

LOCAL OPTION has had its fairest trial in Owen Sound. If it has failed there, it can succeed nowhere. Read what the Mayor of Owen Sound says of **LOCAL OPTION'S** effect on a town:

TO ALL WHOM IT CONCERNS

Owen Sound Nov. 27, 1907

"Local Option differs in operation very little from the Dunkin Act, which was tried in Owen Sound some years ago.

"In Owen Sound there is a good, capable License Inspector, who does what he can to enforce the law, but public sentiment is against doing so, notwithstanding the large majority by which it was carried, and liquor is sold in large quantities yet. There has not been a single instance of anyone having been sent to gaol, although several convictions have been secured against nine hotels here. Lately some seventeen informations were laid by the License Inspector, very one of which was dismissed with costs, although he had two detectives who swore that they had got liquor.

"The writer knows places where liquor can be purchased, in which it was never seen before Local Option came in force, and he is informed that there are sixty-one of such places in the town.

"The town has four policemen, and the statutes, the by-law appointing them, a special by-law and a special resolution of the Council lately passed, make it the duty of these men to enforce Local Option; yet the sale goes on and no convictions are made.

"Public sentiment is against its enforcement.

"Local trade has been injured by Local Option, and scores of people in the surrounding country who used to trade in Owen Sound when License was in force, now go to Wiarton, Chesley, Port Elgin, Chatsworth, Markdale, Meaford, etc. Local Option has divided our citizens into two hostile sections—Local Optionists and Antis, who are jealous and distrustful of each other. What one proposes the other opposes.

"Owen Sound is a 'house divided against itself' in this respect.

"The evils arising from drinking have not been lessened but rather increased. Under License Law, liquors were sold in eleven hotels, and no liquor could be purchased by the glass outside of these hotels. Now it is sold in many places, and drunkenness is as prevalent as ever, if not more so. There may be less open drinking at bars, but drinking from bottles has largely increased, especially among youths and young men. Drinking takes place in private rooms, in offices, in closets, in cellars, in outbuildings, etc.

"It may be asked, 'Where do they get it?'

"It comes in on the railways, in trunks, in suit cases, in valises, in satchels, in boxes, barrels, etc. It comes in on boats, on wagons, in carriages, etc., etc. Friends bring it to friends, and there are those who bring it in to make money.

"It is impossible to keep liquor out. Evidence of this can be seen in the shape of empty bottles and broken bottles on the streets, in lanes and out-of-the-way places, in the police courts, at the docks, etc.

"The effect on the financial affairs in Owen Sound is this: "At the Court of Revision held by the Judge to hear cases

of appeal, nine appeals were heard, the appellants claiming that their properties had been lessened in value because of Local Option. After hearing the evidence the Judge ordered that their assessments be reduced \$57,750.00, and the Corporation lost, because of this, \$1,357.12 in taxes. The owner of one hotel (the Coulson House) neglected to enter an appeal, or in all probability another \$5,000.00 or \$6,000.00 would have been struck off. The revenue derived from hotel and shop licenses, amounting to \$1,394.00, has been entirely cut off, making a direct annual loss from these sources of \$3,051.12. Beside the Corporation has had to pay for legal advice and counsel fees, etc., fully \$500.00 more, in defending the by-law, and our citizens who tried to squash it lost perhaps another \$4,000.00 or \$5,000.00, and their relations as citizens have been embittered.

"It was said that under Local Option the town would require fewer policemen, and a saving could be made in that way, which would almost, if not altogether, offset the loss of revenue. It has been found that this cannot be done, in fact the salaries of some of the policemen had to be raised very materially, and the police force should be increased. Some active Local Optionists went so far as to ask that six additional men should be put on; there are four now. No reduction in the municipal expenditure of Owen Sound can be made because of Local Option.

"The writer was brought up in a family of eight boys and has three of his own.

"He has been in active business in Owen Sound for over forty years and is in business here yet.

"He has had to do with employing men during all that time and has many men under his control now.

"He has large pecuniary interests in several large manufacturing establishments here, and has occupied the positions of School Trustee, Councillor, Reeve, Mayor, and License Commissioner.

"He has served as a member of the Board of Trade, as one of its Council and as President, and knows Owen Sound thoroughly.

"The writer has seen Owen Sound under indiscriminate license, under restricted license, under the Dunkin Act, then under the present License Act, and under Local Option, and has no hesitation in saying that Local Option has not lessened drinking, has not improved business or the financial position of the people generally, neither has it improved the moral tone of the citizens as a whole, but on the contrary, Local Option has injured local trade and lowered the moral well-being of very many.

"The writer deeply regrets having to say these things, but believes that it is his duty to do so, if thereby he may help to prevent others repeating the mistake made in Owen Sound."

(Signed) M. KENNEDY,
Mayor of Owen Sound.

Believers in Local Option have been willing to rest their case on Owen Sound. Yet here is it proved that Owen Sound has suffered grievously from Local Option. Have you any reason to think YOUR town would not repeat Owen Sound's experience? Would that be good for your town?

THINK, BEFORE YOU VOTE!