

THE LIQUOR LICENSE LAWS OF THE PROVINCE OF ONTARIO.

When the Mowat Government took office in 1871, the liquor traffic was under the control of the Municipal Councils of the Province, and licenses to sell liquor were issued by the municipality. The inspection of hotels was also directed by the Municipal Councils by an officer appointed by the Council.

As a consequence there was great abuse of the power to issue licenses, and the whole question as to the issue of licenses and the regulation of the traffic entered into municipal politics and seriously affected municipal elections.

The first radical change in the license laws of the Province was made in 1876, by an Act commonly known as the "Crooks Act," by which the licensing of hotels and other places for the sale of liquors was placed in the hands of three commissioners for each electoral district, and the inspection of hotels, etc., in the hands of an officer appointed by the Government, known as Inspector of Liquor Licenses.

The following table gives, in intervals of five years, the numbers of each kind of license issued between 1874 and 1900 inclusive:—

Year.	Tavern.	Shop.	Whole- sale.	Vessel.	Total.
1874-5.....	4,793	1,377	52	33	6,185
1879-80.....	3,199	757	42	22	4,020
1884-5.....	3,253	675	28	14	3,970
*1888-9.....	2,006	336	26	17	2,445
1889-90.....	3,073	445	27	15	3,560
1891-5.....	2,785	337	29	—	3,151
1899-00.....	2,021	308	21	—	2,950

*Scott Act year.

The number of licenses issued in proportion to population was as follows:—

1875. One to 278 persons. | 1900. One to 700 persons.