

SPEECH

DELIVERED BY

HON. G. W. ROSS

**On the Second Reading of the Bill respecting Prohibition,
on 6th March, 1902**

The Premier, who was greeted with prolonged Ministerial applause on rising to move the second reading of the prohibition bill, said: I need not trouble the House at any great length in moving the second reading of this bill. I have no doubt that hon. members of this House have a very lively recollection as to the extent, almost to weariness, with which I occupied their time on the first reading. I think I may very properly say, without dealing with this phase of the question at great length, that the bill has been well received generally. There are three parties to the reception of this bill from whom we have heard. The very earnest temperance man, who has so long been looking for prohibition and wondering why its chariot wheels tarried so long, expressed some dissatisfaction that we did not bring in a more decided measure, as he says, and more heroic legislation dealing with this question, disposing of the liquor traffic there and then, and inaugurating the millennium which he looked for if prohibition became the law. We expected that that class, a certain number of them at least—and they are very good men, everybody will admit their earnestness, men with whom, some of them, I have been associated all my life—we expected that some of them would be disappointed. So they were. We expected also that those who were in the liquor trade would urge objections. What they wanted was no bill. They were satisfied with the present condition of things, and wanted no further restrictions on the liquor traffic, at least not a bill so drastic as this appears to be. Between these two is a very large class, composed of temperance men and men who consider themselves temperate, though they do not go the length of being total abstainers. From that middle class the bill, on the whole, has received a cordial reception. (Ministerial applause). They