

# THE PROHIBITION QUESTION AGAIN.

A CONTROVERSY is going on in Kansas on "The Problem of Prohibition." It is likely to become a great political issue, not only in that State but in the whole nation. The Prohibition question in this Territory, affords a pretty good illustration of the two sides to the question in a small way. In Kansas the clergy are taking part in the debate and they divide on the question as to most subjects social, political and religious. Some are in favor of license, others are for prohibition. Logically and morally the prohibitionists seem to have by far the strongest position. But, practically the supporters of high license can pose a case of some striking facts and statistics.

The chief argument, however, advanced in favor of controlling the liquor traffic by license, is the undeniable fact that where prohibition is the law, drinking is nevertheless a practice and an illicit business is carried on, while the State gains no revenue from the evil it spends much money to suppress. Thus, at first sight, appears very plausible. But when examined more closely it does not exhibit much strength. If it is claimed that the liquor traffic is carried on extensively in spite of prohibitionary law, that proves either that the law cannot be generally enforced, or that the officers are not diligent in their duty. Where officers are made, and where courts inflict the law's penalties on conviction, prohibition does prohibit, and the cases of secret infraction of the law are simply on a par with criminal practices of other kinds which exist in all countries in defiance of the law. In such places, then, the failure, if any, is due to the inefficiency or negligence of those who should enforce the law.

The situation in Kansas shows this pretty clearly. The controversy demonstrates that where prohibition is the law, there are drug stores where liquor is kept for sale on the sly. But the very fact that it is kept on the sly, proves that a restraint is placed on the traffic, and the arrest and punishment of those who have thus broken the law shows that the law can be enforced, and that therefore prohibition can be made to prohibit. Intelligent witnesses testify that there is not one tenth, and some say not one twentieth, of the liquor traffic in Kansas that there was before prohibition. This is a strong endorsement in favor of the efficiency of the law.

But there is a stronger endorsement in the vote of the people. After five years trial a very large majority are in favor of prohibition. This was evidenced in the vote for Governor at the last election. The issue turned on this question. And it showed that there was a majority of voters who were in favor of the prohibitionary law and its enforcement by further legislation.

It was claimed by one Reverend gentleman in favor of open saloons that prohibition created hypocrisy. To this another clergyman retorted, "Of all the hypocrisy with which this country is cursed to-day, there is no form so damnable as that which grasps \$10 of license and authorizes the sale of \$10 worth of liquor to curse and destroy the people." It was charged that "in Atchison, saloons keep open defiance of the law." This was denied in these words: "For months there has been no open saloons in Atchison. As a result one police court has been almost out of business. A number of lines of legitimate retail business have found their trade greatly increased. A large number of the houses formerly used for saloon purposes are now devoted to better use. The citizens of Atchison not identified with liquor selling or drinking propose to try to build up the city without asking the aid of a traffic which destroys the property, life and happiness of its citizens."

This is worthy the attention of the people of Provo and of all other cities in Utah where prohibition is made possible by charter. One of the most orderly "Gentle" towns on this continent is Colorado Springs, where no intoxicants can be lawfully sold. The place was built on this principle. It is a standing protest against the liquor license, and an abiding witness in favor of prohibition. But the people of cities where the liquor traffic is condemned must understand that it takes something more than sentiment to execute the law. Loud denunciations of the liquor traffic and verbal demands for its suppression are all very well, but the city officials must be sustained financially and otherwise in fighting the opponents of the law and suppressing the evil. Men must be put into office who will endeavor to carry out the people's will, and their hands must be strengthened in the performance of that duty. While people declaim against liquor selling in public and engage in liquor buying and drinking in secret, and while those who know of the law's infraction will not lead their aid, as witnesses, to secure its enforcement, illicit liquor dealing will flourish and the foes of prohibition will have arguments to fight against it.

The financial aspect of the question is very alluring. The revenue from licenses forms a very large portion of the income of many cities. It comes, too, from the source which causes a large expenditure. And the argument that this should of right furnish that revenue is quite plausible. But the rowdism, revelry, rioting, assaults, murders and other crimes which are certainly the result of unrestrained dram-drinking, being the cause of so much expense to every city, ought to show the sensible that the great root of these evils should be reached, if possible, and that it is cheaper in the long run to fight the liquor traffic, even at the loss of the revenue gained in such a questionable manner, than to bear its consequences and suffer the loss occasioned by the rowdism, and the cost of prosecutions for multiplied offences.

When the surreptitious liquor traffic has been allowed to gain a strong foothold, of course the expense of its suppression will necessarily be large. But it is better to spend money for that purpose and at the same time prevent crime, than to let the evil increase to the certain expenditure of more money and the injury of society resultant from the increase of crime.

We maintain the ground which we have taken all along in regard to this matter, and that is, where prohibition is impossible, high license is the best substitute. Where prohibition is possible it should be enforced. When once established with any good show of success it is folly to let down the bars, for it will be found much easier and cheaper to keep them

in place than to pick them up and put them back after they have been cast down, trampled in the mire and given entrance to unnumbered evils.

## BOREMAN AT BEAVER.

On Monday the 6th inst., the December term of the Second District Court opened at Beaver. Judge Boreman delivered himself of one of his characteristic Methodist attacks upon the "Mormon" Church, and no doubt relieved his spiritual stomach of a great deal of bile. We hope it has done him "a power of good." We do not think it will do us any harm. Of the bench the feather-weight official couldn't do anybody harm. His utterances have no significance whatever, except from the fact that they are judicial. Intrinsically they are too valueless to be designated even by a cypher.

The remarks to which we alluded were addressed officially to the Grand Jury, and were intended to influence that body, in the direction of the speaker's animus. As reported to the press, he was stating that "the jurors should not be influenced by favor or affection or friendship on the one side, nor from hatred or malice on the other. They should not indict from a malicious or vindictive standpoint, neither should they be influenced by fear or from any personal consideration." So far, so good. That is perfectly right and proper. A grand jury, like a petit jury, should be impartial. It will be a bright day for Utah when impartial jurors shall be assured, and picking and packing shall be abhorred things of the past.

But, as reported, the Judge proceeded to assail the "system" here, which he said is "hostile to every thing that is American" and is "fighting the government," and the people, who, he said, are "teaching their children perdition." He ridiculed the claim of "persecution" and placed the family relations of the "Mormons" on the same plane as stealing and murder. He told the grand jury that they would note, in the term of court, that the people here "teach their wives and children to perjure themselves," and would meet in their duty, "hostility to the laws." In this style he went on to impress the jury with his own bitter and sorented animosity.

If it was not calculated to create and foster the very prejudice which he pretended in the first place to condemn, we do not understand the force and bearing of the English language. A prejudiced Judge is as bad or worse than a prejudiced grand jury. What justice can be expected from a court and a jury which, at the beginning of the term, start out with a pronounced animus against the people, and their religion, who are specially marked out for the law's vengeance? The sincerity of the Judge's harangue appears like that of the fellow who shouted to a mob that he had seized an alleged culprit, "That's the villain, there's the town pump, let don't pump on him!"

The "system" which seems so much to disturb Jacob S. Boreman's digestion, is impregnable against any such perfunctory assaults as he is able to make upon it. His calibre, when deposed from the bench, was patent to all who knew of his existence, and when, in the opinion of the Grand Jury, the judicial day shall be ended, that will be the last the world will hear of his little penny whistle. But now, it is a shame and disgrace to the country that the judicial bench should be turned into a stump for a religious bigot, and his occupant may be officially assailed, and that an honest and sincere people who are attached to that religion may be abused and maligned by wholesale. And it is in conformity with the principles of fairness and equity, which are supposed to underlie the jurisprudence of this great country, that a Federal Judge should, in advance, so scandalize and libel the class from which expected defendants belong, as to stir up the passions and prejudices of the Grand Jury before whom their cases are to come, that unfavorable action may be predicted almost to a certainty.

But such scenes as that at Beaver on Monday are not new nor uncommon in Utah, and there is no wonder that an imported judiciary commands no greater respect than that which is entertained for it in this inter-mountain region.

## THE WILSON-MOEN CASE.

THIS CASE CELEBRE has been more talked about in the past than any other of late, the celebrated Campbell divorce proceedings and the boudoir trials in New York being inferior to it in point of general interest and those details which, while not repulsive, are so peculiar and even romantic. It collapses in apparent improbability some of the most extravagant sensational dramas, and yet the whole story is not yet known to the general reader. The details are, briefly told: A wealthy citizen of Rhode Island, named Moeen, has been subjected to blackmail at the hands of one Wilson, commonly known as "Doc" Wilson, for several years, the amounts thus extorted aggregating \$300,000. It has not yet certainly come to light what the basis of the strange power exercised by Wilson over his victim was, but the payments were becoming so notorious that questions were asked regarding the proceeding, the only reply received being that he, Moeen, was conscious of nothing detrimental to his character, but could not afford to be drawn into public notoriety by means of a rupture and legal fight with a blackmailer. Some men are so constituted that they will submit to a great deal of injustice and oppression to avoid conflict of whatever nature; but the idea of permitting a villain to systematically and periodically rob a person with no grounds whatever to stand upon except audacity, was a little too much for those who talk first and then investigate, to digest, but they might, despite their portliness, have gone to the grave entirely unsatisfied had not Wilson in an unlucky moment (for him) brought suit upon a note given him by Moeen. Then, after the strange proceedings which occurred in court, the blackmailer himself gave a statement of the whole affair. He said, in brief, that he is the son of Moeen, born after marriage. His mother died years ago, and Moeen married a second wife, by whom he has six children. The children inherit his vast wealth. The child of the first wife was given in infancy by the father to one Jonas Wilson, who received payment for rearing it and keeping the secret. On his death-bed Jonas revealed to the youth the truth concerning his parentage. Thereupon young Wilson went to his father, recited the story of his toil and poverty, his exile from a home where he had the right to dwell, his claim as an heir to the wealth in which the father rolled, and he demanded acknowledgment and reparation. After hot contention and many repulses and threats by the younger man to force the elder to confess him his son, Moeen yielded so far as to buy his silence, and for years Wilson bled him freely. 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