to the Government more than is paid out for the service[11]."



Underwood

A. MITCHELL PALMER

In December, 1920, the attorney general's office was being asked to prosecute 3,000 cases a month

Plainly Congress had nothing to fear in so mellow a mood on the part of the friends of prohibition. During this first year it went its way in peace, less bothered by the question of how to enforce the Eighteenth Amendment than it had ever been by the question of whether to enact it.

10. *New York Times*, January 24, 1921.

11. Testimony before Senate Committee on Appropriations, *New York Times*, January 29, 1921.

Not until the second year of prohibition was this serenity interrupted by the appearance of a new problem, suddenly posed before Congress by a totally unexpected decision emanating from the Department of Justice.

This decision was the ruling of Attorney General Palmer, reached at the tag end of the Wilson Administration and announced only after it had taken leave of office, that the Volstead Act placed no limit on the authority of physicians to prescribe beer and wine for medicinal purposes.

As might have been anticipated, the leaders of the prohibition movement lost no time in denouncing this decision as poor law, poor statesmanship and an unfortunate reversal of policy which was certain to encourage the use of liquor as a beverage on the pretext that it was being used as medicine. Under the auspices of the prohibition organizations meetings were held throughout the country in protest against the ruling made by Mr. Palmer. In the Senate Mr. Willis of Ohio and in the House Mr. Campbell of Kansas introduced a bill designed to copper-rivet the law against tampering by executive officials.

This measure not only strictly forbade the prescription of beer as a medicine and limited such prescriptions to spirituous and vinous liquors: in addition, it drew up a rigid code of conduct for the medical profession. No physician was to prescribe any wine containing more than 24 per cent of alcohol by volume. No physician was to prescribe more than one-half pint of alcohol to any one person within a period of ten days or to write more than one hundred such prescriptions in any period of ninety days without special approval from the government.

This was the answer of the friends of prohibition to the challenge of Attorney General Palmer. To many spokesmen of the medical profession, an innocent third party caught in the cogs of this dispute, it seemed to go unreasonably far. The American Therapeutic Society expressed its fear that the Willis-Campbell bill would "hamper a doctor in the legitimate practice or exercise of his functions as a physician[12]." The New York Medical Association protested that there was "nothing inherent in the powers, the tradi-

12. *New York Times*, June 5, 1921.

tions or the knowledge of Congress to justify this assumption of suzerainty over the profession of medicine as practiced in the United States[13]."

Such protests, however, were dismissed by leaders of the prohibition movement as beside the mark. In the opinion of these leaders a larger issue was at stake than the independence of the medical profession. This issue was the sanctity of prohibition. Doctors who opposed this legislation were described by the Anti-Saloon League as puppets of the liquor trade[14]. Congress was advised to ignore their protests. On June 27 the Willis-Campbell bill was brought before the House, debated for a single day and adopted by a vote of 250 to 93[15]. In the Senate some opposition to the bill developed, but not enough to block its progress. It was adopted by the Senate on August 8 by a vote of 39 to 20[16]; sent to President Harding on November 19th, after a delay in conference; and signed by him on November 23rd.

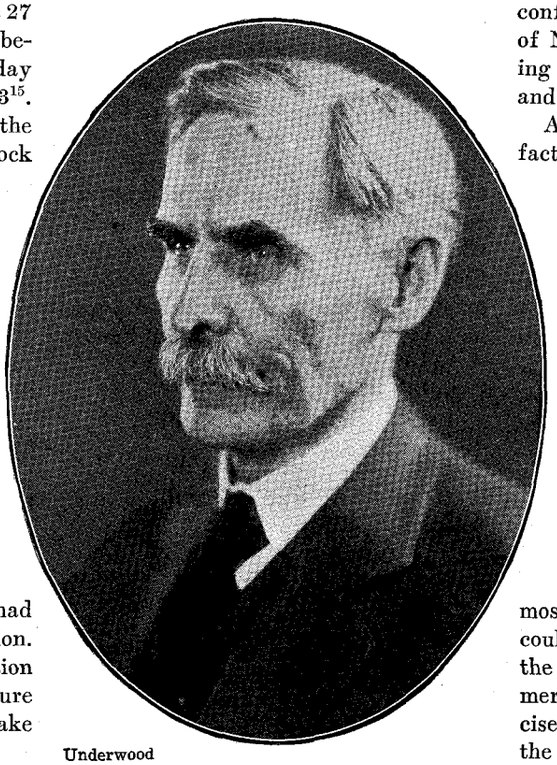
By contrast with the indifference of Congress in the first year of prohibition, here, in the second year, was action. Yet it is clear that this action, designed to close a gap unexpectedly opened in the Volstead Act, actually resulted in creating a situation more anomalous than ever.

For the great difficulty, to date, had not been a lack of drastic legislation. There was plenty of drastic legislation in the Volstead Act. The obvious failure of Congress had been its failure to make that law effective.

At the end of a year it was already clear that if Congress wished to put an end to widespread lawlessness it would be wise to give the country either less law or more machinery of enforcement. At this juncture Congress chose to enact more law, rather than less law, and to create no new machinery to enforce it.

THE Willis-Campbell Law represents a landmark in the work of Congress because it was the first law, and for some years the only law, enacted by Congress to supplement the Volstead Act. Not until March 26, 1924, when a bill to authorize a temporary increase in the Coast Guard received the approval of both Houses[17], did Congress adopt another law in any way concerned with prohibition in the United States.

Meantime, one session succeeded another, and the record revealed no sudden change in the interest of Congress in the problem of enforcement. Now and then a flurry of speech-making would sweep the Senate or the House, with a few wets and drys on either side bitterly assailing one another for bigotry or treason. Now and then some vigorous partisan of prohibition like Mr. Upshaw of Georgia would rise on the floor of one House or the other, to insist that the law must be enforced regardless of the cost, even if Congress was forced to spend "twenty millions or fifty millions or even a hundred millions a year, until this mighty task is completed[18]."



Underwood

ANDREW J. VOLSTEAD

On all such occasions the House was generous with its applause but by no means prepared to yield uncritically to its own enthusiasm. If it frequently cheered to the echo the proposal to enforce the law fearlessly and to the hilt, "regardless of the cost," on no occasion did it accept this principle as a guide to its own action. Appropriations for the Prohibition Bureau remained at a modest figure, so far below the demonstrated needs of the enforcement service that by the end of the second year some of the smaller prohibition organizations, if not the Anti-Saloon League itself, were beginning to be restless.

In November, 1921, the chairman of the Prohibition Party complained that the law had been neglected and deplored "the scandalous, ineffective enforcement in many parts of the country[19]." The American Lutheran Publicity Bureau gave the press a statement declaring that "the authorities in many places are in collusion with the lawbreakers or helpless against the magnitude of the evil; the situation is fast becoming intolerable[20]." The annual conference of the Methodist Churches of New York adopted a resolution asking the President to call out the army and navy to put an end to bootlegging[21].

All told, there was enough dissatisfaction in the air, as prohibition entered its third year, to convince the loyal but inactive dry majority of Congress that the time had come when it must act again. Accordingly, a new bill was brought before the House in April, 1922. It proposed to attack the problem of enforcement not by arming the officers of the law with larger funds or more authority, but by deporting aliens.

This proposal, in the form of a bill to make alien violators of the law liable to deportation for a first offense, was a measure to which most of the prohibition organizations could give their cordial approval, for the reason that it implied no lack of merit in the law itself but fitted in precisely with the theory that opposition to the law was the work of a small company of disloyal malcontents.

In the House itself opinion was divided between those who held this point of view and those who believed that aliens contributed only a small fraction of the number of violations occurring every day; that the right way to enforce the law was to enforce it evenhandedly against all violators; and that the proposal to make alien violators liable to deportation for an act which might involve merely the manufacture of a gallon of home-brewed wine was to create a penalty out of proportion to the character of the offense.

This argument was advanced in the House not only by many opponents of prohibition but by some of its unquestioned friends. Mr. Moore of Virginia warned his dry colleagues that such

13. *New York Times*, May 21, 1921.
14. *New York Tribune*, April 18, 1921.
15. *Congressional Record*, 67th Congress, 1st Session, p. 3135.
16. *Ibid.*, p. 4742.
17. *H. R.* 6815, 68th Congress, 1st Session.
18. *Congressional Record*, 67th Congress, 4th Session, p. 4544.
19. *Associated Press dispatch*, Chicago, November 29, 1921.
20. *New York Times*, January 12, 1922.
21. *New York Times*, April 4, 1922.

legislation as this might react against their cause[22]. Mr. Huddleston of Alabama, describing himself as a life-long prohibitionist, insisted that the proposal to punish alien violators first "by fine and imprisonment in this country and then by banishment to some foreign land from which perhaps the alien fled to save his life . . . marks the high tide of fanaticism and intolerance[23]."

Such protests as these, however, merely stimulated friends of the bill to redouble their efforts in its behalf. Mr. Cramton of Michigan told the House that aliens who were unwilling "to support the supreme law of the land, the codification of our American spirit," deserved small consideration at the hands of Congress: "for God's sake send them back where they come from[24]." Mr. Roach of Missouri replied to those critics of the bill who had described it as too drastic: "I want to answer that," said Mr. Roach, "by saying that in our attempt to support the Constitution of the United States and enforce it, we are not going to write a law that is too drastic for that purpose. That is exactly the trouble now, that the laws by which the Eighteenth Amendment is to be enforced are not sufficiently drastic[25]."

Here, certainly, was a familiar theme: the theme that what the situation needed was not a vigorous effort to enforce existing law, an effort which required thought and money, but a fresh supply of drastic legislation, which cost nothing.

By a vote of 222 to 73 the House adopted the bill for deportation and sent it to the Senate[26].

In this same year the Prohibition Bureau continued to roll its heavy stone uphill, its budget having been increased over its budget for the previous year merely by a nominal $400,000.

THE Senate having shown no interest during 1922 in the plan of the House to deport aliens, and criticism of Congress on the score of its inaction having mounted, meantime, rather than diminished, the House looked elsewhere at the start of the fourth year of prohibition for an opportunity to contribute something to the enforcement of the law. This time it turned its attention in the direction of the diplomatic corps.

22. *Congressional Record*, 67th Congress, 2nd Session, p. 5079.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 5071.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 5075.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 5081
26. *Ibid.*, p. 5083.

The issue arose early in the year when Mr. Cramton of Michigan, who had been active in support of the deportation bill, introduced a resolution calling on the Secretary of the Treasury to reveal what shipments of intoxicating liquors had been received by the embassies and legations in Washington since January, 1920, "giving in connection with each such shipment the name and office of each consignee, the country to which he was accredited, the kind and quantity of liquor, the place from which shipped to the United States, to whom delivered by the Customs Service and the date of such delivery to the consignee or his representative[27]."

Underwood
REPRESENTATIVE CRAMTON OF MICHIGAN

The question at issue, Mr. Cramton insisted, was by no means trivial. Charges had been made that diplomatic liquor was pouring into the hands of bootleggers. In Washington "the problem of enforcement of the Eighteenth Amendment is said to be acutely affected by the presence of these liquors." The question was a serious one. "It is time Congress and the country knew the facts[28]."

Introduced in the House on February 3rd, Mr. Cramton's resolution brought a reply from the Secretary of the Treasury on February 13th. It was a well established principle, this official pointed out, "that diplomatic representatives of foreign governments are entitled to free entry of goods as a matter of international comity and usage." This being the case, the Treasury "could not properly give out any reports or other information as to importations of intoxicating liquor by diplomatic representatives, in view of their diplomatic status and the protection of person and property to which that entitles them[29]."

This statement from the Treasury was by no means satisfactory to Mr. Cramton. The liquor record of the embassies, he insisted, was a matter of importance to the country. This record was available at the Treasury. "It ought to be furnished to the Congress, the body which has the responsibility of dealing with the question." Mr. Cramton therefore insisted that the House adopt his resolution and call on the Treasury to divulge its facts[30].

Opposition to this plan was expressed by Mr. Parker of New Jersey and by Mr. Garrett of Tennessee, who insisted that the only result of it would be to promote "friction and trouble and irritation on the part of foreign countries[31]." The House, however, was plainly in a mood for action. A good deal of time had elapsed since the adoption of the alien deportation bill and nothing had happened in the meantime to convince the more restless friends of prohibition that Congress was sternly resolved to enforce the law.

By a vote of 189 to 113 the House adopted Mr. Cramton's resolution and sent it to the Treasury, where it came to rest. For since the Secretary of the Treasury was required to divulge only such information as was not incompatible with public interest and since he had already expressed his opinion that it would be incompatible with public interest to divulge this particular information, there was nothing more to be done about it. Here the matter ended.

This was the sole contribution made by Congress to the cause of prohibition during its fourth year. No other bill was adopted either in the Senate or the House. No other bill was seriously debated. The Senate spent a few minutes on one occasion discussing a bill introduced by Mr. Sterling, designed to bring the Prohibition Bureau under Civil

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27. H. Res. 503, 67th Congress, 4th Session.
28. *Congressional Record*, 67th Congress, 4th Session, p. 3789.
29. *Ibid.*, pp. 3790-1.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 3791.
31. *Ibid.*, pp. 3792-3.

▶▶ Our Changing Football Rules ◀◀

By GEORGE TREVOR

TINKERING with the football rules has been a favorite parlor pastime since 28 B.C. In that year, Caesar Augustus decreed that the football code must be revised.

Did the Roman emperor, anticipating Theodore Roosevelt's action, insist that the game be modified in the interest of safety? Quite the reverse. Augustus regarded football as too tame and gentle a sport wherein to train centurions for the grim business of war. He wanted it tougher!

That was 1958 years ago, but the inter-collegiate football rules committee is still trying to finish what Augustus started. Generations of "meddlesome matties" have tampered with Americanized football, making drastic changes or adding amendments until Walter Camp would not recognize his own brain child.

When Camp died the tinkerers redoubled their activities. Not content with taking the foot out of football by the simple expedient of exiling the goal posts to Siberia, the meddlers decided to eliminate the element of luck. This was a large order, but the revolutionary "dead ball" rule of 1928, protecting the fumbler from the full consequence of his act, has certainly lessened the likelihood of fluky runs.

Since 1876 hardly a year has passed without a minor or major surgical operation on the hapless football rules.

This progressive metamorphosis reached a climax last fall in the no-run-from-fumble amendment, a radical ruling, which, according to a sardonic son of Eli, "automatically nullified Princeton's offense." He referred, in case you don't know your Big Three Bible, to the Princeton penchant for scooping up a loose ball and converting it into a touchdown.

As if frightened by their own daring, the football solons tacitly agreed to take a sabbatical leave in 1930. Incredible as it seems, they have left the football code virtually unchanged. But shift plays—Knute Rockne's bread and butter—still cause the Rules Committee uneasiness. For 1930 the pause after a shift has been more definitely specified. All eleven players are now required to remain stationary for "at least one second" after emerging from a shift or huddle. It is suggested that the referee carry a split second watch to time this interlude accurately. If he doesn't own a watch, he may gauge the second's delay by counting up to six "rapidly." Just how fast is "rapidly"? By slurring his numerals an accommodating referee could lend Notre Dame aid and comfort. Conversely, a slow count might benefit the defense as much as it helped Gene Tunney at Chicago. Teams that live by the shift should shun a stuttering referee or else chip in to buy him a watch.

It should be diverting to see a referee cock one eye on his watch while he focuses the other on the field of play. His divided attention may prove a boon to pugnacious youngsters who enjoy taking a surreptitious sock at an opponent's chin.

Dangerous scrambles for a ball that rolls out of bounds have been minimized by arbitrarily awarding it to the team whose player last touched it on the field of play. Prior to this year many a youngster banged his head against bench, yard stick, or retaining wall in a wild stampede for possession out of bounds.

ANOTHER slight change in the 1930 code provides that the ball must be inflated to a pressure between twelve and a half and thirteen and a half pounds. This prevents chicanery. A coach who is weak in kickers but well supplied with passers can no longer get the edge by introducing a soft, flabby pigskin which is easy to grip and catch but hard to punt.

Though the code remains substantially the same, American football is still feeling the backwash of the radical dead ball rule. The pigskin may change possession after a fumble, but, if recovered by an opponent, it cannot be advanced. Bear in mind that any member of the side which fumbles is entitled to pick up the ball and run as far as he can. Only the defense is hobbled. There is one exception, a discrepancy which strikes me as fundamentally unjust. An "air-line fumble" is not granted immunity from a run-back.

I see no reason why the rules should punish an air-line fumble while giving quasi protection to one which strikes the ground. All fumbles should be dealt with on a common basis. Certainly, it is easy to distinguish between an intercepted forward pass and a fumble that sails on the fly into an adversary's hands.

When the "still pond, no fair moving" principle was woven into the football code, ultra-conservatives shouted "sacrilege." "The thrill has been taken out of football," dissenters argued, "the underdog has been denied the inalienable right to capitalize a powerful rival's blunders. Sam Whites are doomed to extinction."

Of course you remember Sam White, the gawky Princeton end who beat Harvard and Yale on successive Saturdays by grasping opportunity. His Harvard run would still be legal, since it originated in a blocked kick, but his mud spattering romp at New Haven would not be allowed today. A Yale back missed his signal that rainy afternoon and White, snatching up the orphaned ball, escorted it across the goal line sixty yards distant.

Princeton graduates gave Sam White a banquet to celebrate his single handed winning of the Big Three Title. Introducing the guest of honor, Toastmaster Lou Reichner quoted from I Samuel, III, 11: "And the Lord said to Samuel, behold I will do a thing in Israel at which both the ears of every one that heareth it will tingle. In that day I will perform against Eli all things which I have spoken concerning his house; when I begin I will also make an end."

At this point an irreverent diner shouted, "I'll say he did!"

ALARMISTS fail to realize that the very rule which throttled fluky runs from fumbles encourages the use of the prettiest and most dramatic play in football. I refer to the lateral pass, a maneuver which never gained popularity until the fumble was given partial protection. Laterals were double-edged weapons before the dead ball rule was passed. A Rugby toss which miscued usually had a boomerang reaction. Defensive linemen, coming through in the path of a fumbled lateral, could pick up the ball and cakewalk to a touchdown.

If the run from fumble ban has done away with the tang of uncertainty which added spice to football the spectator may find ample compensation in watching two or three halfbacks shuttle the ball from one to another on the dead run. In losing our Sam Whites and "Ducky" Ponds we have gained the deft artistry of such fluent Rugby tandems as Devens to Mays and Masters to Gentle.