

THE "SALOON" IN POLITICS.

A Connection that is Unavoidable and Unavoidable by Reason of the Unreason of the Trade's Opponents.

THE following from a recent number of the New York Sun is worthy of careful perusal by all interested in the question of removing the "saloon" from politics. Such a consummation is desirable to be wished, and by none so fervently more than by the barroom keeper himself. The article succeeds in getting at the milk in the coconut in regard to the reason why the "saloon" is in politics. It is there as a matter of self defence.

The tribute of honor paid to Miss Frances Willard on her return from England is well deserved. She is not "the greatest woman in the world," and "the first woman in America," as she was addressed at the meeting in which she was honored here on Thursday evening, for there is no such woman; but she has labored earnestly, sincerely, and steadfastly, and with all the wisdom she possesses, in behalf of a good cause, in which all good women are interested, and in which, as wives and mothers, they have a deep and peculiar concern.

Intemperance in the use of artificial stimulants is a weakness, a disease, a vice, which, as all experience has proved, cannot be prevented or cured by the legislative means advocated by Miss Willard and the many women, and men also who are of her way of thinking. Even excise laws for the restriction and regulation of the sale of intoxicating beverages are likely to produce evils even more dangerous to society than those they are designed to remedy. Such enactments, as the testimony before the committee has shown, and as is also clear here in New York has long discovered, are a fruitful source of police corruption. If they are sustained by public sentiment, as doubtless they are sustained in many rural communities, they may be useful and desirable; but when their persistent violation is both tolerated and connived at by a great part of the usually law-abiding citizens, as is the case here, they induce a cynical contempt for law in both the applicant to administer it and those appointed whom its prohibitions are directed.

The "saloon in politics" is a favorite subject for the denunciations of temperance and other social reformers, but the peculiar legal discrimination against the liquor business makes the dram-seller a class by themselves, naturally bound together for common defence. The eight or ten thousand or more saloon liquor saloon-keepers in the interest of their business distinguished by the law and its penalties. A saloon keeper has unusual opportunities for making himself prominent in the politics of his neighborhood, and for his self-protection he finds his advantage in improving them. It always happens that when a class is created by discrimination in taxation, it revenges itself by demanding and seizing special privileges as a compensation.

As a result, the saloon-keepers, combined for self interest and self-protection, exert an amount of force in politics far greater than they could otherwise obtain by reason of their numbers and their individual ability. They have the advantage of organization and consolidation between of their very business, and they can follow it up with the other advantage possessed by them of dealing directly with the masses of people, obtaining the great majority of the votes for their district, and it is also easy for them to get the people on their side. They can buy police

support, and it goes to them by natural sympathy. They have no respect for the excise laws. The most honorable men among them—and there are many saloon-keepers of irreproachable integrity in other respects—have no scruples about evading these laws. They have no more scruples on the subject than have their customers, the name of whom are their usual abiding men otherwise. The most respectable of citizens visit saloons open after hours on Sunday, in defiance of the law, deeming it no disgrace to assist in keeping up the transparent fiction that the places are closed, by entering through side doors. This contemptuous treatment of law by the dealers and their patrons breeds in the police a like indifference, for which, however it has been commonly believed, they are accustomed to exact payment in money. Of course a large part of the drinking places are not kept open substantially all night and throughout Sunday without paying for the unlawful privilege in some way. Any man who goes into one of them at the prohibited times understands that, and he makes himself a partner to the crime.

This state of things is not peculiar to the recent reform covered by the investigation of the Lexow Committee. The violation of law was as general and as flagrant under Mayor Ely, Mayor Cooper and Mayor Hewitt, as it has been under Mayor Gilroy; and it was tolerated for the same reasons. It was bad then and it is bad now, not so much because of the increased opportunities for drinking as of the disrespect for law it creates in the people, and particularly because it demoralizes this produces among the police.

The solution of the problem of curing the evils of the liquor business has not been reached here or anywhere else. It is soluble by any method devised by legislation.

Like *Boisfort's Wine and Spirit Circular*, from which we quote, we would suggest that the best method is to stop legislating against the "saloon," and to make it no longer a question of self-protection from the attacks of fanatics and bigots, members of the trade will cheerfully retire from politics and devote themselves to the requirements of their own business.

HE SAMPLD THE WHISKEY.

"Do you sell liquors for family use?"

asked the man of the groceryman.

"Yes sir," replied the dealer.

"Domestic wines?"

"Yes."

"Bottled?"

"Yes."

"I prefer draught goods. You don't keep whiskey on draught, do you?"

"Yes, sir, a dozen gallons."

"I should like to sample some of it. I find it very hard to get good whiskey, and I use a good deal in the run of a year. Sick wife, you know, and doctor says she must have good whiskey or none. Do you object to letting me try it?"

"Certainly not. We're always glad to prove our goods. Fifty cents a pint."

"That's smooth. How about your Bourbon?"

"There's a three year old article for the same price."

"Fifty cents a pint?"

"Yes."

"That's pretty good, but a trifle hot. Haven't you got something that's about ten years?"

"Yes. Here's an elegant eye ten years old. It's like oil."

"Oh, that's more like it. How much?"

"Eight dollars a gallon."

"That's good whiskey. I've found yet, I'll have to bring around a demijohn and get a gallon of that. I'd as soon give my wife poison as poor whiskey. You keep

the best whiskey I've struck yet, and my patronage in yours. I'll send my boy right around with the demijohn."

The man walked out of the store and up the street. On the corner he found a friend.

"Did you work it, Jim?" asked the friend.

"He was the easiest work I ever tackled," replied the man. "I got half a dozen good slugs of the best whiskey with had, and he's expecting me around with a demijohn to get a gallon of his eight-dollar eye for his sick wife."

The men looked at each other and grinned.

"It's a good scheme, Jim," said the friend, "and I reckon there's enough of them kind of joints in New York to keep us jugged up for the next six months if we don't do a stroke of work."

They walked up the street, and a half hour later were tasting the whiskey of two dealers, who listened intently to the same story of a sick wife and a gallon demijohn.

A PLEA FOR SCOTCH WHISKEY.

Dr. Macgregor's Remarks in the British House of Commons.

As the debate on the financial bill in the British House of Commons on June 27th, Dr. Macgregor moved to omit the words "Great Britain" for the purpose of inserting the word "England." His object he said, was to exempt Scotland from the increase of the spirit duty, because he considered that Scotland was already much too heavily taxed as compared with England, and because he considered that the proposed tax on the beverage of the Scotch people was out of all proportion to the tax on the beverage of the English people. It had been stated that in Scotland each person was taxed annually for Imperial purposes at the rate of £2 2s 8d, while in England the rate was £2 2s 3d per head, and in Ireland £1 11s 3d. Scotland consumed 27 million gallons of beer and spirit duties; while England only paid 15 1/2. The English cask of beer, which contained 3½ gallons of proof spirit—and it was the proof spirit that was taxed—paid 6s 9d of duty, while 3½ gallons of proof spirit in the form of Scotch whiskey paid 28s 6d. Why should that be? (Hear, hear.) He had been accused of going against his party in this matter, but his answer was that his vote was intended to go against injustice to Scotland without regard to Government or party. (Hear, hear.) It was not because this was a tax upon whiskey *per se* that he objected to it, but because it was a tax on a Scottish industry, and would lead to the ruin of the predominant partner. He objected to the proposal from three points of view—as a Scottish nationalist, as a consumer (loud laughter), and as a medical, and, therefore, for temperance reasons. As a Scottish nationalist he protested against this duty because it was a disadvantage to Scotland. For Scotland it was found that spirits were better than beer. (A laugh.) In many parts of the country the law was applied was peculiarly adapted to the distillation of whiskey, and in many parts also the soil was well suited to the cultivation of barley. For these and other reasons, the manufacture of whiskey had become an industry in Scotland and to tax that industry unfairly threatened to crush it. The annals of Scotland furnished an illustration of this. Before the time of the union the beverage of the Scottish people, especially the latter class, was almost entirely Scotch whiskey was distilled, but after the union the Englishman at once had his eye upon Scotland, and he insisted on taxing it heavily and imposing on the people against their will port which would bear

higher duty. Hence, the historian, in a moment of irritation and sarcasm, had immortalized this historical fact in the following couplet:

"Stren and erect the Calabonian stood,
Old was his mien and his hair was hoar;
Let him drink port, the English statesman cried,
He drains the poison and his spirit dies."

(Here the hon. member produced from the bottom of his hat, which was lying by his side, a glass of pale yellow liquid, which he quaffed amid general laughter.) The Calabonian, in order to revive his spirits (laughter), took to the distillation of whiskey. The increased tax now imposed would simply lead to the drinking of an inferior whiskey—a whiskey that would produce a worse form of intemperance, disease and destitution, of outrage and of crime. Therefore, he trusted the temperance party would not proceed to encourage the over-taxation of a wholesome product when properly, consistently and moderately used, and not abused. (Hear, hear.) He was well aware the many temperance men made martyrs of themselves for the sake of their fellow-men who were less able than they were to exercise self-control, but as a medical man who had mixed with all classes of society during 30 years of professional life, he ventured to sound a note of warning to the temperance party to beware lest they defeated their own objects and aims by seeking legislation that would never pass in a free country like this. (Hear, hear.) The people of every nation would always have a narcotic of some sort, whether it was alcohol in the country, opium in India and China, the chewing of roots in certain savage countries, or the narcoticism of leaves in others. Instead of a higher spirit duty he should have increased the death duties on the great estates, or, if that were impossible from the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, it would have been more popular and less oppressive if he had put another penny on the income tax. He trusted that not only every friend of Scotland, but every lover of justice and fair-play would support this amendment. He apologized for his disconnected and incoherent remarks (laughter), but, having caught a chill in the lobby, he was not in his best form. (Renewed laughter.)

A FEELING APPEAL.

Her Father—"What will your income be at the time you expect to marry?"
The Young Man—"Oh, sir, you do not expect me to name the extent of my generosity."

DON'T WORRY
ABOUT
The Washing
SUNLIGHT
TRY
SOAP

It will save you much trouble
It will bring you comfort and ease
It will save your clothes and hands
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