

1880-81, 103 days, and the Session of 1882, 98 days. I need not remind those who were members of the late House that the Session 1880-81 was the Session in which the Pacific Railway Contract came under discussion, when we met before Christmas, had a Christmas Recess, and resumed afterwards; and we are now within three days of the duration of that Session. Taking the whole of these Sessions together, the average is under eighty-one days. Taking the last four Sessions together, including that exceptional Session, the average is ninety-three days. Omitting the exceptional Session, the average is eighty-nine days, and we are now called upon to discuss the measure on the hundredth day. The hon. gentleman announced to us in the Speech from the Throne, that this measure was a necessity forced upon the Administration by a decision which had been given some six or eight months previous. No step was taken to carry out the view expressed in the Speech from the Throne until the 16th of March, some few weeks or more after the commencement of the Session, when the hon. gentleman moved the reference of the whole subject to a Select Committee. I need hardly point out, Sir, that had that been the course originally designed to be pursued in reference to this measure, the hon. gentleman would have—ought to have—moved for his Select Committee immediately, so that its labors might have been prosecuted and its results arrived at and submitted to this House within a reasonable space. But, as I said, no step was taken until the 16th of March, when the Committee was moved. Now, Sir, I do not know in what manner, and with what amplitude of discussion, legislation upon this important question of licensing, involving, as it does, so many considerations of various descriptions and so much matter of detail, has been conducted in the Legislatures of the other Provinces than that from which I come; but I do know that in that Province a License Bill, even an amendment to a License Bill, embracing a few particulars, has always been understood to be a measure likely to give rise, and has always justified the expectation that it would give rise, to very ample discussion. That is natural in a measure of that description; and it is the more to be regretted that we should be called upon at this stage to legislate in this regard, because we labor under difficulties very much greater in respect to such legislation, than any Provincial Legislature possibly can in dealing with the legislation of its own Province, because we have to deal with the legislation of the different Provinces, and to consider how far it is possible, as the hon. gentleman has suggested, to harmonize the various views, ideas, and opinions which have been in vogue in the different Provinces, and the various laws to which the people have been accustomed, in one mould, in such a way as to suit us all. I do not propose, at this time, to enter upon a rediscussion of the positions I took at the earliest stage at which it was possible to take them on this matter. It will, I believe—particularly after the announcement of the hon. gentleman that an infinitude of suggestions have been made to the Administration on behalf of various interests, and that improvements will be submitted for the consideration of the Committee, arising out of these suggestions—be for the convenience of the House that I should interpose as little as possible until the Administration can announce these improvements which they propose to make. I am inclined to believe, Sir, that the discussions which have taken place, and the difficulties which have been evolved, have indicated the importance of the view which has been pressed from this side of the House upon the attention of the Government and the House, that this question, above all questions, is one eminently of a local character, and one to be dealt with by the Local Legislatures. But I shall not enlarge upon that either, convinced as I am that we shall advance a decision upon that, as well as upon other points, by as rapidly as possible getting into Committee, so as to

understand what it is proposed to do with this Bill. Its merits shall ultimately depend, as it is submitted to this House not upon the form in which it at present appears, but upon the form into which the hon. gentleman will propose to mould it. Maintaining, therefore, the objections which I have expressed to the House on a former occasion as to the impropriety of our interfering at all at this stage with this question; maintaining the position that if there be a doubt cast, as there has been, by a paragraph in the Speech from the Throne, upon the jurisdiction of the Local Legislatures, the best interests of the Dominion and the spirit of our Constitution would be best consulted, not by our legislating here, but by taking steps to remove that doubt. I shall not interpose longer between the House and the question, but proceed to facilitate the giving of that information at once which I had thought the hon. gentleman would give on the second reading, as to the alterations which he proposes to make in the measure.

Bill read the second time on a division.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, in moving that the House resolve itself into Committee of the Whole, said: I would suggest, in order to expedite the Bill as much as possible, that we should take the clauses as to which there is no dispute, and leave over those on which there may be discussion.

Mr. BLAKE. Some of these clauses may be depending on the other clauses.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. We will not take up any of the depending clauses.

Mr. BLAKE. We must know what the disputed clauses are first. You cannot deal with the clauses in that way.

Motion agreed to; and the House resolved itself into Committee.

(In the Committee.)

On section 2,

Mr. McCARTHY. I propose to add in the eleventh line after "shall" the words: "unless such interpretation be repugnant to the subject or inconsistent with the text," then the word "board" should come before "district" so as to get it in alphabetical order. It will be found in the third enumerated clause of the interpretation.

On section 3,

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. This provides:

Nothing in this Act shall apply: 1. To manufacturers of native wines from grapes grown and produced in Canada, and who sell such wines in quantities of not less than one gallon or two bottles, if not less than three half-pints each, at one time at the place of manufacture.

2. To any person who holds a license as auctioneer, selling liquor at public auction in quantities of not less than two gallons at any one time.

3. To any person selling liquor in any refreshment room at the Senate or House of Commons, or the Legislative Council or House of Assembly of any of the Provinces, by the permission and under the control of the Senate, House of Commons, Legislative Council or House of Assembly respectively.

Mr. BLAKE. As we are passing a most stringent law to the rest of the world, why should we permit anybody to sell here?

Mr. McCARTHY. It does not give permission.

Mr. BLAKE. It recognizes the principle of permission.

Mr. FORBES. With reference to the first sub-section, if it would be well to do something which would prevent drinking on the premises, we should insert the words, "not to be drunk on the premises."

Mr. BLAKE. Does that apply to the liquor or the man?

Mr. FORBES. The one follows the other.

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex). Why is an auctioneer to be exempted from the restriction of this Act?