

OPERATION OF THE
Injunction and Abatement Law
IN KANSAS CITY

**A Report of the Secretary of the Society
For Suppression of Commercialized Vice**

MAY 24, 1922

INCORPORATED

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THE INJUNCTION AND ABATEMENT LAW IN KANSAS CITY

Three successive Missouri legislatures refused to adopt an "Injunction and Abatement Law" but the General Assembly of 1921 passed the bill and the law went into effect in June, 1921.

No. 1. The first application of the Injunction and Abatement law was against the property of Annie Chambers at 201-3 West Third St. The temporary injunction has been made permanent. Annie Chambers violated the injunction and as a penalty spent a week in jail. She has appealed the case to the supreme court on the ground of unconstitutionality. In the meantime the madam has given a \$500.00 bond to use the place only for legitimate purposes.

No. 2. A property at Fifth and Grand Avenue had been used for years as an immoral resort. Upon learning that our society contemplated applying for an injunction the agent closed the place. Later investigation revealed no signs of its former use.

No. 3. A hotel on East 15th had a bad police record. A warning letter to the proprietor was not replied to but we have no further evidence of its improper use.

No. 4. A rooming house on Whittier place harbored inmates who were convicted of immoral practices in the South Side Court. A warning letter to the owner brought the occupants to the Society's office. They promised to do all in their power to keep the place clean. The police later found further bad evidence. The matter was again taken up with the owner and the lessee again made protestations of doing everything possible to operate the place as it should be. Later investigation revealed nothing wrong.

No. 5. A 12th St. property was used for immoral purposes. Upon taking the case up with the owner it was found that he had already had the place vacated and no further action was necessary.

No. 6. A McGee street house has had a bad record for years as an immoral resort. In reply to our notification the owner said that there must be some mistake but that he would take the matter up with the occupant. Investigation later showed nothing irregular but the place is still under surveillance.

No. 7 . Another McGee street building is an old time house of prostitution. Recent bad evidence was secured. The owner was located in Iowa. He disclaims all desire to own such a place and assured us of his co-operation in cleaning it up. Nothing wrong has been found there lately.

No. 8. A lower Broadway house has a bad recent record. The owner was notified by registered mail but the letter was returned. We have not yet found the owner's correct address but the place is now used for other purposes.

No. 9. A place on McGee St. near the Post- Office revealed bad conditions. The owners are located in Lexington, Ky. The police have raided the place and have secured convictions. Our evidence shows continued bad conditions. The case is being followed up. The agent later came to our office and assured us the place would be cleaned up. This has been done.

No. 10. A North Side hotel was raided by the police and several convictions secured. Our letter to the owner brought a prompt call from the proprietor who says he will not knowingly allow improper conduct in his place and will use every effort to keep the place clean. He asks our co-operation in ridding the place of any objectionable characters. Later investigation has revealed nothing out of the way.

No. 11. This place on McGee street near In-

dependence Avenue has been raided by the police and convictions secured. Our own later investigation revealed continued bad conditions. The owner has received our notification as evidenced by the returned registered letter receipt. We have not yet heard from the owner.

No. 12. The ownership of an East 12th street hotel with an exceptionally bad record is now being ascertained and a warning letter will be sent.

No. 13. This was an active house of prostitution on Independence Avenue whose owners promptly overcame the bad condition.

No. 14. This is a bad negro house on East Sixth street and its ownership is being looked up.

No. 15. This place is an old time bawdy house on Seventh street. We are searching the records for its ownership.

No. 16. A warning letter will be sent when the ownership is confirmed.

No. 17. This is an old time negro resort. Its owners have been sent a notification and have promised to clean up the place.

No. 18. This place is near the preceding one and we have just received the receipt for our notification.

The last eight cases have been taken up very recently and there has not had sufficient time as yet to work them all out; but in general, the operation of the Injunction and Abatement law has been exceedingly helpful in combatting vice. Real estate owners do not want injunctions and our organization has no desire to secure them providing the owners will clean up their premises without them. We appreciate the co-operation we have received and believe that the Injunction and Abatement law will meet the anticipations of its sponsors.

During the first three months of this year vice

was decidedly in check in Kansas City. There has not been a time in the eight years our Society has been in operation when moral conditions here were so good as in January, February and March 1922. Since that time there has been a decided slump in decency. Street walking has been resumed, solicitations from windows are frequent and old time bawdy houses are again in operation.

The underworld has interpreted the election to mean that the bars are down. The police make the arrests but they do not have full co-operation of the courts and the results are disastrous. It is up to the people of Kansas City to demand the enforcement of law.

NAT SPENCER,
Secretary of the Society for Suppression of
Commercialized Vice.



