

**Debate on Prices.**

F. H. Keefer (Conservative, Port Arthur) continued the debate and barely got started when a remark from him precipitated an argument between R. L. Brackin and Attorney-General Nickle. Mr. Keefer's remark was to the effect that if alcohol was sold at a reasonable price a bottle might be bought at the \$1.25 price of the old days instead of the \$5.50 of the present. "Do you wonder we have bootleggers," asked Mr. Keefer, "when they can make a profit like that?"

Mr. Brackin—If the price of whiskey is governed to any extent by the \$10-a-gallon duty, and if, under the law of the Province, liquor can be supplied to people as medicine on a doctor's prescription, why does the Province make a bottle of Scotch cost \$5.50 or \$6, and at the same time take a profit of a million a year into the Treasury of the Government through the sale of that whiskey?

"It's up to Ottawa to remove the duty," said Mr. Keefer. "Personally, I hope to see the time when the doctor's prescriptions are taken off as well."

"You'll see it," said Mr. Brackin.

Attorney-General Nickle—For the understanding of the House, allow me to say that the amount of duty paid last year by the dispensaries was more than the amount the dispensaries paid for the liquors they bought. The dispensaries are carried on a basis of from 16 to 20 per cent. profit above their overhead. And they sell liquors as medicine cheaper than any other Province in the Dominion. Since we've taken office, we've reduced the price twice, and, I think, three times.

**Profit Is \$500,000.**

To vigorous questioning from Mr. Brackin, Mr. Nickle added: "When the Attorney-General took office he steadily turned his face in the direction of reducing the price to a minimum. The profit made by the dispensaries in the past has been made possible largely through the fluctuation of sterling and of the franc. Large supplies of liquor were purchased by the Government when the franc was very low. My estimate this year will be approximately \$500,000 profit on a turnover of five or six millions. To reduce the price below what it now is would be to reduce it below the level of commercial success in business."

**STILL CASTING ABOUT FOR STRONGER DRINKS**

**Bill Introduced in Legislature Would Make Provision for 10 P.C. Beer**

**AND OTHERS ARE LIKELY**

By a bill which he introduced before the House for first reading yesterday, J. A. Pinard (Liberal, Ottawa East) seeks to amend the Ontario Temperance Act to the extent of allowing beer up to 10 per cent. proof spirits to be sold in standard hotels and on other premises. Notice of motion of this amendment was seconded by R. L. Brackin (Liberal, Kent West).

**Other Bills Predicted.**

According to information given The Globe there is little doubt that this bill is but the forerunner of others, seeking changes in the act, which will come from the Liberal group. In fact, it is generally understood that another amendment aiming at the abolition of the doctor's prescription system will be launched by members of that party very shortly.

**Col. Currie's Aim.**

Notice of motion has been given by Col. J. A. Currie (Conservative, Toronto) of two bills, which, if adopted, will make "wet" all ridings which voted "wet" in the last Ontario plebiscite. Col. Currie's first bill is in the form of an amendment to the O.T.A., and stipulates that in the event of a Government control bill passing the House, it shall not apply to those ridings which voted dry at the last plebiscite, nor to any riding which on a subsequent occasion votes dry. His second bill is a Government control measure, fashioned on the same lines as the measure he introduced before the House last year and withdrew on the final night of the session.

**Neither Mosquitoes Nor Fleas Have Any Terrors for Premier, He Tells Progressive Leader**

**Daily "Tiff" in Legislature Brings Forth Some Sharp Repartee as Old-Time Rivals Bandy Taunts**

**"FORECAST LAWYER" APPLIED TO CURRIE**

The Legislature was the scene yesterday of another "tiff" between Premier Ferguson and Hon. W. E. Raney, which started unexpectedly, travelled at top speed for a good half-hour, and actually got nowhere in the end.

Armed with "Bourinot" and "Sir Erskine May," Mr. Raney took the Premier to task for his recent refusal to answer Opposition queries on Government policy, and proceeded to quote his "authorities" to show, as he saw it, that only questions relating to the opinion of the Government were banned, and that he (Mr. Raney), in asking hitherto if the Government was contemplating a liquor-control bill, had had a perfect right to do so, inasmuch as the interrogation concerned fact only and not opinion.

**Why Not Question?**

"And why should we not interrogate the Government?" asked Mr. Raney. "The electors should be told. Here in the Province at the present time we have one-half the people knowing what is going to happen and the others are high and dry."

Reading a newspaper clipping to the effect that the Government had discussed the O.T.A. at a recent caucus of members, Mr. Raney added: "It looks as though the people we represent have no rights."

His further quotations from "Sir Erskine May" were checked up by Attorney-General Nickle, who said Mr. Raney was taking a wrong interpretation from the quotations.

Mr. Raney banged his book upon his desk, saying: "There is the language."

**Col. Currie Takes a Hand.**

"Mr. Speaker—" began Col. Currie.

"Ah!" said Mr. Raney. "The forecast lawyer."

"Withdraw! Withdraw!" came from the Conservative benches.

"I take objection," said Attorney-General Nickle, "on the ground of misinterpretation."

Mr. Raney—I am glad there are so many profound constitutional lawyers on the back benches.

Col. Currie—Let him read the whole passage.

"Let him alone," said Premier Ferguson, warming up to the fray.

Getting to his feet again, Mr. Raney expressed the hope that the Premier would apologize to the Speaker for his misconception of the rules of procedure in refusing to answer his questions on the order paper.

"Good night!" from the Toronto benches.

**Enter the Premier.**

Premier Ferguson stepped into the "mill" at this point.

"It was a far different story," said he, "when my honorable friend sat over here. Many a time—"

Mr. Raney—No abuse, now.

Stating that Mr. Raney was dealing as usual in hair-splitting thrusts with a view to gaining publicity, and to leading the public to believe that the Government was keeping "something back," the Premier added that he (Mr. Raney) hadn't a tittle of foundation for his claims.

Mr. Raney—Keep your temper, Mr. Prime Minister.

**A Biting Retort.**

Mr. Ferguson—I will say, as I've said before, that I'm immune from mosquitoes and fleas. I never lose my temper unless bitten by something substantial. (Conservative applause.)

The Premier went on to say that never had so many caucuses been held as in the regime of the former Government, and even the reporters could not catch a whisper of what had gone on. Now Mr. Raney had the nerve to infer that the present Government was doing business in secret. The sole purpose of Mr. Raney's questions was, he knew, to create an impression that the Government feared to announce its policy.

"I've said—" declared the Premier.

"Aha!" chortled Mr. Raney.

**One at a Time, Please.**

"This is not going to develop into a dialogue," remonstrated the Speaker. "One at a time."

"I've said," continued the Premier, smiling, "that the Government is prepared to enforce the laws of the statutes. The Ontario Temperance Act is on the statutes, and will enforce it, as long as it remains there, with every means at our power. If this Government should reach the conclusion that some improvement is necessary it will not hesitate to say so to the public."

The argument terminated with a ruling from the Speaker in support of Premier Ferguson's attitude.