

Champion Throws Up Its Hands

Well, what is the world coming to? Here is the Champion of Fair Play, the great Chicago weekly organ of the liquor interests, which has been shrieking that prohibition does not prohibit, until it has nearly lost its voice, and now in the last number of that paper, under a scare head, in the most conspicuous place on its editorial page, is an article copied from the Evening Post, without note or comment, and therefore presumably indorsed by the Champion of Fair Play, in which it is plainly admitted that prohibition is actually prohibiting in the state of Alabama. Just notice the headlines which the Champion puts on this notable article:

EVERY LEAK CLOSED.

A New Prohibition Law in the Southern State most drastic ever enacted in this Country.

DUE TO SALOON DEFIANCE.

The Liquor Interests bring about trouble for themselves by arrogant attitude at the start of crusade.

From this article, which is in the form of a letter from a Birmingham correspondent, the following interesting paragraphs are taken:

With the adjournment of the extra session of the Legislature Alabama took a stand to become the driest territory in this country, if not in the world. The laws went into effect on their passage, and already their effect is felt all over the state.

These prohibition laws are the most far-reaching and drastic in existence. Every possible safeguard against the sale of liquors and beer in the state was taken, and all loopholes of escape or evasion as practiced by the liquor interests under the imperfect state-wide laws were closed.

The laws themselves are sweeping, and the provisions for their enforcement are the most extreme ever heard of in this country.

Will Nail Them Down.

These laws, which have already practically prohibited the sale of liquor in this state, are expected to be made permanent by a constitutional amendment putting prohibition in the organic law. The Legislature, by a large majority, which is thought to have reflected the public sentiment of the state, enacted a provision giving the right to vote on constitutional prohibition in ninety days, and the election has been set for November 29.

The prospects are that the constitutional amendment will be adopted by a considerable majority, but it will have to encounter the influence of a large amount of money turned loose by the liquor interests, which are making a last desperate stand in Alabama territory.

Turn Things Upside Down.

The laws which went into effect a short time ago bid fair to revolutionize the social conditions of the state which have been in vogue for a century. The traditions of hospitality for which Alabama has been famed almost ever since it was settled by the white man are being overturned and an entirely new order of things in entertainment has been introduced.

Club life in the state is practically demoralized. The clubs are almost deserted, and many of their members are talking of disbanding. This includes country clubs, golf clubs, boat clubs and shooting clubs, as well as the leading social clubs in the cities.

It Locks the Lockers.

The locker club system, which has flourished in the larger cities as a substitute for the saloons under a decision of the

Supreme Court regarding the state-wide prohibition law that liquors could not be seized in places where they were stored, unless it was proved that they were so stored for the purpose of sale, have been put out of business under the new laws, which make it practically impossible to engage in this character of business without conviction.

Where there were over 200 locker clubs in Birmingham alone, there are now none. They are closed tight and the liquors removed. Even the private citizen is handicapped in getting liquors to his home, as the law puts the local deliverer out of business and prohibits the railroads and express companies from delivering this class of goods C. O. D.

Nothing like the present laws was thought to be possible in this state a year ago. Today they are being so rigidly enforced that anti-prohibitionists acknowledge that they are completely routed.

These laws were the result of the attitude of the liquor interests in defying the movement from its inception. The leading antis freely admit that if the liquor men had been willing to consent to high license and restricted area, so as to abolish the dives and joints from which the constantly increasing record for crime in the industrial centers was generated, and had shown a determination to observe the laws strictly, there would never have been a prohibition campaign in this state.

Not as Big as They Thought.

They (the liquor people) overrated their strength, however, and not only aggravated matters by undertaking to control local and state politics, in entering campaigns and elections as an organized influence, but after local option was adopted, and later, when state-wide prohibition became a law, they assumed a defiant attitude, and in Mobile and Montgomery especially, and to some extent in Birmingham, they discredited the law in every possible way and fought its provisions through the courts, even to the highest tribunal in the state, with threats to carry the contention to the United States court.

All of this so aroused the administration and the people that they took the position that the question had gone beyond one of temperance and had become one of whether law or liquor should dominate in Alabama.

Determined to Finish It.

The result was, it was determined to make the law so sweeping and rigid as permanently to stop the political agitation growing out of this question and to so largely decrease the consumption of liquor in the state as to make it a dead influence in the public life of Alabama.

Almost every thoughtful business man in Alabama, including those who opposed prohibition, admits that the liquor interests brought this whole fight against themselves by their defiant attitude as an organized influence in the public affairs of the state.

The Speaker of the House and the overwhelming majority of the members of the Legislature were totally in sympathy with the movement. The large majority of the people of the state were behind it. In the smaller towns and in the rural districts the sentiment for the strictest anti-liquor provisions is well-nigh solid, while the larger cities are about evenly divided in sentiment, which will be modified one way or the other, according as the law is enforced and prohibition as a preventive succeeds.

At this time the entire state is dry as the desert of Sahara. Not a drop to drink can be obtained at any of the clubs,