

lest in their Sunday traffic so long as they loyally supported the Tammany ticket. Under this agreement all of the saloon keepers who had neither wealth nor political pull became the abject slaves of Tammany Hall. The rich saloon keepers, those who possessed great political influence, were in their turn the masters of the police. A police captain could rule with an iron rod all of the small saloon keepers in his district, and he in turn had to pay unquestioning obedience to the demands of the larger ones.

The patrolmen either knew, or were soon taught, that they must not meddle with any protected saloon. Only recently I came across a curious case in which this lesson was taught. A new patrolman from the country was put upon a given beat for the first time. He knew that under the law all saloons had to close at one o'clock. A big corner saloon kept by a noted Tammany politician remained open after the hours, as a matter of course. The smaller saloons in the neighborhood had closed. The policeman put his head in the door and directed the proprietor to close. The proprietor regarded this as a joke. It was something so novel in his experience he could not understand that it had a serious side. After making his rounds once again the policeman, finding the place still lighted, walked in and told them to shut forthwith. They regarded it first with amazement, then with anger, and finally told him that he had better mind his own business and leave. Thereupon he replied that he would instantly arrest the saloon keeper and his assistants if they did not close. Accordingly, close they did, but sent word immediately to the police station. At the station the news created more consternation. In fifteen minutes an officer had been sent around to the too zealous policeman, who was taken off that beat and put on another where there were no saloons. In five minutes after the saloon was again blazing with light and in full blast. Three or four complaints were soon afterward lodged against the countryman for trivial faults, and in a very few weeks he had learned the lesson of being blind unless his superiors chose to order his eyes open.

Another case which came within my personal knowledge may also be interesting. A certain officer arrested the lookout man of a saloon whose owner was an influential politician. The lookout man's friends came to his assistance, assaulted the officer, and injured him very severely. Instead of commending him for his actions, the Board actually fined him severely on a trumped-up charge of assault, and the saloon was not again molested.

Instances of this kind happened again and again. The utter demoralization of the Police Board, which they signalized, need hardly be insisted on. It was a simple impossibility to make the department honest and clean without rooting out this evil. The blackmailing of the saloons by a partial administration of the law had been the chief of all the causes that tended to corrupt the New York police force. Any honest board, even entirely apart from considerations of enforcing the law, was bound to try to remove this evil, and the evil could be removed but in one way—that is, by the thorough enforcement of the law.

It again seems incredible, but various high officials of the Federal and State Governments, actually including the Internal Revenue Collector for the district, appeared before the Mayor to request him to stop the police officials from obeying their oaths of office and honestly enforcing the law. The Mayor, of course, would not stop them; indeed, he could not have stopped them even had he wished. The Police Board would obey the Mayor in every matter possible; but no obedience could be accorded to any one if the command was to violate the oath of office. The attitude taken by the men who made this demand was as essentially immoral as the attitude of any other allies of the criminal class. The apology for their action must be the same apology that is advanced for lynchings, and that is again advanced on behalf of the Government officials who fail to put down lynching. When the Legislature deliberately puts laws on the statute books which the executive officials deliberately disregard, and enforce only against the weak, the result is to put a premium upon corruption and lawlessness; that is, upon attempts to supplement or take advantage of the defects of the law by individual action. Fundamentally the difference between this Internal Revenue Collector and his fellows, who wish the New

York officials to violate their oath of office, on the one hand, and, on the other, the peace officers who fail to protect a prisoner from lynchings, is one of degree and not of kind. Each set of men could advance the plea that the public sentiment of a particular locality was, perhaps, not favorable to the enforcement of the law in a particular case or cases. The only answer to this is that executive officers have to do, not with wild guesses by interested parties at public sentiment, but with public sentiment as embodied in the law of the land.

The Police Board is a unit in insisting that the law shall be observed. The Board will not be swayed by any considerations, personal or partisan, and it absolutely declines to take the view that it is necessary, in the interest of reform, that reformers should violate the laws they are sworn to enforce. We believe that the majority of the people are law-abiding, and will uphold the honest observance of law. But be this as it may, whatever the outcome, the Police Board clearly sees its duty, and will not shrink from performing it.

NEW YORK CITY.

THE POLICE AND THE SALOONS.

THE HONEST ENFORCEMENT OF THE LAWS—HOW THE SUNDAY LAW WAS MADE AN INSTRUMENT FOR BLACKMAIL—POLICEMEN REBUKED FOR CAUSING PROTECTED SALOONS TO CLOSE—THE NEW SPIRIT OF THE ADMINISTRATION.

BY THE HON. THEODORE ROOSEVELT,
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To me the issue seems so perfectly simple that it is very difficult to see how there can be an honest difference of opinion on the subject. The Police Board stands simply and squarely on the issue of the honest observance of law. All laws should be observed; all should be executed alike.

It is doubtless true that in most communities there are laws which are unimportant, or which are utterly obsolete; but it is better to have even these statutes observed until taken off the books; and the moment that we get an important law which is but partially observed, or is violated at the will of the executive officers, it becomes the most fruitful source of political corruption.

The position of the Police Board needs no vindication, but if it did, no more ample vindication could be desired than that furnished by a recent publication in *The Wine and Spirits Gazette*. In this it is recited, as a mere matter of history, that Governor Hill wished to pass a law which would open the saloons on Sunday, but admitted that it could not be done on account of the hostile sentiment of the State. The liquor sellers then complained of the way in which they were blackmailed by the Tammany police. The next step in the transaction seems almost incredible; but it is related as a mere matter of course. The liquor sellers laid before the Tammany Board of Police their grievances on the question of blackmail, and the blackmail was commuted for political service. It was agreed that the saloons should not be mo-