

Friday, March 18th

MONDAY LIKELY DATE FOR SECOND READING OF NEW LIQUOR BILL

French-Canadian's Fifth
Public Speech in English
Greeted by Desk-Banging

PLEA FOR BEER BY GLASS

Premier Ferguson intimated at the close of yesterday afternoon's sitting of the Legislature that the second reading of the Government-control bill would probably be given on Monday next.

Then comes the battle of discussion, which will rage when the House in Committee deals with the measure section by section. What with this and the volume of other legislation to be handled, next week will be a busy one—with, as the Premier announced just before adjournment yesterday — night sessions on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, as well as the sittings every afternoon.

Debate Continued.

Yesterday afternoon L. W. Oke (U.F.O., East Lambton) and T. Legault (Liberal, Sturgeon Falls), continued the debate on second reading of the liquor bill.

While Mr. Oke gave a lengthy explanation as to why and how he would oppose the control bill, Mr. Legault announced his alliance with the "wet" wing of the Liberal party, and made a plea for the sale of beer at 5 cents a glass "for the sake of the poorer workingmen of the Province." The French-Canadian member adjourned the debate, to continue Monday.

Mr. Oke said that while the proposed Government-control system resulted from the mandate of a majority of voters of the Province, he represented a dry riding, and as such a representative felt duty bound to oppose the bill. He thought that the Progressive amendments were "not in order," and should have been introduced in committee.

"Yet," said he, "if I vote against the amendments, it will mean support of the bill. So to settle dispute," he declared, "I'll support the amendments."

Service From Friends.

He spoke of objections that appointments by the board had not been taken "out of politics," that the staffing of the liquor-control system might become a matter of patronage. He felt that the Government had every right to employ their friends, "for," he said, "you can't get the service from your political enemies."

Mr. Legault, a new member in the House, took the occasion, as it was his maiden speech, to stray from a strict discussion of the second reading of the bill.

He extended congratulations to new appointees in the House, felicitations to the veteran legislators who had extended the helping hand to the neophytes. He recalled moments in the previous debates by his picturesque references to the wealth and future of Northern Ontario. And all was delivered with a masterful command of words, with a richness of phraseology, which aroused admiration on all sides—an admiration which was expressed in vigorous desk-banging by every member of the House, when the French-Canadian member noted that this was but his fifth public speech in English.

Argues Against Carton Purchase.

Dealing with the Government-control bill, he pictured the position of the "poor working man" under the act. With but a small income a week, such a man could not afford purchase of beer by the carton, said he. Such a man would buy a bottle of beer at the store in the city, travel home to the suburbs with the bottle warming up in his pocket, open it at home, to have the warm liquid "fizz away like soda water," "blow up like explosives."

"Pushed into prohibition," he went on "people have indulgence made all the more desirable. Every farmer is educated today and makes his own beer, wine and whiskey. Some even gather juniper berries for gin. The bootlegger hasn't the time to get juniper berries, and he flavors his with turpentine.

"The bootlegging business," he declared, "regulates the price of rye, wheat and barley in the north in many sections. A farmer there can realize \$25 out of a bushel of rye."

If the O.T.A., he said, was "enforced to the very letter of the law," you would have to put the roof of a prison over half of Toronto, or Sturgeon Falls—just as you wish.

In the old days, he said, vice was centralized in the bar. "Today," he went on, "with the bars closed, the habitues drink in seclusion, in hidden places."

"Some may accuse me of advocating a return to the bar," he declared, "but I have a new scheme."

His new scheme had to wait until Monday, for with the hour at 6 o'clock he was called to adjourn the debate until next week.