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DOES PROHIBITION PAY?

THE TEST OF A STATE
THAT HAS PERSISTED

MAINE, AFTER FIFTY-SEVEN YEARS OF
PROHIBITION

BY HOLMAN DAY

REPRINTED FROM
APPLETON'S MAGAZINE
FOR AUGUST, 1908

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DOES PROHIBITION PAY?

II. THE TEST OF A STATE THAT HAS PERSISTED

MAINE was a pioneer in agitation and legislation for the restriction of the trade in alcoholic liquors, such a pioneer that the name of the State became a characterization, and "Maine laws" the familiar phrase in every discussion elsewhere. APPLETON'S MAGAZINE propounded the question, "Does Prohibition Pay?" in the July number, applying first the individual test in two articles, "Man and His Neighbor," by the Rev. Charles F. Aked, D.D., and "Man and Himself," by George C. Lawrence. Pursuing the same quest for a solution, the series continues this month with the following article by Holman Day, relating past and present conditions in the State of Maine. Still other articles are to follow, month by month, in the belief that they will contribute noteworthy to the sum of information on this exceedingly live topic. APPLETON'S MAGAZINE will be glad to receive letters of comment on the articles as issued, whether agreeing or disagreeing with the positions supported in these pages.—THE EDITOR.

MAINE, AFTER FIFTY-SEVEN YEARS OF PROHIBITION

By HOLMAN DAY



IT is a giant, the Maine liquor law. The ordinary Maine man who has never studied that law, and would not understand it very well if he did study it, doesn't know how big a thing it is. The fact is, we Maine Lilliputs got our strings out and began to tie that law down a half century ago, and we have been busy at the same work ever since. It has never been loose, free, and active in all its members. It would scare us all if it were. Once in a while it gets an arm loose or a leg loose and thrashes around and does some execution, and then those interested get out their strings again.

That is to say, in the fifty-seven years the Maine prohibitory law has been on our statute books it has never been actively, honestly, consistently, and thoroughly enforced as a State law through the length and breadth of Maine. I don't mean by this that lawbreakers have merely persisted in

selling despite efforts to enforce the law; I mean that the trouble has been higher up: officials have never united to do their full and plain duty in securing universal enforcement. And there isn't an honest man in the State of Maine who will declare it as his firm belief that these officials ever will do so.

That is to say, there is no better outlook for Maine than erratic, spasmodic, and sporadic enforcement, depending entirely on the moral nature of officials, local sentiment of the people, and those strange and sudden reversals of popular feeling that cannot always be explained. I am prepared to say that in most cases in Maine, in the last twenty years, where strict enforcement has followed on "wet times," the controlling motive has not been an awakened moral sentiment against liquor, but a desire to punish some official who has made too glaring an exhibition of graft—an evil that has chiefly characterized the operation of the Maine liquor law.

Understand at the outset that I am not "writing down" the Maine law. It has accomplished many things for which the State of Maine ought to be grateful. But the hypocrisy that it has engendered has been too much concerned in hiding the faults of the system; zealots have made us ridiculous by their extravagant claims as to what prohibition has done for Maine.

Any Maine lawyer will tell you that the Maine prohibitory law is the most terrible club that Reform ever shook at Rum. The Maine legislature from time to time has given the radicals almost anything they asked for in the way of new knobs for that club. That was merely playing politics. Reformers have sharp tongues, and a man ticketed as "a rummy" cannot get very far in Maine politics. Several supreme judges of the State have told me that the reformers have overreached by making the law too savage. Such laws, obnoxious to public sentiment, cannot be enforced.

Some years ago the Maine legislature changed an "or" to an "and" in the prohibitory law and made it mandatory upon judges to send rumsellers to jail as well as fine them. Chief Justice Peters declared in an interview that he should use his own discretion in spite of the law, and he called Neal Dow "a hypocritical old grandmother." The rest of the judges did as they liked about construing the new law, and it was changed back by the next legislature.

But there is law a-plenty now. If we wanted to cut all the strings and let the giant loose, we could catch a rumseller red-handed on his first day of business and do something like this to him: There would be the charge of single sale; he could be indicted on the grounds of search and seizure, common seller, nuisance, drinking house and tipping shop, and could be fined four or five thousand dollars and kept in jail for years. This *could* be done, understand! It is proper to remark that Maine uses "discretion" in handling its rumsellers.

The law is in the constitution of the State. It did not get in there through any sudden spasm of reform. It came about after years of discussion. And people in Maine, no matter how bitterly they inveigh against the scandal, hypocrisy, deceptions, and degeneracy of official character involved in the operation of the law, concede that there is small chance of the constitution being

amended. It is doubtful if a legislature can be elected that will vote even to resubmit the question to the people.

Therefore a word as to the causes that induced Maine to adopt such a law may be illuminating.

It may be admitted as a fact that in the early half of the last century Maine men were drinking too much rum for their own good. Farmers, lumbermen, shipbuilders, and fishermen—and in those days these were the workers of Maine—decided that rum strengthened the brawny arm of labor and took the edge off the asperities of Maine weather. More than two million dollars' worth of rum came annually into the port of Portland from the West Indies and was distributed to all parts of Maine. There were several distilleries in Portland. Every country store kept rum for sale. The old account books of those days make interesting reading. One sees from them that Maine men were paying more for rum than they were for flour. Drinking rum was not considered iniquity—selling it was legitimate trade. The Hon. Simon S. Brown, of Waterville, speaking at the dedication of Waterville city hall, stated that he used to attend service in a meetinghouse that stood on that site and that the minister habitually had a tumbler of rum and water on the pulpit and took a sip between whiles as he preached. And Mr. Brown is still far from being the oldest inhabitant.

Portland, having been so long the chief distributing point of the toddy of the folk of Maine, became the point also from which came the temperance spirit that resulted in Maine being the first of the American States to adopt prohibition. Away back in 1818 the Rev. Drs. Payson and Nichols called the first temperance meeting in Portland, and it was held in the Quaker meetinghouse. There were sixty-nine persons present and they were sarcastically dubbed "The Sixty-niners." As their avowed object was the suppression of the liquor traffic in Maine, they immediately met much hostility from the "business interests." A good half of the fortunes of Portland were based on rum.

An attempt was made to set fire to the Friends' meetinghouse and to Dr. Payson's church. But from that day on the ministers and the churches kept up the fight. Temperance societies were organized in all parts of Maine. At first, those who took the

pledge agreed to abstain from ardent spirits—rum and brandy. Then the pledge embraced all liquors, and the teetotalers became identified with the reform movement.

When still a young man Neal Dow became the head of the movement and lectured on the subject from end to end of the State during many years. Maine was flooded with literature designed to educate the people along the lines of temperance. All this evangelistic work bore fruit when the Washingtonian temperance movement swept the country. Maine organized quickly. The seeds of reform had been sown in every community.

After several attempts had been made by Neal Dow to have the Maine legislature pass a prohibitory law, he appeared before a joint special legislative committee May 26, 1851, with the draft of such a law, and no one appeared in opposition. On May 29th the bill passed the Maine House by a vote of 81 to 40. It passed the senate next day by a vote of 18 to 10. On Monday, June 2d, Governor Hubbard signed it, though many members of the legislature who had voted for its passage went to the governor privately and urged him to veto it; they represented to him that they had been obliged to vote for it by the politician's first law of self-preservation, for the vote margin in their districts was so small between Whigs and Democrats that the radical temperance men held the balance of power.

Therefore, it is apparent that the political hypocrisy that has always been associated with the Maine law was born with the law in 1851. That same hypocrisy in regard to honest enforcement has never failed to characterize it ever since.

In 1855, following the Portland "rum riot," the anti-Maine Law forces captured the State and the law was repealed. But it became so evident that a political party to be successful in Maine needed that law behind it, that the next legislature, controlled by the new Republican party, promptly reinstated the law. Since then the Republicans have made prohibition a part of their platform. In 1884 the people of the State voted to put the law into the constitution by a decisive majority of three to one—70,783 for, 23,811 against. And there it has been ever since, and there it will doubt-

less remain, if the opinion of the most sagacious political observers of Maine is to be relied on.

From time to time it has been tinkered—new teeth put in. All changes have been in the direction of greater stringency. The Maine legislature has been so willing to give the reformers all they asked for that on several occasions they have passed new clauses that were found to be unconstitutional.

At nearly every session of the legislature an ardent little band of resubmissionists has appeared before the committee on temperance; they have presented their side and have had good orators on the floor of house and senate. They have never been able to muster more than a handful of votes.

Such being the law, such being the method of its enforcement, and such being its probable future on Maine's statute books, how about it as an asset?

It is almost a waste of time to go about asking Maine men what they think of the law as a good thing for Maine. To be perfectly honest, we folks in Maine haven't made up our minds. In a newspaper experience of more than twenty years I never found two Maine men who agreed on all points regarding the Maine law. Recently a hit-or-miss canvass of citizens was made in the larger cities of the State. It was only another case of "many men and many minds." After reading the opinions it would be difficult to give an intelligent summary. Between the extremes of "monumental farce" and "the best thing Maine ever did for itself," there are hundreds of varying opinions, according to the slant of a man's mind. The Rev. Dr. Blanchard, of Portland, says: "I voted for the constitutional amendment and took part in the great thanksgiving meeting in Portland city hall when the amendment was carried. The Rev. Dr. Miner, one of the most ardent prohibitionists in the country, had told me he thought it a great mistake to put prohibition in the constitution. My eyes were opened to the great evils of prohibition in a very few years. The more I have seen of the operation of the law I am the more convinced that a wiser law might have been placed upon our statute books and enforced." The Hon. Charles F. Libby, leader of the Cumberland bar, says: "The good the law has done is more than offset

by the evils it has brought with it. It has bred hypocrisy, encouraged perjury in our courts, led to corruption of our officials, given prominence in public life to a poor set of politicians, has destroyed the frankness in statesmen that ennobles men in other States, and has not been effective." Stiff arraignment from sources not to be lightly impugned!

But, on the other hand, there are scores of able champions of the law who show that the open saloon no longer entices the young, that the traffic has been so outlawed that only the most depraved toppers will chase it into the corners where it has been driven, and that no law can absolutely prevent crime. The Rev. A. S. Bisbee, superintendent for Maine of the Anti-Saloon League of America, draws attention to the fact that there are more than 225,000 depositors in savings banks in Maine, nearly twice the number of voters. The average per capita is \$146.14. "If a system that puts a savings-bank book into the hands of every third person in Maine, children included, is a failure, then prohibition is a failure," remarks Mr. Bisbee.

Between such divergent views as to the evils or the benefits of prohibition, what are the facts regarding the vagaries of enforcement? It doesn't require argument to show that if prohibition really prohibited, Maine would be a model for the world. The leading wholesale liquor salesman of the Maine district said to me the other day: "There isn't a word to be said in defense of Old King Rum. We'd all be better off if it were not made and sold. But so long as the people of Maine want to buy rum I'm going to sell it to them." There is no pretense made by even the most earnest advocate of prohibition that any man in Maine who wants liquor is going without it.

No one must make the error of believing that the men of Maine are any different from the ordinary run of humanity in respect to their tastes. They closely resemble their brothers in license States.

The well-stocked sideboard is as common a feature in Maine as it is in other parts of the United States. And yet, under the Maine law, should an enemy for spite make complaint, a citizen who invited in his neighbors occasionally and gave them something to drink in the way of strong waters would be liable to indictment, fine, and im-

prisonment on the ground of maintaining a nuisance.

Private packages of liquor addressed to citizens are not disturbed by the officers. Even if they are seized and libeled the citizen can prove property, allege they are not intended for illegal sale, and may take them home.

This express-package traffic has developed a new feature in the liquor business. There are scores of so-called express companies doing business in Maine cities. Recent raids and seizures and the succeeding trials in court have shown that these "express companies" really have but little other business than soliciting orders for liquors and delivering the same to customers. They carry an "on-hand" stock from which immediate deliveries are made. Judge Peabody, presiding at the last term of the Androscoggin court, sentenced the agent of one of these companies to pay a fine of eight hundred dollars and serve eight months in jail. The agent was unable to explain the kind of rapid transit that gave a purchaser a keg of beer in his cellar in less than an hour after he ordered the express company to ship the beer from Boston to Lewiston. The judge decided that it was more of a liquor store than an express company.

This express business and other forms of evading the law have sprung up since the so-called "Sturgis law" went into operation in Maine, and this "Sturgis law," or enforcement statute, has produced a state of affairs in Maine that deserves a little special consideration.

A few years ago Maine's system of enforcement certainly did deserve all the fun that was poked at it from outside; it was not so much of a joke, viewed from within the State.

The "Bangor plan" was in operation. Prohibition spasms may come and go, but it has never been possible to make Bangor dry. Bangor simply won't dry up, that's all. A Bangor daily paper is the only one in the State that defies the law and runs a liquor advertisement regularly. The proprietor, a wealthy man, has been indicted for the offense on complaint of the Civic League agitators, but he keeps on running the advertisement, not so much for the money there is in it as for the purpose of displaying the true Bangor "red-rag" sentiment on the rum question.

So Bangor put its name to the only systematic and universally recognized nullification of the Maine law. The sheriff and county attorney allowed a certain number of saloons and hotels to sell liquor. Prior to the term of court at which fines were to be "assessed," the county attorney, or his agent, went to the office of the collector of internal revenue at Portsmouth, N. H., and drew off a list of the names of those in the county who were paying a special liquor retailer's tax to the United States Government. Then the county attorney presented this list to the grand jury and it was accepted as evidence that each party was a dealer in liquor and the parties were accordingly indicted on that evidence alone, and accepted the indictment without protest and came up to the "cap'n's" office and settled without demur. Each paid the regular fine and costs, amounting to one hundred and ten dollars. Usually the county "assessed" twice a year. That made a comfortably low license.

Penobscot County paid off its county debt and built a handsome new court house while that plan was in operation.

Other counties adopted the system, until the majority of them were engaged in a profitable business with rumsellers, the taxpayers as silent partners. A few stanch old temperance counties would not tolerate the plan. In those counties men kept out of the rum business. The sheriff of a ramrod county knew that popular sentiment called on him to enforce the law. Sheriffs in other counties knew just as well that their constituents wanted the traffic "regulated." So that the matter of handling the Maine constitutional law became after all merely a local issue to be determined according as the people felt or as the sheriff thought they felt or ought to feel.

I recollect that at about that time the Woman's Christian Temperance Union of Maine, an organization that is effectively felt in State politics, made a pilgrimage in force to Houlton, the home of Governor Powers, and presented to him an appeal that he order the sheriffs of the State of Maine to do their duty and suppress the liquor traffic. Governor Powers received them politely and said he would write a letter to the sheriffs. But he told me at the time, before writing the letter, that really he had no authority or power to make the officers

pick out one law and pay especial attention to it. As the law then stood on the books, the governor of the State had no part or parcel in enforcing the prohibitory statute. It was before the days of the "Sturgis law." The sheriffs replied pleasantly to the governor that they were doing all they could to enforce all the laws on the statute books, and some of them exhibited his Excellency's letter and made merry over it, being able to read between the lines—for Governor Powers is Maine's most sagacious politician.

But after the Bangor plan got started doing its snug little business all over Maine, the sheriffs in a number of counties overreached and made it a bit too snug. The charges were freely made that the rumsellers were invited into a close corporation, only approved men being allowed to open places. These men have declared that they paid to officers certain sums each month, so much on a barrel of beer or ale, so much on "hard liquors." No one ventured to explain by what right sheriffs or their agents collected such sums. But the fact that they were being collected was a matter of common knowledge and it took the voters from two to four years to get mad enough to remedy the situation. In some counties, with his profits from the board of prisoners, his fees, and his "side business," the sheriff cleaned up from twenty to twenty-five thousand dollars a year. The governor's salary was two thousand dollars!

It is apparent that the prohibitory pendulum had swung as far to one side as it would go. If a farce writer, building a play on the comedy of the thing, were to say that Portland, and Cumberland county, after tolerating open saloons for half a dozen years, would turn around and elect for high sheriff the clergyman at the head of a temperance mission, the idea would be considered far-fetched. But that is what Cumberland did. And the Rev. Henry Pearson put on a silk hat with a cockade on the side of it and started in to close up the barrooms. But enforcement of that drastic sort suited the people so ill that the county next elected a Democratic sheriff who introduced the "Pennell plan," another system of regulation that the thirsty welcomed.

Then Androscoggin County, containing the second largest city in the State, nominated and elected a Methodist minister to

be high sheriff, but strict enforcement was so little to the taste of Androscoggin, after it had been tried, that the county went Democratic when the minister was renominated—the county's first political overturn in twenty years. As a matter of fact, the county did not want enforcement. The voters had simply got mad because the Bangor-plan sheriffs had "been doing too well financially." When Androscoggin went Democratic its saloon forces dusted out their shops and prepared for business. A typical Maine saloon of the "Bangor-plan" variety is worth a glance. It isn't especially retiring. It makes just a little pretense at not being a saloon. In the front shop are empty cigar boxes on shelves or in cases. There is a bar in the back shop. In troublous times these back shops are barricaded by "strong doors." A man on watch gives the signal when officers are approaching, and before they can batter through the strong door the liquors on hand are spilled down a sink. In troublous times the main stocks of liquors are kept in hides at some distance from the saloons. Of course not every stranger would recognize a cigar-box masked saloon. I have seen proprietors sprinkle whisky on the sidewalk in front of the place to attract the noses of those wandering in search of a drink.

Well, Androscoggin County and Cumberland and other counties did not open up for business for a tidy term of two years as they had anticipated when they had shelved the ramrods which they had invited into office and had promptly tossed out.

The "Sturgis law" happened!

William T. Cobb, of Rockland, was elected governor of Maine four years ago, and in his inaugural address he made folks sit up and blink hard when he declared that Maine ought to be ashamed of itself to have a constitutional prohibitory law on its books and make it a football of politics and a laughingstock for the nation. He said that if the people didn't want such a law they ought to repeal it. But that so long as it was on the books he proposed to see it enforced, and he called for some kind of enactment that would give him the power as governor to enforce it as a State law. That is to say, he did not propose to allow the law to be made the subject of local option.

The old politicians decided promptly and indignantly that Governor Cobb had more

courage than good judgment. Cities and counties sputtered about being deprived of self-government, but the governor went on and a bill was introduced in the legislature, with Senator Sturgis, of Cumberland, as its sponsor, and after a tremendously hot fight it was passed to be enacted. The governor intimated grimly that he would keep that legislature there all summer if it did not pass something to give him power to enforce.

The law authorized the governor to appoint three commissioners with salaries of fifteen hundred dollars each, and he picked out three men of unimpeachable integrity and proven fearlessness. The law further provided that the governor, in effect, had the whole resources of the State treasury behind him. The commissioners could appoint as many special deputies as they cared to and could cover all parts of the State. These men receive a per diem and their expenses. They promptly got busy, almost two-score of them.

They descended first on that Democratic county of Androscoggin that had thrown out its Republican enforcement Methodist minister, and they remained in Androscoggin month after month, and are in Democratic Androscoggin to-day. The aspersion that the Sturgis law was being worked principally for politics attached to the governor and his commission at the start, therefore, and still sticks. The work that has been done by the commission in other counties has been spasmodic. In the home town of one of the commissioners there are saloons and have been saloons ever since the commission was appointed. It is a town with a large foreign population, and labor conditions would be disturbed were the workers deprived of their beer. The commissioner is largely interested in the industries of the town. The commissioners did not send deputies to Republican Bangor until the open-saloon conditions there were so flagrant that all the temperance papers of the State took up the cry of favoritism and demanded impartial enforcement.

In Cumberland the Democratic sheriff declared that if there was going to be enforcement he would attend to it himself, and he did so rather effectually until a few months ago, when there was a "loosening." When the sheriff let up and the Sturgis commissioners—this being an election year

—were discreetly quiet, the Mayor of Portland astonished everyone by putting his whole force of policemen on the job—the first time the police of a Maine city have taken a hand in suppressing the liquor traffic in many years. At the present time, with an election imminent, the Republican commission is, to say the least, not stirring up opposition by widespread attempts at enforcement.

The temper of the people of Maine was shown last election when Cobb, who was elected by more than 25,000 plurality before he had espoused the enforcement idea, found his plurality cut down to 7,500. At the close of that campaign one of its managers remarked that it "was evident that the folks of Maine wanted prohibition, but did not want it enforced." An attempt was made at the last session of the legislature to repeal the Sturgis law; its foes won in the first passage of the act, but the governor vetoed the bill and his veto was sustained. It is generally predicted that the next legislature will repeal the law, and thus will depart Maine's only real and earnest attempt to enforce the Maine law as a State-wide statute, instead of leaving it to the local option of municipalities.

What has been the condition of affairs generally in Maine during this enforcement of the law—the best enforcement we have ever witnessed despite its failure to use all counties alike?

In the jail of Androscoggin County, where there has been most consistent and rigorous enforcement, there are more prisoners than ever before in the jail's history. Arrests for intoxication the past year in Maine cities have averaged 25½ to the thousand of population. The average in New England is 18½ to the thousand. In Portland arrests were over 55 to the thousand, and in Bangor 100 to the thousand. There are scores of "phony expresses" doing business in private packages. One agent, on trial, said that he averaged one hundred and fifty deliveries daily in Portland. During the dry time in Lewiston the city liquor agency, conducted under the State law to supply liquor for medicinal and mechanical purposes, averaged a business of more than one thousand dollars a week, and the population of the city is less than thirty thousand.

Other municipal agencies did a corre-

spondingly large business. The agency system is Maine's prohibitory safety valve. Enforcement coupled with a closed municipal agency would breed revolt. The State liquor agent sold \$110,000 worth of liquors last year. These agencies carry full lines of all kinds of liquors, even bottled cocktails, the exact medicinal use of which is not stated. The last legislature threatened to investigate the whole agency system, but the serious illness of the State agent interfered with the plans for hearings.

Lastly, in considering the ways for getting liquor, we come to the so-called kitchen barrooms—places where strong drink is dispensed in the homes, and in Lewiston where they flourish most rankly there are hundreds of such places. There is no regulation of them. The veriest toper who has the price can buy. The quality of the liquor dispensed can hardly be described. Chemists who have analyzed some of it after its capture by officers say that it is composed of alcohol, tobacco steepings, and stupefying drugs. Much of this stuff is compounded in Maine, and the makers of it buy labels, corks, and caps in New York or Boston and produce a neat "long-necker" of apparently good whisky. Many victims of this stuff have died after being arrested for intoxication and men apparently crazed by the compound have hanged themselves in their cells. I am advancing no arguments from these statements. I am simply mentioning some facts that may be interesting to those unfamiliar with conditions in a State that has been practicing prohibition—in its statutes—for fifty-seven years.

Visitors to Maine always have occasion to speak of the prevalence of drinking on railroad trains in the State. The passed bottle is universally seen in smoking cars.

In rural communities various patent medicines are used as intoxicants, and "jaky drunks" are common. The last is the Maine name for a Jamaica-ginger jag. Men will drink down bottle after bottle of that fiery stuff.

The farmer has his cider jug. Cider is exempt from the provisions of the statute, so far as its manufacture and sale for culinary purposes go. But a man is liable to arrest if he sells it for a beverage.

What is Maine going to do?

Two years ago there was widespread talk of resubmission. The Republican political

managers got a bit nervous. That ramrod enforcement—in spots—under the Sturgis law had made Maine men rebellious against the powers that were depriving them of a chance to buy tippie over a bar. There seemed to be only one voice in the cities. Influential men were clamoring for a chance to vote on the amendment. The newer generation in Maine had never had an opportunity to register their voice in the matter. Even many of the radical temperance men of the State advised that the law be resubmitted. They believed that the sentiment of Maine is strongly against high license and that a vote would clinch the case for the prohibitory amendment more strongly. I was asked by the chairman of the Republican State Committee to make a preliminary canvass of the sentiment of the people of Maine—being manager of the publicity bureau of the campaign. Some of the State committee—in fact at one time a majority of them—advocated putting a resubmission plank in the platform.

It should be understood that the voting strength of the rural sections of Maine is three times greater than the strength of the cities. I discovered that the great silent forces of Maine that were not doing much talking were unwaveringly in favor of retaining the prohibitory law as it was. Resubmissionists were at the State convention with ardent pleas—not for high license! Each expressly declared that the ultimate end of another vote was not high license. But they were young men asking for the right to vote on the great matter. When the matter was submitted to the vote of the convention only sixteen men out of 1,323 delegates stood up to be counted for resubmission. The others came upon their feet in opposition. But it was well understood that political policy dictated that stand on the part of a considerable portion of that majority. The Hon. George D. Bisbee, speaking for the policy of reaffirming the prohibitory plank, made his strongest point when he said: "Gentlemen, if you adopt that resubmission plank you will have every one of the five hundred ministers of Maine talking against the Republican party."

In that campaign nearly every minister in Maine held a midweek meeting to advocate the reelection of Governor Cobb, and the Prohibition party gave up its life in or-

der to vote for him. The party went out of existence at that last election. But even then Cobb had only 7,500 votes for a plurality, a margin so narrow that the managers gasped.

Two years ago the Hon. William T. Haines, believing that the cry for resubmission came from the hearts of the people, in announcing himself as a candidate for governor expressed his conviction that the amendment should be resubmitted, and declared in behalf of drug stores being allowed to sell liquor, in order that pure liquors might be dispensed under control of reputable men.

Mr. Haines has been "resoluted against" by church conventions, ministers' meetings, and temperance societies, and now, on the eve of the Republican State Convention, beholds his rival for nomination, the Hon. B. M. Fernald, who has declared for prohibition, starting for Bangor with enough pledged delegates to insure nomination on the first ballot.

Therefore, Maine, through its dominant political party, will once again declare for prohibition and its enforcement, and—unless all signs are wrong—the next legislature will repeal our only enforcement law. With the old system of local option, and each county once again its own moral mentor and master of its own actions, Maine will recommence the *régime* that the old politicians found so handy and so comfortable, when administered properly. In the meantime, it would be interesting to see the figures by which some one should attempt to prove that prohibition, as Maine knows it, is saving the State anything on its whisky bill. On the other hand, I am glad with thousands of my Maine neighbors that there are no saloons in Maine. There's a good argument for prohibition—if we could engage a few demigods to come here to Maine and enforce it. There's no real good argument for a rumshop, picking up the nickels and dimes.

I trust you have not read thus far looking for a solution of the rum question. We cannot settle it here in Maine. We've given it up. We can merely do the best that poor human nature will let us do. The big question is just as far from being settled as it was when Noah got tired of too much cold water, got his "stuff," and made a fool of himself.