

one year and no license the next, in some cases with remarkable regularity. Some of the rural districts adopt license, some refuse it, some vary. The whole thing is largely a matter of politics, but in addition, if the law had been designed for the purpose it could not be better adopted for the furthering of private revenge and the working out of private spleen.

While in Missouri I made some study of the working of local option there. This State passed the law in 1887, and the by-law was in the same year adopted in thirty-nine counties and eleven towns. Very few elections have since been held, while the by-law has been set aside in thirty-three counties, and, I think, in all the towns. In some cases, the by-laws were set aside on technical grounds, in others by a direct vote of the people. As nearly as I could judge, the law worked something like our own Scott Act and was disposed of on the same grounds. Where it is still in force the statement is made that it is a dead letter. It is now in force in, I believe, only nine or ten out of 115 counties. I have already referred to Michigan, which has retained the law in only four counties, two of which are composed of islands in Lake Superior, and all of which are of inconsiderable population.

Wisconsin has a local option law in force in several counties, but my information is that it does not work at all well. A Law and Order League organized to destroy the liquor traffic has destroyed itself. In the west, Colorado Springs, a city in Colorado of 10,000 inhabitants, is frequently mentioned. No saloons are licensed, the title-deeds forbidding it. I have seen the statement that the hotel sells to guests under the sanction of the general community, and that the drug stores are not bothered if they do not sell in less quantities than a quart. What is certain is that Colorado City, lying contiguous to the Springs, has no lack of saloons. As to the working of local option in California, we know. Texas is required by the Constitution to pass a local option law, and has done so. Some few counties have tried it and repealed it. My acquaintance with Texas leads me to believe that in that State the Prohibition sentiment is not strong. Several of the Southern States have adopted local option as a measure of defence against the negro population.

It is only enacted in the rural districts where the white population is sparse, in towns it is not used. In Kentucky, where it is in use, in the south, where the large negro population is, enquiry leads me to believe it is not very successful even in preventing the negroes from getting drink. In Virginia where local option was passed in 1886 there was at first a sweep in its favor, but the law has since been largely if not almost entirely repealed. Maryland has local option of a piecemeal character. I cannot ascertain that Prohibition is in force in more than one county though several have tried it, but I must confess my information is not very exact. Now we come to Georgia, which has done more in the Local Option way than any other State. There is no official return on the subject, but apparently—I speak on the authority of residents—many rural municipalities have adopted and retained it. The towns and cities have not. The “negro question” is what predominates here. A very large “jug” trade is, however, done with the whites. In all of the Southern States there is undoubtedly a great deal of illicit distillation.

The City of Atlanta was under this style of Prohibition from 1885 to 1887. The repeal contest was an exceedingly hot one, and if one-half of what was said about the effects of Prohibition in Atlanta was true, this instance should be a warning to other cities. At any rate, Prohibition was carried by 225 majority and two years later was repealed by 1,128, every precinct in the city voting against the measure.

Finally we come to South Carolina with her State Dispensary Law, a curious jumble of the Guthenburg system, Local Option, State control, and State profits. The whole thing is a medley. For instance, the law is an outcome of an agitation for State Prohibition. But instead of the plebescite which is now the