

LAST SEGREGATION DISTRICT IN WISCONSIN CLOSED.

Re-elected District Attorney Insists That Law Shall Be Enforced.

THE recent closing of the red-light district of Superior marks the end of recognized segregated vice in the State of Wisconsin. How the city of Superior actually gained some of its regular municipal income from vice was disclosed a year ago by the State Vice Commission, as reported in *The Survey* for January 31, 1914, page 512. A uniform fee of \$50 a month from each of 20 places made a revenue of \$12,000 a year, nominally from fines which practically were license fees.

The abolition of the vice district is due to District Attorney Archibald McKay, re-elected in November for a term of two years. He insists that as long as he is in office the district will be closed, and he has the backing of public sentiment, which seems to have undergone a great change since the visit of the Vice Commission.

In 1907, when Victor Linley was Mayor of Superior, the red-light district was closed by the Mayor's order. This act by Mr. Linley was the climax to a series of moral improvement measures striking first the gambling resorts, then closing saloons on Sundays and holidays, next forbidding women and children to enter saloons at any time, and finally abolishing the segregated district. When the keepers of resorts boasted confidently that they would open again in a few weeks the Mayor threatened injunction proceedings. The district remained closed to the end of his administration.

An interesting sequence to the successful experiment of holding a threat of injunction proceedings over the keepers of houses of ill-fame is the Linley injunction and abatement law, which Mr. Linley, now a State Senator, put through the Legislature of Wisconsin in 1913.

Mayor Linley was defeated for re-election in 1908. His successor permitted the red-light district gradually to be re-established until it became even more flagrant than before. Joseph E. Comiskey, supposedly supported by the saloons and by the ringleaders of the red-light district, was elected sheriff, so that everything seemed safe for at least two years more under the open-town policy. When, therefore, District Attorney McKay, who had been considered harmless, transmitted an order to the sheriff closing all the known houses of prostitution there was consternation in the district.

MINIMUM WAGE FOR ALL WORKERS.

President of New York's Consumers' League Advocates Wage Commission to Study Each Particular Industry.

MRS. FREDERICK NATHAN, president of the Consumers' League of the city of New York, believes that a permanent commission, similar to the one in Massachusetts, with representative wage boards, is the only method by which an adequate minimum wage for all workers can be established, and that, through this, the endless circle of inefficiency, low wages and poverty, low wages and inefficiency can be done away. Mrs. Nathan said in part, in a letter made public recently:

"What is this ever-increasing cause of poverty against which we struggle? Within the past few weeks the Factory Investigating Commission has held hearings which have told us of the low wages received by 105,000 working people in unorganized trades; that 50,000 men and women in four trades alone in New York State are earning less than \$8 per week; that, out of 15,000 female employes in New York city, 8000 received less than \$6.50 a week during the busy season last year; that 53 per cent. of the women in the large department stores in New York city earn less than \$8 per week; that in the candy trade 50 per cent. of the single women receive less than \$5.85 per week; that in the paper-box factories women working at the highest possible speed can make their weekly wage only \$6.

"Those who have been active in the work of relief societies know that low wages is one of the economic causes of poverty. From recent studies made by the Consumers' League we know that the health and efficiency of some of the working women and girls is being undermined for lack of proper food, recreation and proper living quarters.

"Are we not, therefore, creating by our own industrial conditions the thing which we are all being called upon later to alleviate? Is it not possible to secure some standard of payment for the weakest of the working people? Some standard commensurate with the existing high prices, and the price which the industry can afford to pay for the service rendered.

"The Consumers' League believes that a permanent commission should be organized similar to the one in Massachusetts, with wage boards composed of representatives of employers, employes and the public. We consider that these wage boards should take up one industry at a time, study-

ing it intensively, taking into consideration the standard of living of the worker and what the industry can afford. A wage rate should be decided for each particular industry."

A VOTE FOR THE BRISTOW-MONDELL AMENDMENT.

North Dakota Congressman Will Vote for Resolution When It Comes Before Him—A Clear Interpretation of the Reasons for His Support.

CONGRESSMAN HELGESEN of North Dakota announced a few days ago that he intended to vote for the Mondell woman suffrage resolution, although his State rejected the proposition at the last election.

Mr. Helgesen does not regard the action of his State in the light of an instruction on a question that concerns the welfare of the nation. He gives the following as his reasons:

1. Senators and Congressmen, under their oath of office, must not only support the Constitution of the United States, but legislate for all the people of the country, and not be governed solely by the selfish interests of a majority of the voters voting in their own States or districts.

2. In order to intelligently legislate for all the people, consideration must be given to the rights and welfare of those who cannot vote as well as to those who can.

3. The right of petition is one of the most sacred constitutional rights vouchsafed to our people. This right of petition applies to women as well as to men, and does not depend upon their right to vote.

4. Congress cannot amend the Constitution, but by a two-thirds vote of its members can make it possible for the people to determine for themselves whether or not they will change the fundamental law of the land as petitioned for.

5. When many millions of people, representing every State in the Union, petition Congress to permit the people of the country to exercise their constitutional right of determining for themselves whether or not our organic law shall be amended, I contend that Congress has no right to ignore such a demand nor to take to itself the power of determining whether such change shall be made or not.

6. If woman suffrage could be granted by an act of Congress, I believe Senators and Congressmen ought to consider themselves bound by the action of the States they represent when the people of such States have recently expressed themselves on the subject at the polls; but when all that Congress can do is to submit to the States themselves the question of whether or not they want to make a change in the organic law of the nation, I believe as legislators we should take a broad enough view of the matter to take into consideration the rights of all the people of this great nation, regardless of local sentiment.

I quite agree with Mr. Saunders of Virginia when he said in a speech he made the other day on the Hobson prohibition resolution:

"The gentlemen who have discussed this proposition seem to me to have lost all sight of what is actually before us for consideration. We are not amending the Constitution of the United States. This body will never vote upon an amendment to the Constitution of the United States. We merely afford the opportunity to the States to exercise their constitutional powers of amendment under the terms of our Constitution. The States will determine whether or not in their wisdom they will add to our fundamental law."

About twenty years ago the first proposed amendment to the Constitution in respect to the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits was submitted in a report from a committee of the Senate of the United States. Upon that committee there were some great constitutional lawyers, such as Senator Pugh of Alabama and Senator George of Mississippi, both representing States in which a large majority of the people were at that time opposed to national prohibition, and yet these men had the courage and fairness to make a favorable report on said resolution, in which, among other things, they said:

"Whenever any considerable and respectable portion of the American people (and no considerable number can fail to be respectable) desire changes in the fundamental law and ask respectable consideration of their proposition by the nation at large, we hold it to be the duty of the Congress to give them a status in the court provided by the Constitution for its own amendment. They have a right that their contention be placed in proper form before the local legislatures and the people before they have demonstrated that they are able to secure its ratification by three-fourths of the States. That ratification, if it comes at all, will come as a result of agitation and discussion of the very proposition which they ask to have

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