

The Extent of Prohibition in Canada

Temperance sentiment in the Dominion of Canada is exceedingly strong. It has found expression in the plebiscites that have been taken in different Provinces, and in the Dominion as a whole. It has found practical embodiment in the Canada Temperance Act, and in Local Option legislation enacted by every Province except one, as well as in action of municipal councils and electors in using these laws for the local suppression of retail liquor-selling.

It is to some people a matter of surprise that the admittedly strong prohibition sentiment of a great majority of the electors, has not resulted in a larger representation in Parliament and Legislatures of men who are avowed prohibitionists.

Notwithstanding this fact, substantial progress has been made in the exclusion of the liquor traffic from large areas. Under Dominion legislation the traffic is totally prohibited in the great areas of the North West territories, which lie outside the organized Provinces. Liquor-selling is also prohibited in the neighborhood of public works. The facts concerning the practical operation of prohibitory legislation in different Provinces may be summarized as follows:

The Province of Prince Edward Island has a law of Provincial Prohibition, enacted by the Provincial Legislature, under which no retail liquor-selling is permitted in any part of the Province.

In Nova Scotia a number of counties are under the operation of the Canada Temperance Act. It is very difficult to obtain a license under the provincial

law, even in counties in which the Canada Temperance Act has not been adopted. There are eighteen counties in the Province, in only three of which, namely, Cape Breton, Richmond and Halifax, are liquor licenses issued, and the whole number of licenses in the Province outside the city of Halifax is very small.

In the Province of New Brunswick there are fourteen counties and three cities. The Canada Temperance Act is in operation in nine of the counties and two of the cities, so that the area in which licenses may be issued is comparatively limited.

In the Province of Quebec the parish is the smallest municipality unit, and parish councils have authority to pass Local Option by-laws. The latest statistics available give the total number of parishes as 1008, and show 664 of them to be under Local Option by-laws, leaving only 334 parishes in which liquor licenses are permitted.

In the Province of Ontario there are 806 municipalities—cities, towns, villages and townships. On May 1st, 1909, there were 199 of these in which liquor licenses were prohibited by Local Option by-laws. There were 135 other municipalities in which no licenses were issued. This makes a total of 334 municipalities under prohibition, leaving 472 under license.

In the Province of Manitoba there are 130 municipalities. In 35 of these Local Option by-laws have been carried and are now in force. In 30 of the others no licenses are issued. The Province has thus 66 municipalities under prohibition and 65 that permit liquor-selling.

The new Provinces of Saskatchewan