

WHISKY GREATEST MENACE TO INDIAN, U. S. OFFICIAL SAYS

Warning Letter by Commissioner Will Be Read in Schools for Redmen on Tuesday.

RACE IS AN EASY PREY

Unscrupulous Persons Profit by Liquor Weakness, Cato Asserts.

Special to the Post-Dispatch. MUSKOGEE, Ok., April 4.—A letter written by Cato Sells, United States Commissioner of Indian Affairs, on the evils of the liquor traffic among Indians will be read to every student body of Indians in the United State on April 6. This letter has been addressed to 6000 Government employes in the Indian service.

"I believe," says Commissioner Sells in his letter, "that the greatest menace to the American Indian is whisky. It does more to destroy his constitution and invite the ravages of disease than anything else. It does more to demoralize him as a man and frequently as a woman. It does more to make him an easy prey to the unscrupulous than everything else combined. Let us save the American Indian from the curse of whisky. There is nothing that could induce me, since I have taken the oath of office as Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to touch a single drop of any sort of intoxicating liquor, and this regardless of my attitude on the prohibition question."

Open Saloon Scenes Decried.
The bulk of the Indian population of the United States is in Oklahoma. Many years ago, under a mistaken view of the meaning of old Federal laws, saloons were open for a short time in Indian Territory, now the eastern part of Oklahoma. The drinking conduct of the Indian was incredible. Those who patronized the bar at Muskogee astonished even the barkeepers. They drank their beer or whisky—usually whisky—one glass after another, with scarcely a moment's intermission, until they sank to the floor in a stupor. Some found it necessary to steady themselves against the bar with one hand, while with the other they lifted their glass.

After an annuity payment, the Osages used to assemble two or three hundred at a time at Ralston and Cleveland, Oklahoma, on the south side of the Arkansas river, across from the Osage country, where under the laws of Oklahoma Territory, open saloons were permitted. It was a violation of Federal law to sell whisky to Indians, but there were saloon keepers and boot-leggers willing to take the risk. The sole purpose of each Indian was to get drunk, and as quickly as possible. His idea of a good time was to drink until he could no longer walk and lie asleep until he was sober.

One Man Remained Sober.
The Osages proceeded upon their debauches in a methodical manner. To one man of influence—and much physical strength—was assigned the task of remaining sober and keeping order, as the Osages frequently were inclined to fight among themselves in the first stages of intoxication. This man was armed with only a stout club, which he used with telling effect when he found it necessary to control an obstreperous brave. A hundred drunken Indians caused less fear among the white women of these towns than would two rampant members of their own race. The guard with his hickory club was largely responsible, however, for this feeling of security.

When everybody else had had his fling, the guard was free to relax from duties and indulge in what literally was a "high lonesome." He got drunk by himself just as he might go swimming or as he might eat alone. He often incurred the penalty of being too conspicuous, with the result that he was arrested and locked in jail. A further stroke of bad luck was that his companions usually left town without trying to release him.

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MAJOR WALROND, MUSKOGEE'S FIRST LAWYER IS DEAD

Was Admitted to Earliest Court in Oklahoma Twenty-five Years Ago

Judge Z. T. Walrond, the first lawyer ever admitted to practice before an Oklahoma court and a resident of Muskogee for twenty-five years, died at a local hospital last night following an illness of several weeks.

April 1, 1889, the first court ever established in what is now Oklahoma was opened at Muskogee by the United States government. Judge Walrond then a resident of Kansas, had been appointed district attorney and when the court was opened, he was granted the first license by Judge J. M. Shackelford.

Judge Walrond, only recently, was honored by election as head of the Muskogee Bar association. He was active in the practice of law until a few weeks before his last illness. He is survived by a wife and daughter, Miss Lucille. He was a Knight Templar and an elder in the First Presbyterian church. The funeral will be under the auspices of the Masonic lodge but arrangements have not yet been completed. Judge Walrond was 67 years old.

Of the residents now living in Muskogee who were here when Judge Walrond came, there are C. W. Turner, W. S. Harsha, H. B. Spaulding, W. A. Lubbes, Henry C. Cobb, Frank Hubbard, J. A. Scott, Joshua Ross and N. B. Maxey. He found Muskogee a straggling little village and left it a city. He contributed no small part to the development here and remained to the last a true Muskogee booster.

Official letter of Aug-10-25. R. 225-

*See Michigan Aug-19, 93
 Letter to Com. Oct-18, ..
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