

Gambling in Lincoln.

The plain facts about the removal of Sam Melick from the office of chief of police, are, that the gamblers of the city made a "deal" with the powers that be, to pay five hundred dollars a month for the privilege of running gambling houses without police interference. In "cutting up" the bribe Melick did not receive his "bit." Thereupon he started out to "hold up" the gamblers on his own hook. This interfered with the other powers, and on his refusal to cease hostilities, "the concert of nations," fired him. These facts lie within the personal knowledge of at least twenty five persons in the city. They are known to a certainty to hundreds. They are common talk upon our streets.

Gambling is a felony. Made so by state laws. It is the duty of the county sheriff and county attorney to see that violations of these laws are punished. If County Attorney Munger and Sheriff Trompen are the men we have been led to believe they are, they will stop this nefarious business without further prompting. It won't do for the county attorney to say that he will prosecute any case where the evidence presented to him is sufficient to convict. It is his business to secure the evidence. That is what he is hired for. In addition he is provided with a deputy and a bailiff to assist him in hunting up evidence. He can call on the sheriff to perform this duty. The deputy sheriffs can be utilized for this purpose. If the present deputies won't do it, others can be secured who will. Sheriff Trompen is said to be a consistent church member. We were told that at the time of his first nomination, at a critical point in the canvass, he abandoned everything and went home because the next day was Sunday and did not engage in the ante convention contest until the following Monday. Inaction is sometimes commendable, but action is now the duty of the hour. There are ten or fifteen men drawing salaries from Lancaster county, sworn to uphold the laws and charged with the duty of ferreting out crime. The courts have not been in session for two months, and will not be for another month. So these men are not without the necessary leisure. It is ridiculous to say that the evidence cannot be secured to establish the fact that gambling is going on in the city, when the doors of the dens are open and the general public is importuned to enter and engage in play. Mr. Trompen and Mr. Munger are charged with a duty and must either perform it or stand convicted by their own inaction of being unwilling to perform it. The Excise Board cannot remove them for doing their duty, but the people can and will, if they fail to perform it.

The municipal officers who are so openly and defiantly engaging in this unlawful matter are playing with fire. A Chief of police in Omaha went to the penitentiary and stayed there for accepting bribes from the gamblers. A former Mayor of that city barely escaped doing likewise; and only his advanced age, former good name and years of earnest endeavor to build up that city prevented the prosecuting of the indictment found against him. Ex-Police Judge Parsons was deposed from office and driven from this city, because he connived at the gambling houses; and the city council cheerfully went to jail and won the everlasting applause of the community by braving a court to punish Parsons. The fate of Scott, Bartlett, Bollo, Moore, Mosher and others demonstrates that political power is without avail when public sentiment is once aroused. The signs of times are very propitious for the conviction of any public officer believed to be recreant to his trust. It will not take much to fan the smouldering flame of indignation into a

white heat. Some father will find that his boy is a thief, some well known young man will be arrested for embezzlement, some poor devil will lose his little all and suicide, or some business concern will go to the wall, and the conflagration will be on. That such things result from gambling no one needs to be told, especially in this community where yet lingers the memory of Ben Cobb, as a convict; Ned Coons as a fugitive from justice, and now dead before his time, poor fellow, from bearing the burden of his sorrow; the failure, flight, arrest and extradition of Stewart and Chute, not to mention the many others whose fall was not given publicity by courts and press, but which broke many heart strings and gave grievous wounds not yet healed, and which still prompt to righteous indignation. Don't make the mistake gentlemen of thinking the public does not care. The public does care, and will manifest it with a heavy hand.

The most aggravating thing about the whole matter is that it can be so easily stopped. If Sheriff Trompen or County Attorney Munger will simply say to these gamblers, "you cannot conduct your business in this county; it is against the law and you will not be allowed to violate the law," and mean it when they say it, that is an end of the whole matter. These two gentlemen have more than their official standing at stake. The integrity of their manhood is involved. THE COURIER believes the test will not find them wanting.

There is no need of having a grand jury to investigate the business. Such a course will fool nobody. We all know that public gambling is going on in this city and that it is useless to expect the city officials to suppress it and to prosecute the offenders. If Mr. Munger or Sheriff Trompen will tonight walk along Eleventh street between N and O, or along the east side of Post Office square they will see enough to furnish a very plain clew as to where the tiger not merely lurks but rampantly devours his prey. Perhaps if they took Melick along he might show them where he left his notices to quit. Inasmuch as an emergency exists, they might make him a special deputy to secure evidence.

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