

Thring ; but he feels confident, even as to the words you quote, that if he used them they were much modified by the context. What he thinks of Local Option is that it is a second principle, which has every title to be pressed on Parliament, and which would be useful wherever it is adopted. But the mischief of drink is so frightful that he is not willing to trust exclusively to the remedy which he fears may not be of wide operation. He thinks that the principle of sale under public authority is defensible, and it seems to him to be the most hopeful of the methods now attainable for producing benefit on an extended scale. He speaks, of course, according to the latest information he possesses.—I remain, yours faithfully,

H. GLADSTONE.

Even among ardent prohibitionists there are many well-informed persons who believe to some extent in state control of the liquor traffic. They favor the entire suppression of that traffic, but hold the opinion that until that entire suppression is attained it is much better to eliminate from the traffic if possible the element of individual profit. It is not to be expected that so dangerous a business can be carried on without evil results, but those evil results would doubtless be minified if the traffickers had not the inducements to a vigorous pushing of the business which they have at present. One may be a prohibitionist and yet an advocate of some form of state control as a temporary measure.

A letter was also addressed to Sir Wm. Harcourt asking what are the intentions of the Government in regard to the important question above mentioned and the hon. gentleman replied in the following definite statements:—

Treasury Chambers, Whitehall, S.W., Sept. 29, 1894.

Dear Sir,—I have no reason to believe that the views of the Government or of the Liberal party generally are in any degree altered in regard to the policy of Local Option as applied to the drink traffic. It has been my duty, ever since the year 1883, to declare the adhesion of three successive Liberal Administrations to that policy, and the last occasion upon which I spoke upon the matter was at the great deputation to Mr. Gladstone in Downing Street at the close of last year. To the opinions then expressed by Mr. Gladstone and myself I firmly adhere, and shall do what in me lies to promote that policy.—Yours faithfully,

W. V. HARCOURT.

Local Option then remains a part of the Liberal policy and has therefore a fair prospect of being embodied in law at an early date.