

HANNA ADMITS LAW IS BEING VIOLATED

Knows Liquor is Being Sold on Boats and Trains

CHALLENGE FROM LIBERALS

Provincial Secretary Also Admits Ex- istence of "Blind Pigs," and Says Only Wiping Out of Liquor Business Can Drive Them Out.

Admitting that intoxicating liquor was being sold on steamboats and buffet cars travelling through the Province in violation of the law, Hon. W. J. Hanna called upon the House to vote down an amendment to the motion to go into Committee of Supply last night.

The motion, which was moved by Mr. J. C. Elliott (West Middlesex) and seconded by Mr. W. Proudfoot (Centre Haron), read in the following terms:

"This House is of the opinion that the violation of the license laws by the open sale of liquor upon steamboats and railroads within the Province, and the policy of the license department of imposing one fine yearly on the steamboats, apparently as a license fee, is bringing the administration of the license laws into disrepute throughout the Province.

"This House is further of the opinion that the administration of the liquor license laws in Northern Ontario and the relation of the Provincial police thereto should be thoroughly investigated by an impartial tribunal with a view to correcting the serious abuses which are alleged to exist and putting an end to the open and flagrant violations of the law through the operations of the so-called 'blind pigs.'"

Licensed by Fines.

In 1906, said Mr. Elliott, when the present license act was passed the proposal was to place steamboats and buffet cars in the same position as taverns, but that idea was dropped. Since then the principal steamboats plying on inland waters had been fined more or less regularly once a year. It was the duty of the Government to see that this sale was not permitted. Similarly, he said, liquor was being sold on buffet cars running through the Province without regard for the restriction of local option municipalities or the hours of sale. It was useless for the department to claim that this could not be stopped.

Turning then to the prevalence of "blind pigs" in Northern Ontario, the member for West Middlesex said the fact that the department admitted the sale in other cases mentioned was in violation of the law led him to reach the same conclusion with regard to illegal selling in Northern Ontario. In contradiction of its policy to keep liquor out of Northern Ontario since 1908, the number of licenses granted had increased. "Reports are received about open and flagrant violation of the liquor license law," continued Mr. Elliott, reading extracts from letters and reports to show that the traffic was thriving in that section.

Mr. Hanna's Defence.

By a process of elimination, Mr. Hanna pointed out that the offence was not as glaring as had been made out. No liquor whatever was sold on the boats of the Northern Navigation Company, and on the C.P.R. boats, so far as his knowledge went, only at meal times. "With regard to Lake Ontario, whatever may happen in American waters, I have the best of reason to believe that the instruction

of the company is that no liquor shall be sold in Canadian waters."

With regard to the sale on dining-cars, the Provincial Secretary said he had no quarrel with Mr. Elliott's statement. "The practice was recognized. It was without sanction of the law, and our proposition was to put a license upon them." Serious objections were urged at the time and nothing was done. Since then a change had come about, and, so far as the Grand Trunk was concerned, the sale had been entirely done away with except at meal times. "It is the minimum of the evil, if minimum there be, in connection with the whole traffic," explained Mr. Hanna. He did not say it by way of excuse, but he thought it was better to have the traffic in that condition than legalized by a license.

Blind Pigs While There is Liquor.

Dealing with Northern Ontario, Mr. Hanna said the Government had endeavored to carry out its promises. There was no difficulty in getting reports on "blind pigs." The department was full of them, but very few reports contained enough evidence upon which to base a prosecution. In not a solitary instance had a proper complaint been left uninvestigated. "There are blind pigs, and there will be blind pigs so long as liquor is manufactured, and they exist despite the very best efforts the department can put forward to prevent it." It was surprising, declared Mr. Proudfoot, to see the Provincial Secretary, after hurling through the Province that the law would be enforced, admit that it was being openly violated.

DID NOT KNOW BILL WHEN IT CAME BACK

Mr. McKeown Anxious to Learn What Happened to Insurance Measure When Special Committee Got Hold of It

The bill introduced by Mr. M. C. McKeown (Dufferin) to make insurance companies accept the age given when the policy of insurance was issued has been so changed by the special committee of the Legislature to which it was referred that the promoter asked to be made acquainted with it in the House yesterday. The bill came up in the committee stage in the House, but it had a short passage, and on motion of the Prime Minister was sent back to the special committee. The difficulty was that the reprinted bill was not only entirely different from the one that had been first introduced, but, according to Mr. McKeown, radically different from what the committee had agreed upon. "As I understand it," explained the member for Dufferin, "Mr. McGarry, at the last meeting of the committee, suggested an amendment by which notices that proof of age was necessary before payment of the claim should be made by the insurance company should be sent out with the policy. The bill here provides that the company must send out a notice