

Mr. DEACON said that his experience showed that magistrates were more prone to convict than acquit under the License Act.

Mr. LAUDER read a number of cases from the license returns to show that the number of commitments for drunkenness had largely increased under the Ontario License Act, and he hoped the Provincial Secretary would explain why the Act did not effect the results that were expected.

Mr. ROSS did not think that the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Lauder) had fairly compared the statistics which he had presented. The hon. gentleman had failed to give the House the benefit of the recapitulation at the bottom, from which he quoted. That recapitulation showed that there had been a direct decrease in the number of persons arrested and committed on the charge of drunkenness.

Mr. MERRICK contended that the hon. member for East Grey (Mr. Lauder) had made a fair comparison.

Mr. COLE argued that there had been no actual increase of drunkenness among residents in the various localities referred to.

Mr. CREIGHTON said that the charge that a License Commissioner at Thunder Bay was the reeve of a municipality had not been answered. The operation of the License Law was defective as regards the regulation of the sale of liquors for medicinal purposes. A remedy for this evil should have been proposed by the Government. The Council of the county of Grey had proposed a remedy which might be objected to. It was that no liquor should be sold by a druggist unless upon the prescription of a physician. As liquors were in many cases used for medicinal purposes and were included in the list of medicines by the medical fraternity generally, this proposition might be looked upon as preventing free trade in drugs and medicines. He thought that the druggist might keep a book, in which every person who purchased the liquor should be compelled to enter his name, and state opposite the use for which the liquor was purchased. It also should be held as a punishable offence to make a false entry. Such a plan, he thought, would assist in the proper enforcement of the existing law.

Mr. DAWSON said that the Commissioners at Thunder Bay were men of high position, but last year they were foully slandered. Mr. Marks was a very energetic man, but he (Mr. Dawson) did not think that he was the chairman of the Board of License Commissioners. The other two gentlemen (Messrs. McIntyre and Angus Wright) were all well known, and three more respectable men for their peculiar duties could not have been found.

Mr. CREIGHTON—Is Mr. Marks or not a Reeve of a municipality? (Cries of "Order! order!")

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe) argued that the point was, whether Mr. Marks was engaged in the liquor traffic.

Mr. DAWSON—It would be impossible to find a general merchant in that district who is not directly or indirectly engaged in the liquor traffic. Mr. Marks was engaged in the liquor traffic, but he is now a temperance man.

Mr. MACDOUGALL (Simcoe), resuming, said that there were sufficient grounds evidently for the dissatisfaction which had been expressed by the temperance people. He did not know if the same gentlemen had been re-appointed in Toronto this year as License Commissioners.

Mr. CROOKS—Yes.

Mr. MACDOUGALL, finding that to be the case, regretted that the Government should have done so. The Government had aimed a blow at the dignity and the influence of the bench, by taking a gentleman who was sufficiently employed in the discharge of his official duties and placing him in the position of a Commissioner to examine into the claims of those who applied for tavern and shop licenses. There was a very general feeling that the appointment was injudicious and improper; and it was thought that there was surely some one in this large city as well qualified, nay, far better qualified than should render

it necessary to take a learned judge from the bench. He had hoped that the Government would have appointed some one else; and have relieved that gentleman from the discharge of the onerous and unsatisfactory duties which he now had to perform. It was not right that a judge should be brought into contact in one capacity with those over whose claims he might have to adjudicate when in another position. He had expected that after all the unfavourable comments which had been made, and the conduct of that gentleman when in a distant part of the country, that he would have been relieved from the further discharge of those disagreeable duties. He was glad to have heard the Attorney-General say that a municipal councillor ought not to hold the position of a License Commissioner. When the License Bill was introduced it was said that the new powers would be used as a party weapon, and he learned from observation that those suspicions had been realized. The Government had issued a circular saying that no political influence would bias them in making their appointments to carry out the Bill; but that principle had never been practised. The powers conferred by the Bill had been used by the Government to help their political friends and to advance party interests. This question, with the question of education should have been kept free from the taint of party politics. He had no faith or belief in the beneficial results of the Dunkin Act, and thought it had the opposite result of that of advancing the interests of temperance and morality; and now the people were reversing the decisions they formerly gave.

Mr. MOWAT said that it was very easy to make charges against the administration of the law, as had been done by the hon. member for South Simcoe (Mr. Macdougall). As the Dunkin Act had been fully discussed elsewhere, he would not discuss it now. An attack had been made upon the learned Vice-Chancellor, who was patriotic enough to have given his services in the administration of the license law. It was argued that the position which he occupied rendered it improper that he should be a License Commissioner; but he (Mr. Mowat) differed from that opinion. Two reasons were given why the two positions should not be held by one man. One was because the office of License Commissioner did not increase the dignity of the Vice-Chancellor. He (Mr. Mowat) thought the office was dignified enough for any one to hold. The other argument was that cases might come before the Vice-Chancellor in which his duty as a License Commissioner would interfere with a fair discharge of his duties in the former position. There was not a more painstaking man than Mr. Blake, and not a more efficient License Commissioner from one end of the Province to the other, and there was not one more zealous in the discharge of his duties. The License Board of this city was a far better Board than it would be without the Vice-Chancellor. (Cheers.) Another reason was given why that appointment should not have been made, and that was that the whole of his time was engaged in the discharge of his judicial functions; but that gentleman possessed a far greater capacity than either the hon. member for South Simcoe or himself for the performance of judicial duties. He (Mr. Mowat) was glad that the Vice-Chancellor had been able to give so much attention to this matter, and thought that he should rather have received the praise of this House than an expression of dissatisfaction. (Cheers.)

Mr. CAMERON was one of those who thought the position of the hon. Vice-Chancellor was such as laid him open to much criticism which it was not desirable should be made upon an occupant of the Bench. He quoted from the report of the Prison Inspector showing the number of commitments for drunkenness during the last year, and contrasted the same with the returns furnished in the report on the working of the license law, and alleged that there was a discrepancy between the two reports. It was apparent that the latter re-