

PROHIBITION IN KANSAS

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Kansas was admitted into the Union in 1861. In 1867 the soldiers of the Civil War commenced coming into the state to make it their home. With the advent of the soldiers began the fight against the saloon. Under the leadership of the Independent Order of Good Templars and the churches of the state these soldiers engaged in the movement with spirit and courage. The contest was waged with varying fortunes until in 1879, when a resolution was submitted by the legislature to the people of Kansas, providing for an amendment to the constitution prohibiting the manufacture and sale of intoxicating liquors except for medical, scientific and mechanical purposes.

Immediately after the submission of this amendment the Kansas State Temperance Union was organized, with Governor John P. St. John as its first president. This organization took the lead in conducting the campaign for the adoption of the amendment. In the fall of 1880, by a majority of 7,837, this amendment became a part of the constitution of the state. The succeeding legislature enacted laws for the enforcement of the constitutional provision, and successive legislatures since that time have made these laws stronger. The several governors of the state have, in their messages, urged that no backward step be taken in the matter of constitutional prohibition.

For twenty-three years prior to 1903 the law was enforced or not enforced according to the local sentiment of the community. In that year the Kansas State Temperance Union organized a law enforcement department to secure a uniform observance of the law in all parts of the state. At that time there were 35 of the 105 counties in the state in which the law was more or less openly violated, and in which the Kansas joint did business. Every large city in the state except two was in open collusion with and taking

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revenue in the form of fines from the violators of law, thus permitting the illegal sale of intoxicating liquor. Asserting that the power of the law is in its enforcement rather than in the law itself, the State Temperance Union, with its attorneys, J. K. Coddington and John Marshall, commenced the enforcement of the prohibitory liquor law in those counties where the county attorneys would not enforce it because of the local sentiment in favor of the saloon. They also assisted in many other counties.

In 1905 Attorney General C. C. Coleman began to actively assist in this work, and commenced a number of suits in the supreme court of the state to compel the larger cities of the state to cease taking revenue from the sale of intoxicating liquor. Later Fred S. Jackson, who succeeded Mr. Coleman as attorney general, continued the work begun by his predecessor, and instituted other proceedings, having for their object the extinction of all open violation of this law in the state. The attorney general's office and the Kansas State Temperance Union have worked together, each supplementing the work of the other, until at the present writing the open violation of the law has been stopped in all the counties of Kansas except three, and in these three remaining counties prosecutions, raids, injunctions and abatements are being pushed so vigorously that it is only a question of a short time when the prohibitory liquor law will be enforced in every county and city in Kansas as effectively as the laws against the violation of the rights of person or property. The results following the enforcement of the prohibitory liquor law in Kansas justify every argument that has been made in its favor.

Kansas City, Kansas, is the largest city in the state, and has a population of 100,000. A street separates it from Kansas City, Missouri. Kansas City, Kansas, is the home of the great packing interests and manufacturing establishments of the two cities and is fifth among the cities of the United States in the value of its manufactured products, while Kansas City, Missouri, with its population of nearly 350,000, is thirty-first. W. H. McCamish, upon being appointed assistant attorney general of Wyandotte County, in which Kansas City, Kansas, is located, immediately commenced work against 256 joints that were then paying \$90,000 a year revenue to the city. He was opposed by the business and political interests of the city, and because of want of funds his progress

was slow. He had filed over one hundred cases and was making his work felt when, on the 8th of June, 1906, Hon. C. W. Trickett, of the law firm of Keplinger & Trickett, was appointed to succeed Mr. McCamish.

Mr. Trickett, with the assistance of his partner, Judge Keplinger, immediately began a vigorous warfare against the joints, which resulted in closing them before the first day of July following his appointment. During this time great quantities of bar fixtures and liquors were destroyed, and what remained were moved across the line into Missouri. The business men of Kansas City, Kansas, have given their testimony concerning the effect of driving these places out of existence.

U. V. Widener, assistant city clerk, says:

In twenty-one months Kansas City, Kansas, has almost recovered from as many years of saloon oppression; \$245,042.53 of the city's debt was lifted during the last year when no revenues were obtained from the liquor joints, because there were none. The city tax levies have been reduced twenty cents for each one hundred dollars of assessed valuation. The police force has been reduced from eighty-four to fifty men. The fire department is larger and better than ever before. The police and firemen were formerly paid by the \$90,000 a year collected in fines from the joints. They are now paid in cash by the city.

Larkin Norman, building inspector, made the following report:

My records show the building of new houses in Kansas City, Kansas, in 1907, the year after the closing of the joints, to be the greatest in the history of the city. The increase in the cost of new buildings in 1907 over 1906, was \$468,589. The increase in the number of buildings was 379. In 1907 there were 944 buildings erected, as against 565 in 1906. The cost of the buildings in 1907 was \$1,472,279, and in 1906, \$1,003,690. In additions immediately outside the city there are one-half as many new buildings being erected as within the entire city.

Willard Merriam, of the real estate firm of Merriam, Ellis & Benton, one of the largest in the city, has this to say:

A period of almost two years has given us a fair test as to what strict prohibition will do for a city of 100,000 population. Never in the history of the city since Utopian boom days have we had such a steady growth in the price of real estate or as great a demand as we have had in the last twenty-one months. More property has been sold and more has been improved in that time than in any previous six years.

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Testimony of a banker:

It has been a twenty-one months during which bank deposits have about doubled; twenty-one months of the largest activity in building ever known in the history of this city; twenty-one months in which it has been almost impossible to find a vacant storeroom on the business streets in which to locate a business; twenty-one months of the largest growth in population that the city has ever been able to record for the same length of time; twenty-one months of the least crime; twenty-one months of the largest progress made in the building of school buildings and an increase of school facilities; twenty-one months of the largest additions to our milling and factory facilities; twenty-one months of the greatest satisfaction among our retail business men; above all, twenty-one months of the purest city government we have ever had and twenty-one months of the best moral atmosphere this city has ever enjoyed; a twenty-one months during which hundreds of men who were formerly committed to resubmission and who were violent anti-prohibitionists have been wholly converted to the strict enforcement of the prohibitory law and who will use all of their influence and a reasonable amount of their time and money to keep the city clean and free from the influence of the brewers and distillers, as it is free now.

It has been estimated by those who are competent to judge that the enforcement of the law, as it has been enforced here for the last twenty-one months, is a net saving of one million dollars a year to the citizens of this city. (The above is an extract from a letter to C. W. Trickett by C. L. Brokaw, Cashier of Commercial National Bank, the largest bank in Kansas City, Kansas.)

There have been results in Kansas City, Kansas, following in the wake of the enforcement of law, that cannot be measured in dollars and cents. These are some of them: A sanitarium in that city had many cases of delirium tremens when the joints were in operation. After the close of the joints that sanitarium had but two cases in six months. When the joints were running many children were assisted by the juvenile court each month. After the joints were closed this work disappeared and there were but two applications in the succeeding six months, and these were the children of a mistress of a disorderly house. Attendance at the public schools greatly increased. More teachers were employed. There was a large decrease in the number of dependent poor, and in cases of destitution. Not so many persons were sent to the poor farm, and destitution, due to husbands spending money in the joint, almost entirely disappeared. Children in school who were formerly in rags were well clothed. Although the city rapidly increased in population, the number of cases of destitution decreased materially.

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One of the most marked changes was the reduction in the number of crimes committed and in the number of persons brought into court charged with crime. The expense of trying criminal cases was reduced \$25,000 a year; the police force of the city was greatly reduced, saving another \$25,000 per year; and the saving in the city government exceeded the amount that was ever received in revenue from the joints. When the joints were running six weeks or more of district court was necessary to try the criminal cases. After the joints closed three weeks in each term was sufficient, with the same proportion existing in every court having criminal jurisdiction in the city. The police judge of Argentine, a suburb of Kansas City, Kansas, found nothing to do, and in the police court of Kansas City, Kansas, there had been from ten to thirty cases each morning under the joint system, as against almost none after the joints were driven out.

All over Kansas the enforcement of the law has decreased crime, shortened the terms of court, lessened and almost rendered unnecessary police protection, decreased the rate of taxation, filled the churches, Sunday schools and school houses, built up Chautauquas and lecture courses, built new churches, made more and greater public improvements in our cities, and inspired the people of this state with a higher sense of their obligation to the government, both state and federal.

There are cities in Kansas besides Kansas City whose experience is worth reading. Junction City, in Geary County, near Fort Riley, the largest cavalry station in America, under the control of the federal government, changed from tolerating the violation of the law to that of enforcing the law, with the following result: The criminal docket in the district court was decreased fifty per cent. In the buildings occupied by the joints we now find in one a ladies' toggery, in another a restaurant, in two others picture shows, and in others lunch counters and pool rooms, with nothing to drink and no room for gambling. The criminal element of the town has left and a number of the saloon men are now engaged in other business. The soldiers coming from the fort to the city are better behaved, and during the manœuvres, when several thousand soldiers were on the street, there was almost perfect quiet, and on a picnic day, when there were several thousand strangers in the city and the streets full of soldiers, there were only two arrests for

drunkenness. The banks report an increase in deposits. Business has increased. The closing of the saloons has improved the moral tone of the city.

Fort Scott, a city of 15,000 people, four years ago had sixteen joints, two open houses of ill fame and others not so open, several gambling resorts, a shack for a city jail and officers' quarters, two paved streets, a dilapidated appearance generally, but little interest in church work—a typical hard town. In 1906 local workers and the State Temperance Union gave the town a cleaning up. Now there are no saloons or joints, no houses of ill fame, new city quarters, three times the paved streets that previously existed, and much more being planned, more than \$60,000 spent for new churches and church improvements, \$30,000 for a Young Men's Christian Association building, and more than 1,100 members have been added to the churches of the city within two and one-half years after the closing of the joints. The city attorney of Fort Scott says:

There is no argument for the saloon and gambling houses from either a moral or business point of view. Under the wet rule I had a criminal case almost every morning in police court. Now a case in police court is an exception. The closing of these places has reduced crime to a minimum.

Salina, one of the cities of central Kansas, for years tolerated the violation of the law, then changed and enforced the law. Results here were the same as in other places. Taxes decreased, improvements increased, merchants of all kinds declared that business increased.

During the entire time that the prohibitory law has been in existence seventy counties in Kansas have remained dry, and in three-fourths of the small towns and three-fourths of the townships in the remaining thirty-five counties the saloon has been outlawed.

The voters who are now directing the policies of the state are the young men who have grown to manhood free from the influence of the saloon, and so strong are they in favor of state-wide prohibition that, if the question of saloon or no saloon were now submitted, state-wide prohibition would carry by 100,000 majority.

Kansas has 1,600,000 population. It has on deposit in its banks \$160,000,000—\$100 for each man, woman and child in the state. The people of Kansas own their homes. Kansas has fifty-four

counties that sent no prisoner to the penitentiary during the past year, and twenty-two others that sent but one prisoner each. It has but 780 prisoners in its penitentiary, and 291 of these were never residents of Kansas, but were criminals from other states who committed crimes in this state and were sent to our penitentiary. The United States Government confines large numbers of its military and civil prisoners in its penitentiary at Fort Leavenworth in Kansas, and Oklahoma sends her prisoners to the Kansas penitentiary. There are thirty-seven counties without a pauper.

High license Nebraska, with less population than Kansas, paid last year a government liquor tax of \$2,450,236.94. Kansas paid \$127,682.77. Nebraska paid nineteen times as much as Kansas.

Under prohibition the drunkard has practically disappeared from the state, the saloon is no longer a part of the political or social life of the state, her professional and business men do not use intoxicating liquors, thousands of young men have never seen the inside of a saloon, and thousands of young women, many of them now married and mothers, have never yet smelled the fumes of intoxicating liquors coming from the breath of father, husband, brother, son or lover.

With the demoralizing influence of the saloon eliminated, the earnings of the laboring men of Kansas have gone into homes, books, musical instruments, schools and churches, and Kansas recognizes that "morality, religion and education are the three main pillars of the state, to maintain which government was instituted among men," and that the saloon, the destroyer of these pillars, cannot again exist among us.

Of Kansas, Frances E. Willard said:

Kansas is away out on the picket line of progress where mortal commonwealth has never gone before. It may be called, with entire propriety, the state of First Things—the pleasant garden plat on which God tries experiments with humanity to see how large and free we are capable of growing.

And accepting this sentiment from this noblest of women as the best ever written or spoken of Kansas, having solved the great saloon problem, and having proven that "the only solution of the saloon problem is no saloon," Kansas is now, as she ever has been, holding high her snow-white banner, on which are inscribed in letters of gold her motto, "Ad Astra Per Aspera."

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