

The Liquor Issue in Nebraska

In Nebraska, as elsewhere, party lines disappear when the liquor question enters the arena of politics. The defender of the saloon knows neither party allegiance nor party loyalty. It is a matter of BUSINESS with him and he boasts of his political independence.

The opponent of the saloon can not afford to be less independent. There will be but one important task before the coming session of the Nebraska legislature, namely, the enactment of laws putting into effect the prohibition amendment which will be adopted on November 7th. At the April primary the dry candidates for governor in the two leading parties received twenty-four thousand more votes than the wet candidates. As only two-thirds of the vote was polled in April the majority ought to be thirty-six thousand when the full vote is polled in November. It ought to be more than thirty-six thousand for three reasons: First, because the wets came nearer polling their full vote at the primaries; second, because the wet voters drew the line on the liquor question more strictly than the dries and, third, because the dries have had all the time since April to gain recruits.

The liquor interests have their candidates for the senate and house in every district where they have any chance to win, and their aim is to inaugurate an era of lawlessness—the condition which is sure to follow if the liquor interests can control either house. Wet democrats and wet republicans are working side by side in their conspiracy against the home and humanity. DRY DEMOCRATS AND DRY REPUBLICANS CAN NOT AFFORD TO BE LESS EARNEST IN DEFENSE OF THE HOME AND ALL THAT IS HIGH AND HOLY. THEY SHOULD UNITE AND VOTE FOR THE DRY LEGISLATIVE CANDIDATES WITHOUT REGARD TO PARTY DIFFERENCES ON OTHER SUBJECTS. The opposition is united; there must be no division among the friends of the amendment. If in any district two dries are running against one wet, one of the dries should withdraw. No man who has the interests of the state at heart will allow his personal ambition to jeopardize the cause, and he should not be permitted to do so even if he attempts it.

If the enemies of the saloon are only half as active and zealous as the representatives of the breweries, the distilleries and the saloons, the amendment will be adopted by an overwhelming majority, both houses will be controlled by the friends of the amendment—and Nebraska will be saloonless forevermore.

W. J. BRYAN.

Any argument seems to go in a political campaign. Candidate Hughes declares the democratic party is a sectional party because most of the house committee chairmanships are held by southerners. During the republican regime most of the committee chairmanships were held by northerners, thus proving, of course, that the republican is also a sectional party. When one recalls, however, that the rule of seniority prevails and that the south has been electing the same democrats longer than the north has been doing, the mystery disappears, just as it evaporates in the case of the republicans when we recall the south doesn't elect republicans to congress.

The beef barons have raised the price of meat to such altitudes that the average man is lucky if he can indulge more than three times a week. The next thing we know the barons will be posing as public benefactors, claiming that we eat too much meat for our own good anyway.

AN EXCEPTION

When Mr. Bryan urges the election of a democratic senate and house to support the President's economic program, his language must not be construed as an endorsement of any representative of Wall street. If the money trust, the shipping trust or any other predatory interest must have an agent in the senate or house it is better that he should be a republican. His sins will then be charged up to the republican party and he will not hold committee positions that should go to better democrats.

"THE REMORSE OF DENVER"

[From the Denver Rocky Mountain News.]

In the campaign against prohibition in Kansas City, Mo., Denver is being held up as the "horrible example." The former city is being warned to beware the fate that has befallen this city since it put the lid on at the first of the year. A pamphlet, entitled "The Remorse of Denver," is being circulated by the "Breweries and Brewery Agencies of Kansas City." It contains a list of the saloons that were closed and the rents paid and what had happened to the building up to June 1. Naturally a good many of them were for rent and naturally those that were rented did not always bring as much monthly rent as they did for the other purpose. The appeal is to the cupidity of the individual property owner. Prohibition, it sets forth, means confiscation to the owner of property as well as to the saloonkeeper. It is claimed that Denver is losing \$95,000 a month in rents as a result of the change decreed at the polls two years ago.

Denver is engaged taking up the slack from the first of the year's revolution. It has succeeded very much better than the most optimistic predicted.

This season has been the best this city has had in its existence. More people have come this way than in any other summer and they have prolonged their visits in Colorado by an average of thirty days. They came here to enjoy themselves and they did so without the "booze" ancillary. It is safe to state that the saloon was not missed by one-quarter of 1 per cent of the visitors.

Business done this year by merchants has shown an average increase of 20 per cent over a year ago—this from their own books. Manufacturing has improved and, if it be claimed that this was due to extraneous conditions, it can be stated on the other side that prohibition certainly put no obstacle in the way.

Returns from retail merchants' credit associations and the like all are to the effect that collections have improved very materially, that there are much smaller losses and current debts have been reduced by 50 per cent since prohibition went into effect.

The people are satisfied to continue as they began the year. They are practical economists. They know that so many millions were spent upon liquor every year, that the manufacturer and dealer made exceptionally large profits therefrom, that the saloonkeeper made money and that, taken altogether, the liquor business had grown into an exceptionally close corporation, the latter owning wherever possible its own saloon buildings and conducting them on the percentage basis so as to keep all possible profits within the ring. The people know that the saloon was not for the benefit of the community morally, economically or politically and that it was a good thing to get rid of the evil.

There is less crime of high and low degree. The patrolman has grown fat and lazy; the courts can take the half day off to play golf, and in time there will come to the taxpayer a material reduction in cost of municipal and state upkeep, with the knowledge that a large amount of the money saved in the saloon bill will go to more profitable enterprises.

There is before the voters at the coming election a proposition to undo by indirection the prohibition amendment to the constitution. If anyone really desires to know officially what Denver and Colorado think about the question of no saloons in this American city and the state, all he has to do is to wait and read the election returns.

Some folks who pose as political prophets claim that the major part of the progressive vote will be cast for Hughes. The progressive party platform of four years ago complained that the republican party had failed to pass prosperity around. Well, the republican party lost its job at the prosperity table and if the democrats who succeeded to it haven't passed it around to the satisfaction of the progressives they must be very hard to suit.

Mr. Hughes is proud to proclaim the fact that when he was a judge he was a 100 per cent judge, and now that he is a candidate he is a 100 per cent candidate. After feasting his speeches, which are devoted largely to destructive criticism, no one will find cause to dispute his assertion.

Located at Last

Mr. Hughes has been located at last. He states his position when he repudiates the doctrine of the administration, as stated by Dr. Elliot, namely, "No intervention by force of arms to protect on foreign soil American commercial and manufacturing adventurers, who, of their own free will, have invested their money or risked their lives in foreign parts under alien jurisdiction."

In denouncing this doctrine Mr. Hughes commits himself to the opposite doctrine that justifies wars for the extension of trade. As he took the side of the railroads against the patrons when he vetoed the two-cent fare bill in New York; as he took the side of the tax dodgers on the income tax; as he has taken the side of the shipping trust against the people and as he took the side of the railroad managers against the employees on the eight-hour day law, so he announces that he would take the side of speculators in foreign lands as against the people at home, even to the use of armed force. Well, this ought to give him the votes of the speculators, but it ought to lose him the votes of those who would have to bear the burden.

W. J. BRYAN.

In Nebraska the Prosperity league, which is the official title of the organization under which the brewers fight, is spending thousands of dollars in newspaper advertising trying to show that the states which have prohibition have more criminals, more insane, more pauperism and less prosperity than in those where saloons are licensed. The vote on prohibition in November will really determine whether Nebraska has as high a percentage of illiteracy as the census reports indicate, for it requires no great amount of learning to know that a business that sells only stuff that incites persons to crime, that causes people to lose their minds, their money and their jobs isn't increasing their prosperity, their morals or their health.

In an effort to rob the democratic administration of the credit for revising the banking system so as to make it panic proof, it is now asserted that the banking bill is but the Aldrich bill slightly modified. If these critics would have the honesty to say what those slight modifications are they would be compelled to admit that they meant the Aldrich bill with reverse English on.

Much mental anguish is being displayed by certain gentlemen because they have discovered that imports are not much more than under the late high tariff law and the revenue is much less, while at the same time the cost of living hasn't decreased. Their perturbation might be greatly lessened if they would just recall that they once firmly believed the foreigner paid the duty.

PARKS WITHOUT COST

The securing of parks is one of the serious problems confronting a city, the expense increasing with the need. This situation can be easily remedied without injustice to anyone. The man who subdivides acre property into city lots usually does so at considerable pecuniary advantage, and this advantage is, as a rule, an unearned increment. He profits by the growth of the city and gathers to himself a value due to the labor of others. Why not require the dedication of a certain percentage of every new addition to park purposes? If, for instance, a forty-acre addition containing sixteen blocks was so platted that two blocks would be set apart for park purposes, the people purchasing in the addition would have a common play ground—a democratic dooryard—and the party platting the land would realize an additional sum for the land around the parks that would almost equal their value. But if the parks added nothing to the price of the lots adjoining, he could afford to give the two blocks to the public in return for the value which the public has added to his property by creating the demand for city lots.

This reform is offered for the consideration of those readers of *The Commoner* who, as members of state legislatures, may be in a position to embody the idea in legislation.

W. J. BRYAN.