

SCOTT ACT RETURNS.

Mr. WHITNEY moved for an order of the House showing the date of the appointment of Asa Beach as license inspector for the County of Dundas. Also the number of convictions in the county since the date of his appointment for violations of the Canada Temperance Act, 1878, and giving the name of each person convicted, the date of each conviction, the amount of penalty imposed in each case, by whom imposed and the disposition of the penalty in each case. Also whether each conviction was for a first, second or third offence under the Act, and showing also the particulars of unsuccessful prosecutions since said first-mentioned date, with the names of persons prosecuted and the dates of dismissal of prosecutions.

Mr. MEACHAM moved an amendment which had the effect of requiring the same details for all counties in the Province under the operation of the Act named since it came into force.

Hon. Mr. HARDY claimed that this was out of order.

The amendment was therefore withdrawn.

Hon. Mr. HARDY said in making what remarks he had to make on this question he would treat the amendment as if it had been in order. He then went on to contend that a request for returns of this kind was unreasonable, without a word of explanation as to the reasons for requiring it from the mover of the motion. He thought it unreasonable to ask for such returns without first making out a good case as to why they should be granted, and held that it would be unfair to the persons convicted and fined, and who had paid their fines, that their names should be collected and tabulated in the manner proposed. As to Mr. Asa Beach, the gentleman named in the motion, he did not know whether the hon. gentleman considered him too strict or not strict enough in his management of the Scott Act in the district under his charge. At least the reason for asking for such a return should be given. It would be a very great expense to carry out the request embodied in the amendment, and it seemed that no good, and possibly considerable evil, too,

might result from according to it. Under the circumstances the Government could not accede to the request.

Mr. WHITNEY modified his resolution so that the names asked for should be omitted from the returns and other information given, and stated that his reason for asking for the returns was that considerable dissatisfaction existed among all classes in Dundas County as to the manner in which Mr. Beach was managing the Scott Act. He would not, however, make any charges against him.

The motion then passed.

Mr. INGRAM moved for the evidence, report and correspondence relative to the dismissal of Archibald McIntyre, license inspector for East Elgin. Carried.

Mr. CLANCY'S bill to amend the Registry Act was considered in committee and reported.

IMPRISONMENT FOR DEBT.

Mr. GIBSON (Hamilton) moved the second reading of the bill to amend the Division Courts Act. He said that the object of the bill was to take away from Division Court Judges the odious power of imprisonment for debt and to put Division Court debtors on precisely the same footing as judgment debtors in regard to imprisonment. In the Superior Courts a judgment debtor might be examined, but he believed that even if he swore that he had the money in his pocket to pay the judgment that was not considered such an unsatisfactory answer as would subject him to imprisonment.

Mr. MEREDITH suggested that if this was law, which he doubted, it was a bad law.

Mr. GIBSON said that might be, but no one would propose to give the Superior Courts the power of imprisonment for refusing or neglecting to pay a debt, the power now possessed by Division Court Judges. One evil of the present system was the varying practice of different Division Court Judges. Some refrained almost entirely from exercising the power of imprisonment, others enforcing what was virtually imprisonment for debt.

Hon. C. F. FRASER said that his hon. friend's strongest point was the distinction drawn between the large and the small debtor. But he believed that if the small debtor were placed on exactly the same footing as the large debtor, he would be in a very much worse position than he is to-day. For instance, a large debtor might be restrained from leaving the country, while the Division Court debtor might go where he pleased. The present law did not allow imprisonment for debt as it was in the old days. Imprisonment could take place only after a judicial investigation, and as a matter of fact the cases of imprisonment were extremely few. He had, however, always considered that it was an extreme hardship for a man to be imprisoned on the ground that when he incurred the debt he had no expectation of being able to pay it, and he would have no objection to the law being amended in that respect.

Mr. MEREDITH said that he did not see that a man who stole bread for his family was any worse than a man who stole under pretence of incurring a debt. "There is a certain kind of genteel scalawag that you can't reach except by this law."

Mr. O'CONNOR was inclined to agree with Mr. Meredith, but thought it was a hardship to make a judgment debtor lose a day's work by being examined.

The bill was read the second time.

MISCELLANEOUS.

Mr. GARSON'S bill to amend the Municipal Act was read the second time.

Mr. GRAHAM moved the second reading of a bill establishing a standard for milk. He took occasion to deny that farmers are much given to adulterating milk. The bill was read the second time and committed.

Mr. BALLANTYNE'S bill to prevent frauds in connection with the supply of milk to cheese and butter factories was read a second time.

The House adjourned at 6.30.