

COMPENSATION ACT IS ALTERED

Slightly and Passes Third Reading in Legislature—Final Reading Today.

(Tuesday's Daily.)

Yesterday afternoon's session was one of considerable interest in the legislature, marked as it was by the Compensation act, somewhat amended, passing its second reading, by the final passing of eleven acts and by the introduction of Mr. Hiebert's resolution concerning government-owned dispensaries for the sale of liquor.

When the Compensation act came up for consideration Mr. Robertson, of High River, attempted a play to the galleries, but his obvious play ended only with a smile on Mr. Robertson's face. With this government measure, one of the most advanced pieces of labor legislation possible, before him he posed as the champion of some visionary, down-trodden labor ranks.

He was informed by the premier that this was undesirable, and he was particularly without precedent on a government measure. Deputy Speaker Boyle, presiding, ruled that although no outsider could properly take part in the debates of the House, any member who desired to do so could, with the unanimous consent of the House, invite to a seat beside him any labor delegate he wished, and could benefit by that man's representations. This being assented to Mr. Robertson's cards were shown, namely, as he had not any labor representative present whom he wanted to invite to a seat beside him. The occasion being given, there were others who had.

So it was that during the discussion on the Compensation act in committee of the whole, Frank Sherman, of Taber, president of Alberta of the United Mine Workers of America, occupied a seat on the floor of the House beside W. C. Simmons, M.P.P. for Lethbridge. This privilege was accorded Mr. Sherman by the consent of the House and on the invitation of Mr. Simmons, who is one of the keenest advocates of advanced labor legislation in Canada. Mr. Sherman's presence there recalled the fact that it was only a few years ago that practically the first in Alberta to start the movement for the Compensation act.

The amendments to the bill, which were introduced by Mr. Cross and were the outcome of a careful consideration of the bill in committee, were of great importance. The height of the building on which an injured employee must have been erected, was increased from 40 feet to 50 feet. The 40-foot phrase was changed to 50 feet. The trades unions took objection and asked for a change.

Still other amendments were the change in the scale of compensation. When death results from a workman's injury that comes under the act the top limit of the compensation was increased from \$1,000 to \$1,500. In cases where the workman was dependent on the medical and burial expenses to be paid by his employer shall not exceed \$200, this limit being increased to \$300 by the amendment. In cases where it was originally provided that an injured workman under 21 should receive from his employer a certain portion of his salary, but not to exceed \$7.50 per week, this was increased from \$5.

The date at which the act is to come into force was changed from Sept. 1, 1928, to January 1, 1929.

Does Not Apply to Farmers. An important amendment, addition rather, and one in which Messrs. Boyle, Walker, Telford, Puffer, McPherson and others were active in procuring, was a provision in section 2, which section in a general way sets out who are to be covered by the bill. The addition very clearly defines the fact that this act has bearing only upon industrial tradesmen and not upon agricultural communities. The addition reads: "Notwithstanding anything hereinbefore contained, this act shall not apply to the employment of agriculture, nor to any work performed on machinery used in or about a farm or homestead for farm purposes, or for the purpose of improving such farm or homestead, and for greater certainty but so as not to restrict in any degree the generality of the foregoing words of this section this act shall not apply to any of the following employments on a farm—

(a)—Threshing, cleaning, crushing, grinding or otherwise treating grain or saving wood, posts, lumber or other wooden material, or otherwise treating the same, or pressing hay, by any kind of machinery or motive power, and whether such machinery or motive power be portable or stationary, and whether the same be owned and operated by the farmer or farmers for whose purpose the same is being used, or by any other farmer or other person for gain, profit or reward.

(b)—The construction, repair or demolition of any farm building, mill, derrick or other structure. "The word 'factory' as defined in this act shall not be held to include any building, workshop, place or mill on a farm used for the purposes of such farm."

"The words 'mine' or 'quarry' as defined in this act shall not be held to include any mine or quarry on a farm used for the purposes of such farm."

"The words 'engineering work' as defined in this act shall not be held to include any ditch, drain, well, or other excavation on a farm being constructed or repaired for the purposes of such farm, or any adjoining farm or farms."

The act with its amendments passed the second reading and will today be given a final reading.

Much Legislation Forwarded.

The approach of prorogation was evident in the large number of bills on the order paper for a final reading, and passed.

An Act to Amend the Lethbridge Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Edmonton Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Calgary Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Regina Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Saskatoon Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Winnipeg Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Vancouver Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Seattle Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Portland Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of San Francisco Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of New York Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of London Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Paris Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Rome Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Athens Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Jerusalem Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Baghdad Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Cairo Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Constantinople Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Damascus Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Aleppo Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Hama Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Latakia Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Tartus Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Tripoli Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Beirut Charter. Mr. Simmons.

An Act to Amend the City of Haifa Charter. Mr. Simmons.

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much of a disease rather than a crime that men should be medically treated for drunkenness rather than jailed as now. If there were, among the common people of the province, one that would cause each year 1,200 people to be arrested in Calgary and Edmonton, as the liquor traffic did in the past, the people of the province would arise and sweep out of existence any government that would not abolish such an industry.

Some might argue against his resolution that there was no precedent for it, and the government had received no message from the people to take over the liquor business absolutely. But in the telephone question the government had not awaited a mandate from the people, and now that a government-owned telephone system had come to pass all the people were glad. The province was young and should do as its people had—take out new trails for itself. His system of dispensaries would, he believed, reduce liquor drinking to a minimum. It would also be a profitable business for the government to invest in, as it was the love of gain alone that was keeping so many people in the business everywhere.

Despicable Habit of "Treating." It hardened drinking to a habit. It killed themselves, Mr. Hiebert would not so greatly object, but their vice was like a pest which they brought from man through the pernicious habit of treating. When a man was led to drink, the rest in the way to the "treating" that friend was guilty of, whatever the other might do later of wrong. Treating a friend to liquor was as bad as inoculating him with the virus of emphysema.

Quoting statistics from Canada and the States to evidence how much money was squandered yearly in liquor, Mr. Hiebert stated that in the year 1926, when the liquor trade was annually paid in the liquor trade for liquor in Edmonton, this perhaps \$200,000 went for labor, the rest in the way to the general profit of the country. With an earnest appeal to the legislators to consider his resolution as a means to lessen the evils of liquor, Mr. Hiebert closed his speech.

Hon. Mr. Cross, rising to reply, congratulated Mr. Hiebert upon his feeling that the liquor trade was one of the greatest evils of the age. Had this speech been delivered upon Mr. Hiebert's motion, he would have been congratulated by the House.

At the end of the debate the House accepted this amendment to the resolution, moved by Attorney General Cross and seconded by Premier Borden.

That this House, while sympathizing with every effort towards the promotion of sobriety, as has been shown by the amendments to the Liquor License Ordinance of last session, does not consider that the assumption by the province of the sole right of vending spirituous liquors is desirable, and that, before legislation for such a purpose be introduced, any such plan should be thoroughly investigated.

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members had time for full study of the provisions, but the labor unions had been given full opportunity to express their opinions on the matter to one of the members in private.

The fact that speaking under the bar of the House had been allowed here was pointed out by Mr. Robertson, who was informed that the measure under question had been a private bill concerning Edmonton City; that it had come up in the earlier days of the legislature, and the privilege accorded the various lawyers to speak was afterwards pronounced unconstitutional and had not occurred again. Since then city solicitors who had to be consulted on municipal matters before the House were given seats on the floor of the House, but were not permitted to take part in the discussion. The latter was against parliamentary rules.

The privilege of a seat on the floor of the House was then accorded by the House to any labor delegate whom any member would care to have beside him to aid him, Mr. Robertson had no present objection to being called to call, Mr. Simmons, rising promptly, said:

"Mr. Deputy Speaker, in view of the fact that the House has decided to consider the High River bill, I would ask that the House be permitted to take a seat beside me to aid me, Mr. Robertson has no present objection to being called to call, Mr. Simmons, rising promptly, said:

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attorney general as better qualified to respond. Attorney General Cross rose to reply with some amusement.

"Since the member for High River refers you to me for a meeting or a clause which he himself asks to have inserted in the bill, I submit that the labor party, which he claims to represent today, should find another leader."

Mr. Cross then proceeded to a further explanation of the various terms.

Mr. Robertson, rising, disclaimed that he was necessarily the representative of labor, but stood for the rights of the people generally, and to support his motion would say that the Calgary Trades and Labor Council had expressed a desire to have this session attended.

Mr. Cross, again amused at the position into which Mr. Robertson's reply had put him, requested the member for High River to re-read the clause submitted by the Calgary council, which does not mean a really advancing what they asked.

A Lively Episode. Mr. Robertson—They referred me to section 9. Hon. Mr. Cross—Yes, but not to what you ask.

Mr. Robertson—They referred to the definition of dependants. Mr. Moore asked Mr. Robertson to read for the House what the Calgary council had said. Mr. Robertson not doing this promptly, the deputy speaker, anxious to get on with the lengthy bill, asked the House to keep to the matter in point—to realize that he was not a mind-reader; that he could not possibly interpret what members might be thinking. He dealt with it.

Mr. Boyle put the clause to the House, and Mr. Moore rising to speak was ruled out of order by a ruling to which he strenuously objected, but to which the deputy speaker as firmly held.

Order was again called and the House, after considerable amusement, got down to serious consideration of the bill.

In the section which defined the employer as not liable in respect of any injury which does not disable the workman for two weeks, Mr. Robertson asked that this be made one week.

Mr. Cross, in reply, said that the clause was made two weeks to prevent the shaming of sickness among the workmen and stated further that it had proved quite satisfactory in the British Columbia act. In the subsection (c) of the same clause the words, "or permanent disablement," were added on the motion of Mr. Cross. They are an exact copy of the British act.

When paragraph 5, concerning contracting out, came before the House Mr. Robertson moved that the entire paragraph be deleted. He was of the opinion that this was included in the British act, because Mr. Chamberlain had agreed to recognize the right of friendly and benefit societies that had sprung up in England and in which the workmen were interested. Conditions in Alberta were not parallel to those in England, and he believed. Moreover, in his opinion this insurance provision was against the fundamental principle of compensation. The product itself should stand good for the expenses of accidents; there was always a direct payment of insurance companies allowing employees to graft.

Hon. Mr. Cross then said it occurred to him during the foregoing that the member for High River had had little experience in employing men or in the Dominion Alliance today asked Premier Whitney for the repeal of the three-fifths clause, but made no definite statement as to a repeal of the clause. He said an announcement of his policy would be made later.

Ontario Temperance Delegation. Toronto, Feb. 28.—A monster delegation from the Ontario branch of the Dominion Alliance today asked Premier Whitney for the repeal of the three-fifths clause, but made no definite statement as to a repeal of the clause. He said an announcement of his policy would be made later.

Baby's Own Tablets. SAVE A LITTLE LIFE. Mrs. T. Osborn, Norton Mills, Vt., writes: "I do not think enough can be said in praise of Baby's Own Tablets. I am satisfied that our baby would not have been alive today if it had not been for the Tablets."

In-subsection (5) of this section in respect of contracting out, Mr. Robertson asked that the attorney general's report should each year contain full particulars of all schemes of contracting out reported to the attorney general. He was informed there was no such thing published as this report, and that consequently it could not be incorporated.

In-subsection (3) of the section pertaining to insanity of employer the specified sections of the different acts mentioned were out and the words "or ordinance" inserted on the sixth and tenth lines after act.

Asked to Study Bill. Mr. Robertson was again troubled over section 9, relating to "provisions as to existing contracts," upon which Mr. Cross had informed him the day the bill came up first for discussion. He stated that the workman was not sufficiently guarded against relinquishing to his employer some rights to compensation.

Mr. Cross suggested again that the member for High River should study the act before offering amendments, and again referred him to page 4 of the bill, section 5, where the last two lines relate guarded against any such contingency.

Mr. Robertson was satisfied.

Scale of Compensation. In consideration of the schedule of paragraph 5, relating to "provisions as to existing contracts," upon which the act before offering amendments, and again referred him to page 4 of the bill, section 5, where the last two lines relate guarded against any such contingency.

Mr. Cross then read the lines, "but, save as aforesaid, this act shall apply notwithstanding any contract to the contrary made after the commencement of this act."

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ney General Cross to protect the farmer. Mr. Telford asked to have added to the clause as published today the words "or pressing of hay." The House agreed to this.

Mr. Puffer, following Mr. Telford's comment, with others of a similar nature, stated that the bill had at first seemed to him to be impracticable because agriculture was and will continue to be the predominant industry of the province. This legislature had already passed several measures greatly to the interest of the working man, and he felt it this compensation act were to include the farming community a great mistake would be made.

Farmers here were not capitalists. He had been glad, however, on the occasion of the bill to find that it did not refer to farmers, as it would only have hampered farming operations in a new country. Incidentally he called attention to the fact that out of 300,000,000 acres of good land suitable for cultivation in the three prairie provinces 10,000,0