

ANTI-DUELLING LAW.—AN ACT to prohibit the giving or accepting, within the District of Columbia, of a challenge to fight a Duel, and for the punishment thereof.

Be it enacted, by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That if any person shall, in the District of Columbia, challenge another to fight a duel, or shall send or deliver any written or verbal message purporting or intending to be such challenge, or shall accept any such challenge or message, or shall, knowingly, carry or deliver any such challenge or message, or shall, knowingly, carry or deliver an acceptance of such challenge or message to fight a duel in or out of said District, and such duel shall be fought in or out of said District, and either of the parties thereto shall be slain, or mortally wounded in such duel, the surviving party to such duel, and every person carrying or delivering such challenge or message, or acceptance of such challenge or message as aforesaid, and all others aiding or abetting therein, shall be deemed guilty of felony, and upon conviction thereof, in any court competent to the trial thereof in the said District, shall be punished by imprisonment and confinement to hard labour in the penitentiary, for a term not exceeding ten years, nor less than five years, in the discretion of the court.

SEC. 2. And be it further enacted, That if any person shall give or send, or cause to be given or sent, to any person in the District of Columbia, any challenge to fight a duel, or to engage in single combat with any deadly or dangerous instrument or weapon whatever, or if any person in said District shall accept any challenge to fight a duel, or to engage in single combat with any deadly or dangerous instrument or weapon, whatever, or shall be the bearer of any such challenge, every person so giving or sending, or causing to be given or sent, or accepting such challenge or being the bearer thereof, and every person aiding or abetting in the giving, sending, or accepting such challenge, shall be deemed guilty of high crime and misdemeanour, and on conviction thereof in any court competent to try the same in the said District, shall be punished by imprisonment and confinement to hard labour in the penitentiary, for a term not exceeding ten years, nor less than five years, in the discretion of the court.

SEC. 3. And be it further enacted, That if any person shall assault, strike, beat, or wound, or cause to be assaulted, stricken, beaten, or wounded, any person in the District of Columbia, for declining or refusing to accept any challenge to fight a duel, or to engage in single combat with any deadly or dangerous instrument or weapon whatever, or shall post or publish, or cause to be posted or published, any writing charging any such person, so declining or refusing to accept any such challenge, to be a coward, or using any other opprobrious or injurious language therein, tending to degrade and disgrace such person for so offending, on conviction thereof in any court competent to trial thereof, in said District, shall be punished by confinement to hard labour in the penitentiary, for a term not exceeding seven years, nor less than three years, in the discretion of the court.

SEC. 4. And be it further enacted, that in addition to the oath now to be prescribed by law to be administered to the grand jury in the District of Columbia, they shall be sworn faithfully and impartially to inquire into, and true presentment make of, all offences against this act.

END OF VOL. I.