

Liquor Traffic—Ontario.

12579a. Do you think the present system of issuing licenses works satisfactorily for the regulation of the traffic?—So far as I know. I may say that I have not made a study of the different enactments or laws, but I know that things are conducted in an orderly way here.

12580a. The number of licenses to the population are few comparatively?—I know that.

12581a. Do you think that is an advantage?—I do.

12582a. Would you prefer a prohibitive system to the present one?—Not at all.

12583a. Have you any objection to state your reasons for that conclusion?—In the first place, I think it is impracticable, and in the next place I do not think it is at all desirable.

12584a. And you come to the latter conclusion on what grounds?—May I ask a question before I answer? I would like to know what you mean by a prohibitory law?

12585a. A law prohibiting the manufacture, importation and sale of intoxicants of all kinds, except such as might be required for medicinal, mechanical and sacramental purposes?—That exception would be so great that there would be many impositions, and it would be a dead letter, or what I think is worse, a law that could not be enforced. I think it is a bad practice to have an enactment that cannot be enforced and will not be enforced. I have formed that opinion on general principles, and also from actual experience.

12586a. Does your objection to a prohibitory law rest principally on the ground that you think it would not be enforced?—That is one of the grounds. I think it is impracticable, it would not be enforced, nor is it desirable.

12587a. May I ask you to state on what grounds you come to the latter conclusion?—Because I think it would be a failure, and it would suppress the manufacture of a very important article which is essential in many respects.

12588a. Do you think alcohol is indispensable in connection with your own profession?—Quite so.

12589a. Have you come to the conclusion that there is no other article which could be substituted for it?—Quite positive.

By Judge McDonald :

12590a. Have you formed any opinion as to the value of alcohol as a food?—This is a point which is very much discussed. I believe it is the consensus of the medical profession, that is, the scientific medical profession, that it is important as an article of diet.

12591a. Do you put distilled liquors upon a different footing in that respect from fermented liquors?—No, I cannot say that there is a division made.

12592a. We find that some do make a distinction?—Oh, yes.

12593a. Speaking for yourself, you do not think there exists such a distinction?—I have never observed any particular distinction.

12594a. Have you formed an opinion at all upon the question whether the immense increase that has taken place in the last few years in the use of lager beer has been beneficial?—I have had perhaps special opportunity of knowing something about that. I am connected with a life insurance company, and one of the questions we put in reference to the habits and many other things is as to the condition of the kidneys; and I think—I am expressing my personal views—that there is an increase of kidney diseases, and I attribute that, whether rightly or wrongly, to the drinking of excessive quantities of lager beer.

12595a. In what way does it operate?—Many people, Germans in particular, drink immense quantities of lager beer; they are at it constantly. The result is that the kidneys are all the time in active operation, which causes irritation and sometimes inflammation.

12596a. Speaking from your reading as a medical man, can you tell us whether diseases of the kidneys exist to any great extent in Germany?—I am not prepared to say. I once had the pleasure of hearing a very eminent German scientist speak on this subject, and he attributed the diseases of the kidneys and liver to a great extent to the excessive use of the beer of the country.