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PORTLAND'S RUM SHOPS.

All kinds included, there are about 400 of them.

Hotels, Eating Houses, Drug Stores, Kitchen Bar-rooms, All Known as "Rum Shops" Does Prohibition Prohibit There?—Liquor Sold Openly—Out of 2110 Arrests in a Year 1295 Were on Account of Drunkenness.

(From the "Boston Herald.")

I do not see how I can avoid using the person singular—and pretty frequently, too—in relating the history of an exploring expedition which I undertook several weeks ago on behalf of *The Herald*. The perils I evaded, the dangers that I passed (by), the moving incidents by field and flood—especially the flood—which I avoided, even the mercies I escaped cannot be adequately described here on the impersonal standpoint of an "editor," and this must be my excuse for intruding the ego so freely in my endeavours to depict with fidelity many curious scenes and events—all of which I saw and out of which I was—in the state of being during the past month.

Justing aside, much of my relation will be a record of personal experiences. When compelled to go to others for information, I have endeavored in every instance to seek persons whose statements could be relied upon, and will make none that I do not firmly believe to be truthful.

It is manifestly impracticable for me to name names and exact localities. I do not propose to play the role of an informer. What I discovered might have been known by any citizen of the state, had he been so inclined.

So much for a preface. Now for the reasons for the expedition.

Bishop Neely of Portland was the leading cause. Early in November he wrote a letter to the Rev. William Bagden, a Congregational minister engaged in evangelistic work in Boston, who had repeatedly asked him whether his observation of the

working of the prohibitory law in Maine justified his (Mr. Bagden's) conviction of its inefficiency. This letter, as the Bishop subsequently explained, was written with no thought that it might be published, but it appeared in *The Boston Herald* of Nov. 8, under the heading, "Prohibition a Failure," and was widely quoted in the Maine newspapers. Here is that portion of the document which directly answered Mr. Bagden's question:

"It is true, I presume, that spirituous liquors are much less in general use than they were 50 years ago in Maine. But they can still be had, of a very impure and pernicious character, by all who want them, not only in our cities, but, I believe, in a vast majority of our smaller towns and villages. And I do not think that the vice of drunkenness has been in the least lessened in its prevalence here by any legislative enactment or provision for the enforcement of the law within the past 30 years."

The appearance of this letter in the press was closely followed by the publication of a reply by Ned Dow, the venerable apostle of Prohibition, who sharply criticized the statements of the bishop and declared that he had been grossly misinformed and misled by persons in whom he trusted.

To this, Bishop Neely responded in an open letter, averring that he knew whereof he spoke. "Not considering," he wrote, "that I am no newsmonger here, and have been a resident of Maine for 28 years, and that my official duties require me to traverse a great portion of the state every year, I would hardly know where to look for those who have fuller opportunities than myself to learn the facts of the case, as they have been presented during that period, unless, indeed,

among the commercial travellers, and some of them I have consulted, with the result of having my opinion, based on personal observation, confirmed." The advocates of Prohibition and its opponents thereupon took up the dispute and have since continued it in the newspapers, in the pulpit and on the platform not always, it must be said, temperately, for in many cases denunciation has usurped the place of argument.

Then the *Boston Herald* said to me: "Go into Maine and learn by personal observation how the prohibitory law is enforced or violated. We don't want theories, opinions or rumors—give us facts, and let our readers draw their own conclusions."

And so I went into Maine, and this is the record of what I saw and heard.

I might as well say at the outset, that in no place save one where I stopped long enough to purchase intoxicating liquor.

Portland, the largest city and the commercial capital of the state, was naturally visited first.

I found by the report of the city marshal for the year ended on the 31st of last March, that there must be some immoderate use of intoxicating liquors there, for out of the total of 2110 arrests made by the police, an even 600 were for drunkenness, and 794 were for drunkenness and disorder, while one person was apprehended as a "common drunkard." Thus only 816 persons were taken into custody for offences other than intoxication, while in 2150 cases, "rum did it." That the fiscal year 1893-4 was not exceptional in this respect is proved by the following figures from the city marshal's report, showing the number of arrests for drunkenness during each of the last 10 years: 1884, 1510; 1885, 1088; 1886, 1142; 1887, 1561; 1888, 1308; 1889, 1290; 1890, 1211; 1891, 917; 1892, 874; 1893, 1464.

I am informed on good authority that in Portland, as in many other cities, the police rarely arrest a man who, though evidently under the influence of liquor, is quiet and orderly, minding his own business, and not making a spectacle of himself. A resident friend told me that a policeman of his acquaintance, whose word he had no reason to doubt, kept an account, during a recent month, of the men he noticed who, as he expressed it, "walked cross-legged, but were not drunk enough to run in." The officer put a handful of buckshot into one pocket, and every time he saw on his beat a man in this condition, he transferred one shot to another pocket. When he went off duty he counted the transferred shot and jotted down the number in a memorandum book.

At the end of the month he added up his daily figures and found that the total exceeded 1500.

How much of the liquor sold only for "medical, mechanical or manufacturing purposes" was responsible for this amount

of intoxication, it is, of course, impossible to determine. But the city agent for the sale of ardent spirits did a rushing business last year. Here are the city auditor's figures showing the expense of the agency during the twelve-month ended on March 31:

Liquor bills.....	\$38,962.30
Agents' salary.....	1,100.00
Salaries of assistants, etc.....	1,589.94
Fuels and small wares.....	221.08
Rent.....	1,500.00
Telephone.....	30.00
Printing, stationery, etc.....	36.00
Insurance.....	70.00
Heating.....	50.00
Wrapping paper, cartons, etc.....	107.85
Repairs.....	47.75
U. S. license.....	25.00
Account of evening school.....	180.50

Total.....\$ 610.43

The city received for the sale of liquors the sum of \$48,791.65—\$9,829.35 more than was paid out for them, and taking all expenses into account, cleared a profit on the year of \$4,781.22.

But the city agent by no means has the monopoly which the law declares shall be his. The sheriff of Cumberland county has stated in a published interview that there are 400 places in the city where liquors are sold, and my investigation has convinced me that that official did not overestimate the number.

All the large hotels, with one exception, have bars. That there is one exception is due, it is said, to the wife of the proprietor, who has persuaded her husband not to sell spirits in his house.

I do not try to procure liquor there, but a friend who stopped there while I was in Portland, a gentleman in whose truthfulness I have implicit confidence, told me he had sent out an employee of the hotel for a bottle of whiskey, and was informed when it arrived that it was purchased in a neighboring drug store.

The hotel bars are not so publicly located as those of Boston, but I found no difficulty in reaching them by inquiring their whereabouts of the porters or bellboys. None of the four I entered was locked, and the doors of two stood open. The stocks of liquors in the bars were apparently small, and in no case was there any elaborate array of fancy glassware.

It seems that when a seizure is made, the utensils used in dispensing the liquors go with the stock, and hence it does not pay to leave much of either exposed to the possible grasp of a city marshal or sheriff's deputy. But the barkeepers had bottles of bitters, "gum," cordials and other kinds of the compounding of cocktails and liquor mixed drinks, and displayed a degree of skill in their use which betokened long experience. One of those artists informed me that the bulk of their trade came from the guests at the hotels. "Of course," he said, "we have a number of regular customers who live here in Portland, and others drop in occasionally, but there are so many places