

Bishop of Tucson on Prohibition in Arizona

[Below will be found a statement recently published in the Fortnightly Review, giving the views of the Rt. Rev. Henry Granjon, Bishop of Tucson, Arizona. Special attention is called to this article, because the bishop, as will be seen, opposed the law as originally passed. The feature which he opposed has been modified and he recognized the good prohibition has done and is likely to do.—Ed.]

Prohibition, as enacted into law in this state, has proved rather beneficial, all things duly considered. It has done away with the saloon evil, and that alone weighs 75 per cent in the balance. With us the saloon was, beyond the shadow of a doubt, an unmitigated evil. It was the bane of this young, struggling commonwealth. Every man and woman who voted dry had chiefly in view the extermination of the saloon. It has been closed tight, and all hope and pray that it will stay closed. Our people take the view that local option is only a half-measure, of little value, and somewhat inconsistent. If good, the lesser of two evils, they reason that it should apply throughout the state; and if it is an undesirable move, they contend that this also applies to every community. They look upon local option as a mere makeshift, dodging the real issue, and according more weight to the preference of local aggregations for the lower interests of life, than to the high, moral worth of the movement, for the benefit of the people at large.

In Arizona, Prohibition has prohibited,—not absolutely, to be sure, but to a very appreciable extent. From the laboring class it has taken away the ever-present temptation, and many a laborer, burdened with a large family, is glad that he has been made to learn, of necessity if not of his own choice, the boon of sobriety. Hence an increase of comforts in the home, of self-respect, of genuine family happiness and peace, and on the whole of law-abiding citizenry. In view of these good effects of prohibition, the majority of the people are perfectly satisfied with it. The price paid for the abolition of the saloon, in the form of an increased taxation, is pro-rated among all classes, and is willingly accepted.

Where an untoward aftermath of the measure was felt, is in certain side issues, such as general business depression, which followed hard upon the heels of prohibition,—although this may have been more of a coincidence than anything else, and it remains to be seen whether, after prohibition has become a fixture and a habit, a strong reaction will not set in, to the ultimate benefit and satisfaction of all concerned. Again, prohibition has begotten the bootlegger, and probably bootlegging, like smuggling, is one of those things that will ever be among us. But the worst features of bootlegging, sternly run down as it is by the officers of the law and necessarily limited, do not begin to compare with the far-reaching injury caused by the open-door, licensed saloon. It has also been stated that prohibition has increased the number of drug fiends. However this may be, the evil has not reached the extent where it could materially affect the issue.

The worst feature of the Arizona prohibition law, and the one which caused me at the time to instruct my priests to discourage voting for it, was its disregard of the sacred rights of the church to use fermented wine for the celebration of the Mass, and consequently to import it into the state. I took care to warn the promoters of prohibition of the standing of the church in the matter, and of our determination to fight all and every form of prohibition that failed to provide an exemption on this score. Attention was also called by the medical and other liberal professions to the advisability of allowing an exemption in favor of alcohol for medicinal and scientific purposes. The prohibitionists were intent on framing a drastic law that would leave no loophole of any sort or shape for infringement, and they simply waived aside our representations by alleging that the priests could use grape-juice and the scientists would find out some substitute for medicinal alcohol. This attitude was unfortunately encouraged by imprudent and ill-advised utterances from lecturing priests (one of them "did" Arizona recent-

ly, who go about the country advocating prohibition of the most uncompromising type, and going so far as to say that it is up to the church to substitute grape-juice for fermented wine for the Mass. This from the mouth of Catholic clergymen; our separated friends have at least the excuse of lack of information in these matters. And I believe I can say, so far as Arizona is concerned, the thought of slighting or making little of the Catholic religion never entered their minds. As a matter of fact, while some of my parish priests needing altar wine found themselves disbarred from using the common carriers, as these were prohibited by law to accept interstate shipments of alcoholic products, they secured wine for Mass in whatever manner they could without the least molestation. In so doing, however, there remained the grievous and most distasteful fact that these priests were placed in the necessity of proceeding, technically, in violation of the letter of the law.

These anomalies have now been corrected, by a recent decision of the state supreme court, and the common carriers accept shipments of liquor for "personal use." A new prohibition amendment is about to be introduced, through the initiative process, which would abolish the personal privilege, but will grant an exemption for sacramental and scientific purposes.

In conclusion I would say, speaking for this section of the country as specified at the start, I can not but stand in favor of prohibition in so far as, and precisely because it appears to be the only available means at present to stamp the unspeakable saloon out of existence. Together with a majority of my people I believe that on the whole this is decidedly a blessing. That the same result could eventually be attained, and temperance efficiently promoted by methods less drastic and more in accord with human nature than prohibition in its extreme form, seems not improbable. The principle of personal use under proper regulations, being an inherent right of every human being, might be respected. The law might content itself with prohibiting highly spirituous liquors, or taxing them so as to make them prohibitive, and permitting only very light wines and very light beers. Punishment for drunkenness could be made so severe as to prove remedial and a deterrent. Whatever ways and means might be devised, so long as they avoided extremes and struck the just medium, would probably in the long run bring the people nearer to the reform sought than a system of coercion. However, as things stand there is no choice, and prohibition, with all its faults and flaws, seems to me a worthy cause. The experiment is worth while even if only partially successful. As to the many, very many, thank God, who know how to use nature's gifts as God intended them to be used, and who honor their manhood by their self-control and habits of moderation, the sacrifice asked of them is one of Christian renunciation and brotherly love, well worth generous acceptance for the sake of the vast throng of weaker fellowmen who, as it seems, can be saved from themselves only by the use of the strong arm of the law. After everything has been said pro and con, so long as our constitutional religious rights are not trespassed upon, we as Catholics, children of saints, may well afford to join the crusade of our times, and let our example shine before the world, that God and His church may be glorified.

AMENDMENT FOR NATIONAL PROHIBITION

In the house of representatives, December 22, 1916, Representative Martin A. Morrison of Indiana introduced the following joint resolution proposing an amendment to the constitution of the United States:

"Resolved by the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America in congress assembled (two-thirds of each house concurring therein), That the following amendment to the constitution be, and hereby is, proposed to the states, to become valid as a part of the constitution when ratified by the legislatures of the several states as provided by the constitution:

"Section 1. That the manufacture, transportation, importation, sale, barter, exchange, gift, or other disposition of intoxicating liquors for beverage purposes in the United States and

all territory subject to the jurisdiction thereof, and the exportation thereof, are forever prohibited.

"Sec. 2. That the several states within their respective jurisdictions shall have power to enact all needful legislation for the enforcement of so much of section one hereof as relates to the manufacture, intrastate transportation, sale, barter, exchange, gift, or other disposition of intoxicating liquors; and it shall be the duty of the congress to enact all needful legislation for the enforcement of all other provisions of said section one.

"Sec. 3. That this article shall not be deemed or construed to affect any power now vested in the several states in relation to intoxicating liquors for other than beverage purposes."

PROHIBITION A SUCCESS

A traveling man of wide experience writes as follows, of the prohibition law of the west and the effect of the law:

"Before I left San Francisco I determined to investigate very thoroughly, conditions which exist now in the cities of Portland, Ore., also Seattle, Tacoma and Spokane, Washington, compared to conditions which existed before the states of Oregon and Washington went dry; as affecting the individual and the business people.

Please permit me to state that I interviewed the principal business people in each of the cities referred to, and I do not hesitate to state, that without a single exception, every one of them stated to me that they did not believe that they could overestimate the great benefit which these states referred to had derived from having gone dry.

"They stated that the families of all of the working people are very much better provided for, and that all of the small merchants, whose stores are situated in the parts of the different cities where the working people reside, state, without exception, that before the states referred to went dry, that the working people virtually all owed them bills, which would lap from time to time, and were never paid up in full, and that now they pay their bills promptly, and have paid up all of their old bills, and that they are doing a larger and more profitable business than ever before.

"The large, representative merchants in these different cities referred to, state that the deposits in all of the savings banks have increased very materially. They state also that the business of all of the large department stores shows a decided increase, which they attribute to the fact that the families of the working men have more money to spend.

"These representative merchants also state that the same condition of things applies virtually to every small city and town throughout the states referred to.

"The writer trusts that you may live to see prohibition put into law in every state in the Union, which you are so earnestly working to accomplish, and that you may have the satisfaction of realizing this within the next few years, the same as you have lived to see put into law during the last four years, the many things which you have fought for so hard, beginning with 1896."

The states of Iowa, South Dakota and Nebraska all went dry during the last year. When the issue of whether saloons should be permitted in the District of Columbia was before the senate recently both of the Iowa senators and both of the South Dakota senators, believing that they were sent to Washington to represent the sentiment of their people on moral questions also, voted for prohibition. Senator Norris of Nebraska, whose state went 30,000 dry in November, also voted for prohibition in the district. Senator Hitchcock, of Nebraska, alone of the six senators voted against it.

Having done their best to have the Webb-Kenyon law declared unconstitutional, the representatives of the liquor interests are now saying that the decision AGAINST the SALOON makes national prohibition unnecessary. Would they have admitted that a decision against the law would have made national prohibition necessary? No, they simply try to play the state against the nation and the nation against the state.