

I come now, Mr. Speaker, to another matter—the subject of prohibition. Prohibition is not, by any means, a dead issue. The temperance people of the Dominion are sincere; and however fast and loose the Liberal party or the Conservative party may play with this question, it is bound to continue a live issue. I am not going to make any argument against the Liberal party. I would not be prepared to vote want of confidence in the government for not having introduced a prohibitory measure, but I would be prepared to vote want of confidence in them for the manner in which they have fooled the temperance people by giving these people to understand that if they would support the Liberal party, that party, when in office, would carry out the voice of the people. Instead, however, of carrying out that mandate, they now tell the temperance people of the Dominion that they may go to—Halifax. I have but one remark to make on this point. If the government will themselves introduce a measure and not have a measure introduced by some supporter of theirs on a back seat, or a motion on which a Bill may be framed, and then have another gentleman get up and move an amendment, and then have a third hon. gentleman supporting the government move an amendment to the amendment—

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. The hon. gentleman is out of order in discussing prohibition now, for two reasons. First, because that subject is on the Order paper, and in the second place, he is referring to a previous debate.

Mr. BELL (Addington). There is no one who will so willingly and readily bow to the decision of the Chair—

Mr. W. H. MONTAGUE (Haldimand). The question of prohibition has been constantly referred to throughout this budget debate.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. It is quite different now because the question is on the Order paper.

Mr. MONTAGUE. Since how long?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. Since the day before yesterday.

Mr. MONTAGUE. It has been on the Order paper for a month, perhaps two months, and yet the subject has been constantly referred to throughout this debate, because it is a part of the general policy of the government. It is generally understood that in the budget debate all matters concerning the general policy of the government are open to discussion; and this question of prohibition has been referred to in every speech made up to the present during this discussion.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. The question before the Chair, is the question of preferential trade, and in that connection the tariff

Mr. BELL (Addington).

question has been also discussed, but as to the question of prohibition that is not in order.

Mr. MONTAGUE. This is not a question of preferential trade at all, but the budget. Do I understand you to rule, Sir, that we are limited to the question of preferential trade, and that we cannot discuss the question of prohibition which has been discussed up to the present moment in every speech made on the budget.

The PRIME MINISTER (Sir Wilfrid Laurier). The amendment before the House is one dealing with preferential trade, but Mr. Speaker has allowed the discussion to be made on the whole budget. My hon. friend from Addington (Mr. Bell), however, is referring to an amendment and a sub-amendment which were moved and discussed a few days ago.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The right hon. gentleman knows that it has always been our practice to discuss the general policy of the government in the budget debate.

The PRIME MINISTER. No.

Mr. MONTAGUE. The right hon. gentleman will agree with me that the subject of prohibition has been constantly referred to in all the speeches throughout this debate.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. Let me call the attention of the hon. member to page 549 of Sir John Bourinot's work, 2nd edition:

When an amendment has been moved to the question for the Speaker to leave the Chair, discussions should be properly confined to its subject matter.

Mr. MONTAGUE. That has never been carried out in this House.

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. There is no doubt about that, but I am calling the attention of the hon. member for Addington to the fact that he was referring to a previous debate and to amendments which were discussed the other day, and such reference is certainly out of order.

Sir CHARLES HIBBERT TUPPER. May I ask, Sir, whether your ruling is that the debate is henceforth to be strictly confined within the rule you have quoted and that we are not to discuss the general policy of the government?

Mr. DEPUTY SPEAKER. With the permission of the House, other subjects have been discussed on this amendment, but I now call the attention of the hon. member for Addington to the fact that he was referring distinctly to a debate which occurred some days ago and was certainly out of order.

Mr. BELL (Addington). I readily bow to your decision, Mr. Deputy Speaker, but I would ask your permission to conclude the brief explanation I was about to make.