

THE "LIBERAL" POLICE FORCE.

The Elsie St. Omer, Rose Miller and Goldie Shears case took a decidedly sensational turn before Justice Kesler June 27th after the NEWS went to press. It was full of startling statements which are of so serious a nature as to require the most complete investigation possible. Following is the testimony:

JOE O'BRIEN, the alleged city detective, was the first witness. He testified that he had arrested the defendant. He said further: "I know that her place of residence is reputed to be a house of prostitution; I have seen men enter and come from the house during the day and at night. I visited the place in person on the night that Miss Elsie moved there; I know that beer was sold there, for I bought it, paid for it and drank it. (Laughter.) Harry Duke (city treasurer) told me that the house was disorderly, and he believed resorted to for purposes of lewdness. A young man named McErlain told me that 'Miss Elsie was running a house on the quiet.' He is a roomer there and ought to know."

Attorney Straup here held a consultation with his client and then asked that a subpoena be issued for McErlain. The request was granted and

MARION FIELDS,

a gaudily attired self-confessed sporting character, took the stand and in response to questions nervously said: "I do not know that the general reputation of the house is bad. I know that Miss Elsie kept furnished rooms and that a placard to that effect was tacked on to the front of the house."

Attorney Coad—Is not that a usual ruse for women of the defendant's stripe?

Witness—I cannot say, sir.
 "How long did you remain there?"
 "Only one week."
 "What did you do?"
 "I followed dressmaking."
 "At the expiration of that week where did you go?"
 "I entered a house."
 "Did you pay for your board and lodging at Miss Elsie's?"
 "A portion of it. Miss Elsie holds my trunk and some of my wearing apparel for the remainder."

SERGEANT GEORGE A. SHEETS

said: I have known the defendant for about one year. She is a keeper of a house of prostitution. I have kept close watch of her place for the most of sixty days last past.

Attorney Coad—State why the defendant was not arrested when the last regular raid was made?

Witness—Because the officer who had charge of that branch of the business refused to swear to the complaint.
 "Who was that officer?"
 "Huge L. Glenn."
 "Why did he refuse?"
 "Because he said there was no evidence that she was breaking the law."
 "Have you seen hacks drive up to the defendant's house?"
 "I have, both day and night."

Cross-examined by Mr. Straup—
 "How do you know that the defendant's house is of the character set forth in the complaint?"

"Because I have watched it for

sixty days until one and two o'clock in the morning."

"And it has taken you all that time to catch these women?"

"Well, no—that is not exactly"—
 "Stand aside, call the next witness"

OFFICER THOMAS MATTHEWS then took the stand and testified that he had heard Mr. Duke complain about the character of the defendant's house. He lived in that vicinity and could corroborate Mr. Duke's statement. He, too, had watched the place and saw men going in and out. From his own knowledge he could not say what they went there for but believed that it was for immoral purposes.

POLICEMAN MIKE SULLIVAN, a good natured, six foot, 215 pound officer, who one time posed before the public for honors as a pugilist but who gave up the "manly art" to accept a position on the police force took the stand and said: "I have visited Miss Elsie's establishment on Eighth South street. I believe it is a house of ill-fame."

Attorney Coad—What did you go there for?

"A trunk."
 "Whose trunk?"
 "Miss Marion Fields."
 Attorney Straup—Who is Miss Marion Fields?
 "She is the lady who testified a few minutes ago."

"At whose instance did you go?"
 "I went at the request of Miss Fields."

"And why did she select you for that purpose?"

"She said that Miss Elsie was holding her trunk and some things for her board and she wanted me to see about it and so I went there."

SANITARY INSPECTOR SHOWELL

testified that the reputation of the house was bad. He knew no more than that.

Attorney Straup—Your business, Mr. Showell, is to look after the health of the city is it not?

"Yes Sir; but not in such cases as this" replied the witness with emphasis as he left the stand. The audience roared with laughter at the witness' response and he left the court room and sought the fresh air as the bailiff threatened to clear the auditorium unless silence was maintained.

OFFICER WILSON

said he assisted in placing the defendant Rose Miller and Goldie Shears under arrest. It was about 11 o'clock on the night of the 17th inst. Saw several men jump out at the window and over the fence.

Attorney Straup why didn't you arrest them?

Witness—Had no warrants for them.
 Attorney Straup—Don't you know Mr. Wilson that there are wire screens over all the windows and that jumping through them would be impossible?

Witness—There may be now, but there was not at that time.

Attorney Straup—Again I say why did not you arrest these men of whom you speak?

Witness—That would have been impossible, because they moved with a rapidity that could not easily be equalled.

SERGEANT SHEETS

was recalled and further testified—I

saw four men and one woman endeavor to escape. The former had no intention of going through the gate but jumped clear over the fence, and scattered in all directions. I did not see the men come out of the building, but saw them on the porch and as they ran through the yard and leaped the fence.

"Why didn't you, as an officer in search of violators of the law, make an attempt to catch the men as well as the women? If the place is a house of prostitution the men were certainly equally guilty, were they not?"
 "It required all our time to take care of the female."

"So," said Mr. Straup, "it required the strength and diplomacy of three big policemen to arrest three little women, did it?"

At this there was another burst of merriment, and again the bailiff was called upon to restore order. The last question rather confused the witness, and Attorney Straup did not press him further but inquired: "Is it not a matter of fact that these men you saw were merely roomers?"

"Well, they acted rather strangely for regular inmates of the house."

Witness was again asked if he did not think it was his duty to have placed these men under arrest. He replied in the affirmative, but said that it would have taken at least eight policemen to have done the work. He finally reduced the number to six and Straup once more muttered audibly: "Three policemen—three women," and the witness was dismissed. This ended the testimony for the prosecution and

THE DEFENSE

opened by calling M. W. Palmer. He testified I live at No. 125 East Fourth South, next door to where the defendant resides. I run a livery stable; know Miss St. Omer; she occasionally hires a livery rig from me; her house has a very good reputation so far as morals and chastity are concerned; have heard no one say aught against it.

MRS. M. W. PALMER

wife of the preceding witness was called and gave similar evidence. She had frequently been in the house during the time covered in the complaint, but had never seen anything that would excite her suspicion as to the place being a bad one. It certainly was very quiet all hours of the day and night.

Attorney Coad asked if it was not possible to conduct a house of prostitution in a quiet manner.

To this the witness indignantly replied that she did not know as she had made no such experiment.

GEORGE HENRY

testified that he lived at 375 south, State street, within two hundred feet of Miss St. Omer's residence. He was a grocery and provision dealer and had often delivered goods there. He understood that the defendant was keeping roomers. The defendant had owed him \$200 for goods and on inquiring as to her reliability he was informed that she once maintained a sporting house, but that she had reformed and was going to get married; said sporting house was not the one in question. Mr. Brixen had told him that Miss St. Omer was "good pay," so good in fact that he proposed to liquidate his bill for him if necessary. He had taken