

Mr. BLAKE. You have made it as harmless as possible, I hope.

Sir CHARLES TUPPER. I do not undertake the responsibility of it. I move that the Bill be referred back to the Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to; and Bill reommitted, amended, reported, and read the third time and passed.

LAKE ST. PETER IMPROVEMENTS.

Sir LEONARD TILLEY. I think I neglected to state, when I moved the resolutions relating to the expenditure on Lake St. Peter, that the assent of the Crown had been given to them.

It being Six o'clock, the Speaker left the Chair.

After Recess.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD, in moving the second reading of Bill (No. 132) respecting the sale of intoxicating liquors and the issuing of licenses therefor, said: The objects of this Bill are accurately prescribed in the preamble, which I will read:

"Whereas it is desirable to regulate the traffic in the sale of intoxicating liquors, and it is expedient that the law respecting the same should be uniform throughout the Dominion, and that provision should be made in regard thereto for the better preservation of peace and order."

The Bill, as the House knows, is the result of a report of a Special Committee appointed by this House to consider this all-important question. While the subject was before the Committee the general line of the Bill, of course, became known to the public more or less through the newspapers, and the Government has received an infinity of representations, some complaining of the undue stringency of the measure, and others, especially the Licensed Victuallers, desiring some alterations and modifications in some of the clauses of the Bill, as they regarded it as unduly oppressing on their branch of the trade. All these matters will be fully discussed in the Committee I have no doubt. The general system is this: That in each license-district, which districts are specified in the Bill, there shall be a Board of three License Commissioners. The first Commissioner shall be: In the Provinces of Ontario, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, the County Court Judge, or the Junior Judge of the County, as may be selected by the Governor in Council; in the Province of Quebec, the Superior Court Judge of the Judicial District, and in the Judicial Districts of Quebec and Montreal, such one of the Judges as the Governor may appoint, except in the cities of Montreal and Quebec, where he shall be the Judge of the Sessions of the Peace; in the Province of British Columbia, such one of the Judges as the Governor in Council may appoint. I may say *en passant* that I have received some representations from the Province of Quebec, pointing out some practical difficulties in getting a Judge to be a member of the Commission. They have not the County Court system, as it is understood in the other Provinces, and it is alleged that the jurisdiction of the Superior Court Judges is over such a large area that it would include several, and, perhaps, in some cases, many districts, and that, perhaps, they might not be available. But it has been suggested to me by an hon. member that if you want to get independent men, men of standing and of position in those cases where Superior Court Judges are not available, the Registrar of Deeds, who is an officer holding office during good behavior, might be appointed as a substitute, but of course that will be a matter for discussion in the Committee. The second Commissioner shall be the Warden of the

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county or Mayor of the city. When there is both a Warden and a Mayor, having jurisdiction within the license district, the former shall be second Commissioner. In the cities of Montreal and Quebec, in the Province of Quebec, the Recorder, and in the Province of Prince Edward Island, the Sheriff of the county shall be the second Commissioner, inasmuch as they have not a municipal system as is known and obtains in the other Provinces. Then as this is a Government measure, and the Government are responsible for the carrying out of the objects stated in the preamble, it is proposed that the Government shall have the appointment of one Commissioner who shall hold office during good behavior. This is the governing board which rules the whole system, the whole plan of license regulations, the whole plan of restrictions, the whole plan of punishment. The Inspectors who are to act as the executive under this quasi-legislative body of Commissioners are to be appointed by the Commissioners. The Commissioners being an independent body, being a body of which two members are quite independent of any Government influence or supposed Government influence, it is thought better that the Inspector should be appointed by such a Board, rather than directly by the Government, as in other places, and should act under their general direction. As will be seen by the Bill, the license fee is nominal, the object of the Bill not being for revenue purposes or the increase of the revenue, but for the purposes of good government and the regulation of this trade. Though it is not expressed in the Bill, perhaps it will be provided during the progress through Committee, that, so far as we have the right to assert it, the right of the Provincial Governments shall be asserted to make such legislation as to all such licenses as may be necessary in order to bring in revenue for Provincial, local or municipal purposes. These are the principles of the Bill, and the rest of the measure consists of the machinery. The gentlemen who composed the Special Committee were carefully selected from the different Provinces. There has been, of course, a necessity for a good deal of give and take, because people are very naturally inclined to prefer the system to which they are accustomed, and which has been in force in their own Provinces. Of course, as with every new measure, time will show its imperfections, and it will be the pleasant duty of the Legislature, from time to time, as experience shows the necessity of it, to correct any errors in detail which may be revealed. With these few remarks, I shall move the second reading. Unfortunately, I am not in that state of health to be able to discuss this matter at great length at present, but I have no doubt I shall be ably assisted in the discussion by hon. members on both sides.

Mr. BLAKE. We have now arrived at the hundredth day, I think, of the Session; and it is a curious commentary on what might be supposed to be the improved condition of public business which would be presented by an Administration which had just been invigorated by contact with their source of power, the people, that we should have arrived at that stage of the Session before it is proposed to read for the second time a measure which was promised in the Speech from the Throne as one of the most important measures of the Government. We have already heard of the fate of the other two measures of importance which were promised to us. In order that hon. members may appreciate what the circumstances are under which we are called upon to legislate at this time on this important matter, and remembering that it is only a day or two since the Bill was printed and distributed, and that we have had but that brief period for the consideration of its clauses, I would just draw attention to the duration of our Sessions for some years back. The Session of 1874 lasted 62 days, the Session of 1875, 68 days, the Session of 1876, 63 days, the Session of 1877, 80 days, the Session of 1878, 93 days, the Session of 1879, 84 days, the Session of 1880, 80 days, the Session of