

OPPOSITION GETS REFUSAL

Government Will Not Provide
it Counsel in the Dewart
Investigation

FULL PROBE URGED

But Hearst and Lucas Say
That it Will be Fair
Enough

Efforts of the Liberals to persuade the Government to provide and pay counsel to represent the Opposition before the Royal Commission to inquire into the Dewart charges against officials of the License Board were bluntly refused by the Prime Minister and the Attorney-General in the Legislature yesterday. They similarly refused to accede to the request of Mr. Wm. Proudfoot, K.C., the Opposition Leader, backed by Mr. H. H. Dewart, K.C., to have the Royal Commissioner, Sir William Meredith, investigate not only the specific charges made by the member of Southwest Toronto, but also "the enforcement of the Liquor License Act, and the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act, and all matters relating to the administration of the Ontario Temperance Act." Sir William Hearst told the Opposition that the Government desired to be absolutely fair, and it felt it was doing so. Mr. Proudfoot thereupon urged that it accede to the request, so that the Opposition, after the inquiry was completed, could say they had received an absolutely square deal.

Speaking before the orders of the day were called, Mr. Proudfoot asked whether the appointment of Sir William Meredith as a Commissioner would come before the House as a motion for consideration; if counsel, who could call witnesses, would be allowed and paid for to represent the Opposition upon the hearing before the Commission; if the scope of the Commissioner's powers had been more fully considered by the Government; if the Commissioner's powers included an investigation into the administration of the O. T. A. and the enforcement of the law and matters arising out of or relating to the conduct of the Liquor Branch of the department; and when the report of the License Commissioners would be brought down.

Seeks Scope of Probe.

Mr. Proudfoot explained that his object in asking the questions was to find out exactly the scope of the Commission. By what the Prime Minister had said Mr. Proudfoot believed the Commission would cover practically all the things referred to in the amendment introduced by Mr. Dewart last week when making the charges. While he had no objection to the appointment of Mr. White, he felt that the best results would not be secured if all the evidence of the Opposition had to filter through one official appointed by the Government. He referred to the investigation into the Gamey charges, and pointed out that on that occasion counsel for the Opposition had been appointed.

"So far as I am concerned we are anxious to see that the whole question should be gone into," declared the Liberal Leader vigorously. "Important charges have been made in reference to certain individuals who occupy very important positions in the administration of justice, but the charges are also against the working out of the department. We think that the act should be enforced, and if through want of care or for other reasons it has not been enforced in the manner it ought to

be we want to know it. I think we are all interested in seeing that it is properly enforced. That is the only desire that I have in reference to the matter at the present time. I am sure that not only the Government, but the Opposition and the people of the country at large, are interested in finding out exactly how the proceedings are being conducted."

Not Merely Curiosity.

Hon. Mr. Lucas said he wanted to satisfy any legitimate curiosity of the Opposition Leader, when he rose to reply. The Attorney-General was interrupted, however, by Mr. Proudfoot, who said that it was not merely curiosity on his part. Continuing, Mr. Lucas said that the Commission had not been issued yet, but he hoped it would be within a day or two, when the Liberal Leader could examine it in detail. "I think he will find that it is wide enough," said Mr. Lucas, "to leave it to the Commissioner to investigate all that ought to be investigated and that it seems proper to investigate in connection with the various charges, statements, insinuations and innuendoes and all the other words contained in the speech of my honorable friend from Southwest Toronto." It was not customary to bring the commission down in the House.

Mr. Lucas explained that it was a Royal Commission that was to investigate charges made in general language involving the propriety and acts of certain officials and involving to some extent the actions of the License Board. Because no Minister had been attacked there was not the responsibility on a member making charges to follow them up with a formal motion before the House, but the duty devolved upon the Government. The Commissioner's instructions will be "to go on and fully report upon all the circumstances in any way connected with the charges, insinuations and statements involving the integrity, honesty and honor of those connected with the administration of the License Department."

The Attorney-General said it would not be the Commissioner's duty to investigate the whole operations and as to whether or not