

LAW IS AMENDED

Local Option Law Passed at June Election Changed.

SOME OF THE AMENDMENTS

The Law as Amended Will Be a Local Option Law, Pure and Simple, and Not a Prohibition Law as is Demanded by Cranks.

Representative A. A. Jayne of Douglas county has introduced a bill in the legislature amending the local option law. Among the amendments proposed are the following:

The petition must contain 40 per cent of the legal voters, instead of 10 per cent, as now. This is intended to take the power away from the prohibition cranks and place it in the hands of people not actuated by malice or to permit it to be used as a weapon of persecution by a minority. Another amendment provides that a precinct in which a prohibition election is held must not lie partially within or partially without an incorporated city. In a number of cities portions of a precinct overlap the municipal boundaries and extend for miles into the country.

Section 3 is amended and provides that prohibition elections shall be held only every two years. The present law allows the prohibitionists to call elections every June, if they have been defeated at the preceding election. That portion of the community which is in favor of the license system, however, is only allowed to call elections every two years. This particular amendment was the subject of many long consultations. It was realized that it was advisable to prevent the state being embroiled in continual prohibition elections, a condition which has always resulted disastrously to commerce, progress and politics in other states. It was the majority opinion that four years should be allowed to elapse between the prohibition elections, but it was finally decided to draft the amendment at two years, in order to save argument.

Section 7 is amended and provides that the sale of intoxicating liquors shall be prohibited 90 days after the order of the court declaring the result of an election favorable to the prohibitionists.

The present law allows a liquor dealer, brewer or wholesaler less than 30 days in which to wind up his affairs, settle his accounts, dispose of his stock and fixtures and get out of business. The gross injustice of this needs no argument. In the case of a big brewer, or even a smaller concern, it would amount to almost complete confiscation of the property. If a business is to be prohibited for at least two years, and as long thereafter as no election to the contrary shall be held, it does not seem that there can be any possible objection to allowing the owner of the business 90 days in which to settle his affairs.

Section 10 as amended provides that the unexpired license money shall be refunded to the liquor dealer before the order of prohibition shall take effect. The present law is indefinite on this point, and many cities in Oregon have refused to observe this portion of the law. It seems only fair that the refund of the money should be simultaneous with the taking effect of the order of prohibition.

Section 12 as amended provides that there shall be probable cause to believe that liquor is being sold before a search warrant shall be issued. In view of the experience of prohibition states, in which enthusiasts in this political faith have caused private residences to be invaded and a system of espionage established over the personal affairs and habits of their fellow citizens, this amendment has been drafted with the object of leaving something to the discretion of the courts in a prohibition district.

The amendment to section 14 provides that no election may be held except in residence precincts. This amendment is taken from the Bran-nock local option law of Ohio, which is the result of many years of conflict in that state, and which appears to be working satisfactorily there. The only object of a local option law as distinguished from prohibition, is to prevent the encroachment of saloons upon residence districts, against the wishes of a majority of the residents.

This amendment provides that the sale of liquors in wholesale quantities by brewers, distillers, wineries, or wholesale liquor dealers is not to be construed as a violation of the law.

Here again arises the difference between genuine local option law and straight prohibition. Local option aims at the control of the saloon, whereas prohibitionists would exterminate the entire business. The conduct of a brewery, distillery, winery or wholesale liquor house is even less noisy, less objectionable and more clean than the conduct of the average manufacturing

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or jobbing plant. Corporations or firms which have invested very considerable quantities of money in their business can in no case be construed as disorderly saloons. No one but a prohibitionist can advance a reason why a brewery or any other large plant should be compelled to fight at the polls for its existence at the command of any body of voters. Local option carried to this extent becomes a most specious and dangerous argument. Were it to be applied to any other class of business, the butcher shops, canneries, iron works, or, in fact, any species of manufacturing business, its injustice would at once be apparent.

NOT ON ELDER.

Fruitless Search for a San Francisco Murderer.

The police of San Francisco are looking for a murderer who is believed to have come to Astoria on one of the coasting steamers. A search was made of the Geo. W. Elder yesterday when she reached her dock, but no trace of the man could be found.

The man wanted is Wm. Peterson, who has also been known at times as William Hanson, and he has a bad record. He is described as being 27 years old, 5 feet 6 inches high, 180 pounds weight; of medium complexion, small moustache, index finger of right hand bruised. When last seen he wore a dark gray suit and black derby hat.

Two sailors shipped on the Elder in San Francisco and Chief Whitlam was of the opinion one was Peterson, who is wanted for shooting a saloonkeeper named Nyberg last Monday. Every assistance was given Chief Hallock and Captain Gammel in their search by the officers of the Elder. It is thought Peterson may show up on another vessel.

Marine Notes.

The German ship Christel arrived from Port Los Angeles yesterday after a trip of 19 days. She has freight from English ports for Balfour, Guthrie & Co. of Portland.

The dredger Chinook left out yesterday for San Francisco, where she will undergo repairs that will keep her there some weeks.

The steamer Francis Leggett is due in from San Francisco.

The barkentine J. T. Eveston left up the river for a cargo yesterday. The Eveston is one of the fastest of her class on the coast.

The oil tank steamer Whittier arrived yesterday and left up for Portland. Rough weather on the bar kept her outside 15 hours.

The steamer Alliance left out yesterday for Tillamook and Coos Bay with freight and passengers.

The schooner Irene, with lumber for Redondo, arrived down the river yesterday and anchored in the channel.

The steamer Aurelia arrived down from Portland yesterday and left out for San Francisco.

The Redondo left out yesterday for San Francisco with freight and 51 passengers.

The Roanoke arrived down from Portland yesterday with freight and 21 passengers for San Francisco.

The Elmore left for Tillamook last evening with freight and passengers.

The Harrison left last night for Nehalem with freight and passengers. No word has been received from the Gerald C, which left Astoria last Friday bound for Alsea.

The Undine was delayed up the river yesterday and did not arrive until 4 P. M.

Three new fishing boats were fitted with gasoline engines yesterday.

The little steamer St. Mary, which was recently rescued from the grave and rehabilitated, has gone to Portland to do jobbing along the front.

The marine commission recommended in the new merchant marine bill a substantial increase of compensation on certain specified routes where American steam service will be most likely to increase the foreign markets for American merchandise. As a rule the ten new ocean mail routes specified must be created from the beginning, not only the lines, but the ships themselves.

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