

done under the direction of the License Board. It will maintain a head office in Toronto, a central warehouse for the receipt of liquors in quantities and the distribution of same to sales agents, and sales agencies at locations in the Province suiting the convenience of the public, and having regard to the requirements of distribution.

Sir William explained that he had expected to have introduced the necessary bills yesterday, but they had not been completed by the Law Clerk. The principles, however, had been settled and he desired to outline them at that time so the House and the country might have ample opportunity of considering them.

Premier's Statement.

The Government hoped to have been able to introduce to-day the temperance legislation promised in the Speech from the Throne. The Law Clerk has not, however, been able yet to complete the final revision of the bills, and it may be a day or two before they are finally revised and ready for introduction in the House.

The principles, however, that will govern the legislation have been settled, and with the consent of the House I will briefly outline the main features of the proposed bills so that the House and the country may have ample opportunity of considering them before they come up for consideration in the House.

We are nearing the close of the session, and I want the House and the country to have time to consider such important measures before they become law.

Amendments to O.T.A.

It is the intention of the Government to submit two bills, one amending the Ontario Temperance Act, and the other entitled "The Temperance Referendum Act, 1919."

There will be some amendments for the purpose of improving the working of the Ontario Temperance Act and aiding in its enforcement. None of these are of great importance, and I do not propose to deal with them to-day, with one exception, namely, an amendment providing for the sale direct by the Government of all liquors that can lawfully be sold under the Ontario Temperance Act.

This is not new to the honorable members of the House. The Government made a public announcement of its intention in this connection some time ago.

Government Sale of Liquors.

During the past year the methods provided by the Ontario Temperance Act for dispensing liquors that may lawfully be sold for medicinal and other purposes through licensed vendors have not proven as satisfactory as the Government would like. A number of causes have contributed to this result. Chief among these are the prohibition of the importation of liquor by Dominion order in Council, unprecedented demand for liquor for medicinal purposes arising out of the epidemic of influenza that spread over the Province last fall, and the improper conduct of a few, and I am glad to say very few, medical men in the Province. The Government is most anxious, as far as that may be possible, to remedy any abuses and relieve any inconveniences that may exist. To this end the bill to which I have alluded will provide for the abolition altogether of the sale of liquor by private vendors and will provide means for handling this business direct by the Government. In this way it is hoped to overcome, as far as it may be practicable, abuses in the giving of prescriptions; to prevent unnecessary inconvenience to those legitimately requiring liquor for medical purposes, to eliminate all private gain, and insure a supply of pure liquor to those who are entitled under the law to purchase it.

For some weeks past the Government has been carefully studying, with the aid of the best experts it could employ, the best method of carrying into effect the policy I have mentioned, in order that the most efficient methods might be employed in the distribution of liquor for medical and other lawful purposes under the act, and in order, so far as it is humanly possible so to do, to guard against dishonesty, fraud, wrong-doing, or improper conduct of any kind in carrying on the bus-

ness.

Methods To Be Adopted.

The methods the Government proposes to adopt are, shortly, as follows:

(1) After the act comes into force all sales of liquor that can be lawfully made under the Ontario Temperance Act will be made direct by the Government.

(2) This, of course, will not interfere with sales that now can be lawfully made by druggists, but druggists will be required to get their supplies from Government stores.

(3) The business will be carried on under the direction and control of the License Board.

(4) The board, in carrying on the business, will maintain: (a) a chief or head office in the city of Toronto; (b) a central warehouse or warehouses for the receipt of liquors in quantities and the distribution of same to sales agents; (c) sales agencies at locations in the Province suiting the convenience of the public, and having regard to the requirements of distribution.

(5) The head office will require to maintain an organization and staff sufficient to properly manage and administer the undertaking from an executive standpoint. It will have control of the taking over of the stocks now owned by licensed vendors, the buying of liquors, the determination of the prices at which the same shall be sold by the sales agencies, the management of all matters relating to finance and the keeping of all records, financial and statistical.

Central Warehouse in Toronto.

(6) Central warehouse or warehouses will be situated at Toronto for distribution to the sales agencies of liquors purchased by the board, and its duties will consist merely of the receipt and distribution of said liquor.

(7) Where advisable the board may require liquor purchased to be sent direct to sales agencies, but such liquor shall be regarded as having passed through the central warehouse. The central warehouse will simply keep records of the liquor received and distributed, leaving the value of the same known only to the head office.

(8) Sales agencies shall be concerned only with the sale of liquor, and shall maintain financial records of a character which will deal with the daily receipts and deposits and the payment of necessary expenses only. They shall maintain records of a character necessary to keep a running inventory of stock and records of all necessary information covering prescriptions honored, and to give any statistical or official information desired. No purchases of liquor to be made by sales agencies. These agencies will be inspected at indeterminate periods, and their work and affairs closely checked up. Operations of sales agents shall be confined to the sale of liquors supplied to them by the board, which they must sell at prices laid down from time to time by the board.

(9) It is not the present intention of the Government, after the act comes into force, to sell liquor in bulk. All liquor sold or distributed by the board shall be in sealed containers of such character as the board may determine.

(10) Needless to say, wide powers will have to be provided by the act, to make regulations dealing with the matters I have mentioned and with all phases of this important and somewhat complicated business that may arise from time to time. I have, however, outlined in a somewhat detailed way the plan the Government proposes to adopt. I do this in order that the House may have not only as clear an idea as possible of what we propose to do, and how we propose to do it, but in order that honorable members may have clearly fixed in their minds the Government's proposed system for the sale of liquor when considering the other act to which I will now allude.

Temperance Referendum Act.

The Temperance Referendum Act will be a separate act, and will contain the necessary provisions for taking the votes of the electors on the liquor question.

Before dealing with this act I would ask the House to bear with me while I shortly review the facts