

March 7.

CHANGES PROPOSED IN MARRIAGE ACT

Price Gives Notice of
Amendment Motion in
Legislature

Notice of motion was given in the Ontario Legislature yesterday by Attorney-General Price of proposed changes in the Marriage Act which will have the effect of removing doubts as to the right of Ontario courts to make annulments.

Under the British North America Act the Dominion is given control over marriages and divorces, and the Provinces over solemnization, it is explained. Later, through the Federal Divorce Act, the Provincial courts were given authority to grant divorces, but some doubt has existed as to whether the act would be ultra vires in so far as annulment is concerned.

Clauses of the act which are particularly covered by the proposed amendments are: Where parties cannot contract marriage because one of them is already married; where restrictions on blood-relationship exist; and where there is failure to comply with statutory regulations.

Provincial grants to public hospitals and hospitals for consumptives are likely to be reduced under legislative power requested by Hon. Dr. J. M. Robb, Minister of Health. Dr. Robb has given notices of motions affecting two acts whereby they may be changed to allow the reduction if the Government sees fit. Forecasts of the reductions have already been made, and when asked by The Globe if cuts were to be made Dr. Robb said: "Something will likely be done along that line."

Dr. Robb also gave notice of motion that he would introduce a bill to validate arrangements already made regarding the cancer clinics in Toronto, Kingston and London.

William Newman (Liberal, Victoria North) gave notice of a bill to change regulations regarding threshers' liens on farmers. Under the present arrangement a thresher must put a lien on the farmer's grain immediately after it is threshed and haul out the amount necessary to meet the cost of threshing. Threshers consider this method too harsh, and, while the Agriculture Committee of the House decided to take no action last week, Mr. Newman, a member of the committee, is bringing down the legislation. Under the new plan a thresher may hand the farmer a lien slip after the threshing, and can collect later if payment is not forthcoming.

CITY BILL IS DROPPED AS TORONTO M.P.P.'S ASSAIL IT STRONGLY

Hamilton Members Join in
Opposition With Hon.
Mr. McCrea

SURTAX TERMED UNFAIR

With five Toronto members standing up vigorously to oppose the City of Toronto's own bill, and Hon. Charles McCrea, Minister of Mines, urging its withdrawal, the proposed amendment to the Assessment Act, which would allow a surtax on incomes of more than \$10,000, was given short shrift in the Legislature yesterday. When it came up for second reading and it was found that every spokesman was against it, George Shields (Conservative, Woodbine), who sponsored it, agreed to withdraw it after Mr. McCrea had suggested this disposition.

Arguments Against It.

Arguing that it would prevent industries locating in Ontario; drive away some that are now here; lead to rich and influential citizens moving from cities to suburban districts, and discourage the philanthropic endeavors of the richer classes, the various speakers put up such a barrage of opposition that it was apparent from the first that it would not pass. Not during the present session at least has any measure received such unanimous non-support.

"Not having power to restore the dead, I beg leave to remove the body. I will withdraw the bill," remarked Mr. Shields, with a smile, after all doubt about its disposition had been dispelled. It never had a chance to get even to the committee stage. Hamilton members joined with their Toronto colleagues in opposition to it.

"Perhaps it is easy, in times like these, to present a side of a question which appears to attack those of means, those who are referred to as the capitalistic class," said Mr. McCrea, apparently expounding the views of the Government.

It was common knowledge that property was not taxed to its full value, he said. He pictured one of the class it would hit, a man with a home valued at \$30,000, and probably an income of \$30,000, much of which was used to keep up his home. In addition to the taxes on his home, and the regular income tax, he would be asked to pay 40 mills in addition, he said.

Would Cut Employment.

"Is this a fair method of taxation? Would not a Council which attempted this be cutting off its nose to spite its face?" he asked. It would result in less employment, and would injure the very people it was destined to help, he said.

"One of the things we need in this Province to set the wheels of industry going again is capital," continued Mr. McCrea. "In the Province we have built up a great gold industry. We have built it up because of our sane attitude toward the investment of capital. It has been brought in under a fair system, and brought in in hundreds of millions of dollars. It has built up a gold industry which is the sheet anchor of this Dominion in time of stress. We have a heavy load of taxes, but the only way we will escape from that burden is to set the wheels of industry in motion once more. We should not now throw obstacles in the spokes of industry.

Urges No "False Moves."

"There must be a leader and a directing force to lead us out of the present situation. The United States will be led out of it by the great new President. And this country and this Province will be one of the first to emerge and lead along the van of progress. But do not let us do these things; do not let us make false moves. Do not let us injure Toronto," urged

Mr. McCrea in suggesting that the bill be withdrawn.

The bill would have put a surtax on incomes of more than \$10,000 on the following scale: \$10,000-\$20,000, 3 per cent.; \$20,000-\$30,000, 4 per cent.; \$30,000-\$40,000, 5 per cent.; \$40,000-\$50,000, 6 per cent.; \$50,000-\$100,000, 7 per cent.; \$100,000-\$150,000, 8 per cent.; \$150,000-\$200,000, 9 per cent.; more than \$200,000, 10 per cent.

In introducing the bill for its second reading, Mr. Shields stated that it would apply to 1932 incomes in certain municipalities. The object of the bill was to change the assessment on incomes in every municipality in the Province. "Income taxes, if reasonably and equitably applied, are the most fair of all forms of taxes," he said. At another point he remarked: "I still maintain that there would be loopholes, and some municipalities would dodge making income assessments."

Russell Nesbitt (Conservative, Bracondale) was opposed to it, because he felt that it savored of class legislation. People of substance promoted the welfare of the city. "Subscriptions to charitable organizations are made up to a great extent by those who would be affected by this bill. It would discourage philanthropy," he said, and dwelt at some length on how it would react against industries coming to Toronto, and believed that they would go to Montreal and other Quebec centres instead if the taxes were increased here.

"Legislative Piracy."

Wilfrid Heighington (Conservative, St. Davids) thought that the only reason the bill was on the order paper was the good nature of its sponsor. "Let us not approve of a principle of adding to the burdens of a tax rate which is already too heavy. This bill is, in effect, legislative piracy. It is penalizing those who have been the best means of providing charity," he said.

"I do not object to the taxation of the rich for the benefit of the poor," said E. F. Singer (Conservative, St. Andrews), "but I object to this bill. Why put it on here when there is none in Quebec? It is not fair to us. It is not good policy for our Province to be singled out. If there is to be a surtax, the Dominion Government should put it on. Personally I would like to see the time come when all income taxes are abolished."

William Morrison (Conservative, Hamilton East) said that such municipalities as Forest Hill were opposed to income taxes only because they wanted to attract the wealthy to it. "I do not think there should be any additions to income taxes until they are uniform, and the rural parts pay the same rate as the urban," said he. Argue Martin (Conservative, Hamilton West) held that the bill would provide unjust discrimination against Ontario in favor of all the other Provinces.

W. A. Baird (Conservative, High Park) who has had considerable municipal experience himself, said that Councils often took action one day which they would be glad to undo the next. He referred to the increases in Council salaries in Toronto, and the present action to decrease them.

Harry Price (Conservative, West York) told of one industry which was going to come to Toronto, but when it heard of the present bill being brought up, it decided to settle elsewhere, and did so. If it were not for Ontario's favorable geographical situation, it would be very difficult to get industries to settle in the Province, he said.

E. J. Murphy (Conservative, St. Patrick) remarked: "If this were passed, individuals who have been contributing to philanthropic organizations would just say that they would give no more. The municipality would just have to pay out maybe two or three millions more for relief."

Ramsden's Comment.

Commenting on the refusal of the Provincial Government to entertain the city's bill, Controller Ramsden, sponsor of the surtax, expressed the opinion last night that the Government had made a serious mistake.

"I considered it was the proper source from which the revenue should be secured, and I still see no better source," he said.