

COUNCILMEN VOTE TO CLOSE SALOONS

Action in Committee Likely to Be Upset at the Monday Meeting.

OAKLAND, May 24.—By a vote of 5 to 4 the committee of the whole of the City Council of Oakland to-night decided to recommend to the Council the passage of Councilman Elliot's resolution closing the saloons, wholesale liquor stores and drug stores of the city, so far as the sale of liquor is concerned, for an indefinite period.

President Fitzgerald and Councilman Baccus were absent from to-night's meeting. Both Fitzgerald and Baccus are opposed to closing the saloons, and if they are present Monday night and vote as they voted last Monday night, the resolution will be beaten, and the saloons will remain open.

The hopes of those who advocate closing the saloons is centered not on Fitzgerald or Baccus, but upon Councilman Aitken. The latter was absent last Monday night when the resolution was lost in the Council by a tie vote. He was present to-night and voted against the resolution, and he did so without reservation. This morning, however, some of Aitken's Seventh Ward constituents met and passed resolutions censuring him for his statements in opposition to the resolution, made in interviews with local newspaper men. The men who advocate closing think that it may be possible to swing Aitken's vote, but those who know him know him as a man who is not easily swayed from a position once taken, and as a result of to-night's vote the advocates of a wide-open town, not the forces of decency, are jubilant.

The meeting was a warm one. Before taking any action publicly the Council met in executive session, Mayor Mott and others being closeted with them. This session was a lengthy one, but finally the open session was called to order. Councilman Meese was chosen to preside, in the absence of President Fitzgerald, and he warned the crowd that filled every available foot of space within the Council chamber that there must be no demonstration of any kind.

Elliot took the floor to explain that the resolution fathered by him had been slightly amended in executive

session before it was presented to the Council. He attacked President Fitzgerald, who was absent, for the criticism the latter has passed upon the resolution, alleging that Fitzgerald was unfair.

Then an audience was given those interested in the matter, and Henry P. Edoff, P. N. Hanrahan, Rev. Dr. Charles Brown and two or three others were heard from. Edoff, who is a prominent wholesaler of liquor in San Francisco, spoke not for liquor interests, but for the Oakland relief committee, and he denounced vehemently the statement that the \$50,000 of relief funds would be paid to Oakland only if the saloons should close.

"It was decided to give Oakland \$100,000," he said. "Fifty thousand dollars of that has been paid and the other half was assured before our saloons were opened. It was promised by President Wheeler, by Dr. Devine, by Mr. Stratton, and no question of saloons can enter into the matter."

Hanrahan opposed the resolution and Dr. Brown advocated its passage. Then Councilman Burns sprung a typewritten reply to a letter written by Fred S. Stratton to an Oakland paper in which Burns roasted Stratton to the best of his ability and used some extremely pointed language.

Burns really got before the crowd, however, by proposing an amendment to the effect that all saloon licenses be revoked. He said it was only fair to the saloon-keepers. Elliot said the thing was vicious, in that it would open the way to all sorts of politics when it came to granting licenses again. Elliot said that he didn't believe the Oakland Council could be trusted to handle 260 licenses.

The amendment, seconded by Aitken, was lost by a vote of 4 to 5—Aitken, Burns, Hahn and McAdam voted in favor, and Meese, Pendleton, Elliot, Thurston and Donaldson were opposed.

Then the vote was taken on the original resolution, and it was reported favorably by the following vote: Ayes—Donaldson, Elliot, Meese, Pendleton, Thurston, 5. Noes—Aitken, Burns, Hahn, McAdam, 4.