The Camden Chronicle

PUBLISHED EVERY FRIDAY

—BY—

W. L. McDOWELL.

Business locals, 5 cents per line each insertion.

Candidates' Cards for County offices $5.00. Congressional $10.00.

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Subscription Rates:—One year: $1.50, six months, 75 cents; three months, 40 cents.

Rates for Advertising:—Ordinary transient advertisements, first insertion $1.00 per square; each subsequent insertion 50 cents per square.

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CAMDEN, S. C., JULY 30, 1909

Obstacle To Reform

On its face prohibition seems so obvious a remedy for intemperance that many of the best citizens, without making any special inquiry into the subject, eagerly adopt it, and come to look upon any opposition as a mark of callous or corrupt feelings. Many others find it convenient to fall in line with more active advocates rather than to endure the odium of resisting so promising a proposition.

There are doubtless at present not a few whose common sense suggests to them that the drastic prohibition measure which they must vote for or against, is either a political gold brick, or a specimen of premature millennial legislation. They are diffident of setting up any contention against the fervors of numbers morale, and indeed they feel but poorly equipped with information or argument to form any views of their own.

It would perhaps all many in opinion if they could [illegible] any abstraction in our [illegible] number of Pearson's Magazine [illegible] the Rev. Wilbur A. Warren [illegible] Bell: "Prohibition, the Obstacle to Real Reform." We attempt a condensed review of some of the statements and observations contained in the article.

A few years prior to the [illegible] temperance wave swept over [illegible] New England States. Maine [illegible] Massachusetts [illegible] New York, Indiana and Wisconsin [illegible] enacted prohibitory laws which took effect [illegible] declared constitutional by the Supreme Courts of those States.

After fifty years another wave came and carried four more States [illegible] Kansas, Nebraska, North Dakota and three western States [illegible] and it still clings on in Maine alone of New England.

Of the eight States first adopting prohibition, seven have changed to license as a failure. Nebraska after [illegible] years trial, Vermont after [illegible] years. These states made the change earnestly and honestly as a result of considering it. Says the author: "To claim that prohibition has not measurably succeeded in the United States, that it accomplished [illegible] good, is the [illegible] gence of the people of New England. No sensible person can be [illegible] these seven states would have [illegible] erately repudiated a system [illegible] had adopted in high hopes, and [illegible] high moral purpose, if they had found that that system was a failure for sobriety, prosperity and good citizenship. In view of this [illegible] is always easier to secure [illegible] ment than the repeal of a [illegible] puted moral purpose, the repeal of prohibition by these states [illegible] the more significant."

Maine has only retained [illegible] by a narrow margin because [illegible] ties. Gov. Cobb of that state, a strong prohibitionist, in his inaugural four years ago said that the law in that State had become the "laughing stock of the nation."

In Georgia prohibition went into effect January 1st, 1908. In less than a year it was apparent the law had broken down. For a while it seemed to be going to be enforced and prove an exception to the rule. But soon the same old story began and the drinkers got to buying openly and boldly as ever with the old enemy. Rev. Dr. Hougerty an ardent prohibitionist says: "Atlanta has become a laughing stock and a stench in the nostrils of the Almighty." Supt. Richards of the Anti Saloon league says: "Beer and whiskey here right and left and everywhere. You can get whiskey too and I know it, for what does it mean when twenty seven car loads of beer and whiskey are shipped here?" The joints in Atlanta are a sample of those that obtain over the State.

Under local option a number of States are being "prohibitionized on the instalment plan." It is said that in ten years so called dry territory has extended from a population of six million to thirty eight million, but the consumption of alcoholic liquor as shown by the U. S. Internal Revenue department has increased. In 1899 when six million only were under prohibition, the consumption per head was 16 gallons of beer and 1.1 of whiskey. In 1907 when thirty-five millions lived under supposed prohibition the consumption was 22 gallons of beer and 1.6 of whiskey. For 1908 there was a slight drop of ten per cent. from 1907 in whiskey, but none in beer. These figures are eloquent, and show that while nominal prohibition had extended over half our population the supplies of liquors had not been decreased, but only flowed through different channels.

Mark the following words of this writer who is a clergyman and experienced in the workings of prohibition:

"Prohibition is an attempt to deprive men of what they believe to be an inherent right. The question of individual right is the underlying issue in this whole controversy. Majority rule is of course a sound political principle, but must be confined within reasonable limits. If a majority have a right to say to a minority: 'You shall not drink beer another majority has a right to say: 'You shall not drink tea.' Everywhere and always outside of Islam (the land of Mohammedan) while drunkenness has been and is yet, the moderate use of a mild beverage has been a common custom, and has been regarded as the inherent right of the individual.

"The use of alcoholic liquors is and has always been considered not only legitimate as a beverage, but it is consecrated in the most solemn and weighty rite of the Church. Now you cannot by a mere law, eradicate a sentiment and destroy an institution that has stood for ages, and that is so deeply rooted in our whole society. Prohibition ignores the education, the judgment and the moral habits of countless generations of the most highly civilized, progressive and moral people. It is exactly like trying to make no discrimination between men and women. It arbitrarily makes a legal crime of an act which is neither a wrong in itself nor clearly in the rights and interests of society. Because two or three men use liquor to excess, prohibition would compel a hundred temperate men to follow the lead of intemperate."

"Prohibition has not only failed in the purpose for which it was adopted, but it has given the greatest impetus to the manufacture and traffic in the forms in the country. Some of the last figures I have before me are for the year of 1907 in the states where both the license and prohibition systems were in force, and they show that the traffic in intoxicating liquors was greater in those states than in any other states of the union. Prohibition attempts to do what would be desirable if it could be done, but it ignores the fact that the liquor traffic is a business which has grown up with the sanction of the law, and is now intertwined with the business interests of the country, and cannot be destroyed without the most disastrous results to the business interests of the country. Prohibition ignores the fact that the manufacture and traffic in liquors is a business which has been recognized by the government as a legitimate business, and has been made a source of revenue to the government, and that it is a business which has been established by the government, and that it is a business which has been established by the government, and that it is a business which has been established by