

RANEY ANXIOUS BUT NOT HOUSE

Starts Discussion of O.T.A.
Appeals Amendment at
"Belated Time"

PROTEST STOPS PROGRESS

"Free importation of liquor, ostensibly for domestic use, but really for sale, is and has been since January 1 the chief obstacle in the way of the enforcement of the Ontario Temperance Act."

Just this one sentence had been uttered by the Attorney-General of the Province on second reading of his O.T.A. appeals amendment in the Legislature last night, when objections emanating from Opposition members, first on one point and then on another, threw over until today the whole of the O.T.A. debate.

"I object," said H. H. Dewart, Liberal Leader, "to my honorable friend attempting tonight to introduce an argument upon questions that are not at all relative, that he has chosen at this belated time to introduce with a view to shutting off discussion upon the question of the majority and minority reports of the Special Committee on O.T.A."

Hon. Mr. Raney—I will not undertake in discussing this bill to confine myself absolutely to the sections of the bill. It is an unheard-of proposition. It is an amendment to the law, and it is my right, I think, to discuss the law.

Promise of Premier.

J. C. Tolmie, Liberal member for Windsor, called the attention of the House to the promise of the Government, made, he said, a month ago, to fully discuss the issue of O. T. A. appeals before and separate from the general O.T.A. amendments which it was proposed to bring down. In his contention he was backed up by Hon. G. H. Ferguson, who said he clearly remembered the promise, and J. W. Curry, S.E. Toronto, who expressed the opinion that at the time the Premier might not have fully understood the import of the question which was asked of him by the member for Windsor (Mr. Tolmie).

"I have no clear recollection of the circumstances," said Hon. Mr. Drury. "That happened, I believe, on March 3. But I have every desire to play fair and I will withdraw this bill for the evening, and if there is no objection we will go on with the adjourned debate on O.T.A. appeals."

There was no objection—at least nobody voiced any at that time.

Order Not on Record.

But Mr. Dewart and Opposition members did not know who adjourned the debate away back on March 3 or whose turn it was to continue it, and while Mr. Dewart was hurriedly looking up the votes and proceedings to find out just where to begin there was much sarcastic laughter from Government members. Finally he found that A. C. Lewis, N.E. Toronto, had adjourned the debate, and Mr. Lewis was not in the House at the moment to take up the discussion. But Mr. Dewart exploded another mine under the Government when he declared, "Mr. Premier, the order is not on the order paper. Under these circumstances I say the House should not go on with it tonight."

Premier Drury accepted the point of order, declaring, however, that the discussion must go on to its termination tomorrow so as not to delay the passage of the O.T.A. Amendments Bill. "My own feeling is, however," he commented, "that the discussion has served all useful ends."

Incidental to the brief but decidedly interesting proceedings was Mr. Dewart's rigid objection to the Attorney-General's use of the word "pretext" in connection with the continuance of O.T.A. debates in one form and another. After much insistence on the part of the Liberal Leader, Hon. Mr. Raney said he would withdraw the word "if it made any material difference."

SUBMIT REFORM TO RATEPAYERS

Legislature Decides Initiative
in Assessment Changes
Must be Theirs

RURAL CREDITS PASSES

Two important Government measures received committee endorsement in the Ontario Legislature yesterday—Hon. Manning Doherty's bill to establish a system of rural credits in Ontario and Premier Drury's assessment reform measure, which will compel Municipal Councils to enact such assessment reforms as are indorsed by the people at the polls.

In the latter bill the Premier assented to the demand of H. H. Dewart and members of the Opposition that the process of initiation of such referendum be restricted to ratepayers, whereas his first bill set forth that on a petition signed by 10 per cent. of municipal electors a vote of the people should be taken on assessment reform, the clause was amended to restrict such initiatory proceedings to "at least 10 per cent. of electors qualified to vote on money by-laws."

Hon. George S. Henry and Hon. G. H. Ferguson vigorously protested against the provisions in Hon. Mr. Doherty's rural credits legislation, which permits of 20-year loans being taken out by farmers. Ten years, in their opinion, was the longest period for which such loans should be extended by the Province. Hon. Mr. Henry ventured the opinion that the average length of farming life in rural districts did not exceed 20 years, which meant that the farmer taking advantage of the offer was taking upon himself a life burden.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson maintained that loans for a shorter period, with right of renewal under specified conditions, were preferable, since it would permit of loans being withdrawn within a reasonable period if the borrower was not making proper use of the money and keeping up the security. Mr. Doherty thought that with the shorter term the farmer would be putting so much away to pay off principle that he would hold back on the purchase of equipment necessary to properly develop his land.

Mr. Ferguson also objected to the Government paying administration costs. The Minister, however, made it clear that after the new scheme gets on its feet solidly it will meet all its own costs.