

have invested their money in the business, and come under the regulation of the law, and they are liable to all the regulations established by the Commissioners, who must carry out the Act under the eye of the Inspector. Therefore, so far as those hotels are concerned, they are under the same restraints against improper conduct, whether a petition is presented in their favor or not; and, as they were not obliged to get any such certificate of character when they so invested their money, I think that it would be a cruel and a bad thing if, by a change of opinion in that particular locality, all their gold should be turned into stones, and that they should lose all their property. I really do think it would be very improper and very hard to do so; and that it would operate against individuals, without at all promoting the cause of temperance.

Mr. BLAKE. I would like to know what the reason for this Bill is, after the hon. gentleman's declaration, for he has first stated that the different regulations under which the licensees obtained their licenses were issued under competent authority?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I did not say so.

Mr. BLAKE. Yes; the hon. gentleman did say under competent authority.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. I said, issued under Provincial authority.

Mr. BLAKE. No, competent authority.

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. The hon. gentleman understood what I said, or he ought to have understood me. We are not here to catch at words, and show our wit; although that is not the particular accomplishment under which the hon. gentleman shines. We come here seriously to discuss this matter. The hon. gentleman understood me, unless he has resolved not to understand me. Every hon. gentleman who heard me, understood me to mean Provincial authority under which these people, believing it to be a competent authority at the time, paid their money and established their business.

Mr. AUGER. There is a good deal of truth in what the Premier has said, as to certain cases; but I know municipalities where they have five and sometimes more licensees. Suppose the Commissioners decide to diminish the number of licenses?

Sir JOHN A. MACDONALD. They have that right.

Mr. AUGER. Yes; and suppose they decide to issue only three licenses, how are they to decide what three shall be chosen from the five? But if these persons are obliged to get the support of one-third of the electors in the polling sub-division, then the people can choose three. This difficulty can be met by leaving the clause as it is.

Mr. JAMIESON. As a temperance man I would be quite satisfied with this provision in its present shape. One hon. gentleman has stated that it would give parties who at present held licenses, an advantage over those who wish to procure them, if it is changed as proposed. Perhaps there is something in that; however, I have no doubt, that inasmuch as this Bill will become law in the interest of peace and order, and to some extent for the promotion of temperance, I think that the provision as here is in the right direction; and I really believe that the temperance people of the country will be satisfied with it in its present shape.

Mr. FISHER. The right hon. gentleman, I think, misunderstood the drift of my remarks when he seemed to consider that I thought that the present holders of licenses were less orderly than, and of an inferior character to, those who may obtain licenses under this Act. This was not the intention of my remarks. What I wished to infer was, that as one of the most important parts of the Bill consists in the restriction put on obtaining

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licenses, those who now have licenses will escape those restrictions, and in that way have an advantage over those who have not now licenses. The hon. gentleman seems to be afraid of interfering with the vested rights of certain individuals; but as my hon. friend from Shefford stated, he is bound to interfere with vested rights in municipalities where more licenses are held than are allowed under this law. How will he be able to decide who shall retain and who shall be debarred from licenses? But if they have to get the support of their electors the matter will be more easily decided. As the regulations of the Commissioners will be declared beforehand, the electors in question will know how many licenses are to be issued, and will only sign the applications of the most deserving. For these reasons, I think that it would certainly be only fair and right to the whole community to leave the law as it now is.

Mr. McCARTHY. I think that the hon. gentleman seems to forget that after the applications are in the Board has to select those to whom they will grant licenses. All that this clause does is to say that a man who holds a license is *prima facie* supposed to be a fit and proper person to get a license for the next year. He has not a vested right, but comes armed with that position, so to speak; and therefore he is endowed with that title which a man applying for the first time has not. The Board after all has to say to whom they will grant licenses; and they are not bound to grant a license to one person more than to another. It will be granted if they think that the man's house has been properly kept, and if the Inspector so reports they will refuse the new applicant. Here are people, 90 per cent. of those who will apply, put to the trouble of asking their neighbors to sign a certificate in their favor, although they have carried on their business assumedly in a respectable manner, and that does not seem to me to be reasonable.

Mr. McNEILL. It does seem rather curious that it should be an objection to this clause that those persons who have invested money and property in the buildings they have erected, should have an advantage over those who have not invested their money. It seems to me that to a certain extent they have actually a vested right in this property, because while their licenses are renewable, there is a certain tacit understanding that so long as they keep their places in a proper manner, their licenses shall be renewed.

On sub-section 3, section 17,

Mr. CAMERON (Victoria). I think this sub-section should be amended by inserting the words after the word "school," "in existence before the license was granted to the house for which the license was applied for." I think in the event of an institution of that kind being built after the license was granted, the objection should not apply.

Mr. McCARTHY. It does not necessarily prevail. It is only a ground of petition.

Mr. CAMERON. It should not be a ground of petition.

Mr. BLAKE. To amend it, as the hon. gentleman suggests, would be to recognize that the license should go to the house. It would be practically saying that no neighborhood should be improved by buildings of this description being erected upon them, without their being informed that there was a tavern there which they could not get rid of for all time to come.

Mr. ROSS (Middlesex). It would practically be admitting that taverns would be of more importance than a place of worship, a hospital or a school.

On section 19;

Mr. CAMERON (Victoria). I think ten days should be substituted for four in this clause, as four days is not sufficient in the case of a large county, like my own, to go from one end to the other.