

Feb. 26

# Magistrate's Order To Kill Vicious Dogs May Soon Be Legal

Authority to pronounce the death penalty on dogs which bite human beings is, for the first time, to be vested in Magistrates of this Province, through an amendment to the Dog Tax and Sheep Protection Act, which Hon. T. L. Kennedy, Minister of Agriculture, brought down to the Legislature yesterday.

Under the present act, Magistrates—nor any one else, for that matter—have no power to deal with vicious dogs. Frequently cases have been brought to the attention of the Queen's Park authorities where persons, bitten by canines, have appealed to the law to have the animals destroyed, and have been unable to get any satisfaction. In fact, a number of Magistrates are said to have requested the Attorney-General to step in and take some action. The requested action is now embodied in Colonel Kennedy's amending legislation.

The proposed legislation brings to light, it is claimed, a somewhat awk-

ward situation, as, according to one public official, Magistrates in the past have on more than one occasion taken upon themselves the right to order the destruction of vicious dogs.

"A Magistrate in the past has not been vested with the power to order the destruction of a dog," stated County Crown Attorney Frank G. Moore, when questioned by The Globe last night. He explained that, when it was found that a person had been bitten by a vicious canine, the animal had to be kept under observation for a period of ten days, so that any signs of rabies or disease would show up. J. McNabb Wilson of the Humane Society admitted that cases had been known in the past where Magistrates had assumed the right to order a dog destroyed.

From another official The Globe had the question: "If it is so that Magistrates have been despatching dogs without any authority, what comeback have the owners of the animals that were put out of business?"