

DR. W. J. P. MCMILLAN SPEAKS ON DRAFT ADDRESS

(Continued.)
Uses of Alcohol.

My hon. colleague from Summerside used to make another statement frequently that alcohol is no good as a medicine, that it is a narcotic poison. I wonder if he believes that? I believe that a man who says alcohol is a narcotic poison and who issues "scripts" ought to be looked after.

HON. MR. LEPAGE: Your school books tell you that.

DR. MCMILLAN: The school books tell us that alcohol is a narcotic poison, so my hon. friend from Rustico tells us. But it has its uses, the same as any other narcotic poison. And the medical profession, although they are quoted as being almost unanimous in their opinion regarding the use of alcohol, are not unanimous after all. I will tell my hon. friend that there are occasions when nothing else will do just what alcohol will do. If you come in cold and shivering and just on the verge of having a chill, some of this alcohol, even some of the stuff which came off the "Eddie James," if taken hot, will produce results which I do not think anything else will produce. Probably hot ginger tea, or hot lemonade, or something else, will be put forward. But I know, and you know, Mr. Speaker, that on certain occasions you cannot replace alcohol by anything else; and the people are going to have it. They always will have it and they always will have it. Prohibition is not going to stop them, because Prohibition is built on wrong philosophy. You wonder why it fails, why it has been discarded in other provinces? Because its philosophy is wrong; that is the reason. It is built on false promises. Just as soon as you take your own individual opinion on any matter, and try to force it on the people of any country and impose a penalty for its non-belief, then you are up against something in which you will never succeed. Just as soon as you make the act of taking a drink of liquor a criminal act, and say it is in the category of stealing, as housebreaking, as murder, then you are up against it. For it is not the same. It is nothing of the kind. It is the abuse of alcohol which is dangerous.

The way to make people temperate in this as in every other Province, is by education. The Premier does not believe very much in that, perhaps. There was an application made from the secretary of the Temperance Alliance that he or someone else be allowed to go through the schools of the Province preaching that doctrine. The Premier did not agree with him that it should be done. Perhaps he was right. I think myself that he was perfectly right in that matter; but it shows the difficulties he has got into. He could not avoid them, when he made the serious blunder of linking himself up with any organization and shackling himself by any promises when he wanted to obtain the Premiership. He should have come in clear, with his hands unfettered by any promises; then he would have got along better.

Scripts and the Doctors.

In this matter of scripts the doctors are the "goats" under the Prohibition Act, and have been for years. We don't want to have anything to do with the Act, if we can get rid of it. It is a regular nuisance, people coming into the office at all hours of the day and night, wanting scripts. If we don't give them, they will go away offended. Every doctor knows that, that it is a great nuisance. If alcohol is a narcotic poison, and if it should not be prescribed by doctors, it might as well be kept in the drug stores the same as other narcotic poisons. Its prescription under the Prohibition Act must be wrong. What right has any Act to say to a doctor: "You shall prescribe twenty-four ounces of whiskey." How many times do people need less, and would take less if they could get it? I don't believe either in having rum in a vendor's shop. I don't think it is necessary.

DR. GRANT: You don't like rum, do you?

DR. MCMILLAN: No, I don't like rum. Do you? (Laughter.) Did you say you used to? (Increased laughter.)

The position in which the medical men have been put is absolutely illogical, and I think my hon. colleague from Montague would be very glad to get rid of it himself. He shakes his head? Well, it was ever thus! But I hope the Premier when he makes this Act "more workable" will find some way by which the medical men of this Province won't be bothered with people running after scripts. And if they come for scripts, there is only one way of dealing with the problem. Even some of the members of the Temperance Alliance are of that opinion now. That is, give the doctor all the prescriptions he wants. I think our friend who owns the building in which the grog is kept, and who must be receiving some of the "blood money," has advocated in the public press that the doctors should be unlimited in the number of scripts. I don't know whether it was because there has been a change in the vendorship or not. At any rate, I don't think the change reflects any credit

upon whoever initiated or ordered it. The fact that a dying man was removed from the vendorship, a man who had been a careful and competent official, in order that a change might be made in the interests of a political friend, reflects no great credit upon any Commission or Government.

"Blood Money."

But this "blood money!" There money!" There would have been more of it under Government Control, we are told. It is all right to take it under certain conditions, under certain circumstances. We all know that there is nothing in that argument, because on every gallon of liquor that comes into this Province in a legitimate way the Dominion Government does not hesitate to take its portion of "blood money" if you want to call it that.

My hon. friend the Minister of Public Works told us this morning that wonderful cargo of the "Eddie James." I wonder why he emphasized that? I suppose it was a simple business transaction.

HON. MR. MCINTYRE: It was true, wasn't it?

L'J. MCMILLAN: I guess it was true. I believe it is true that the cargo was sold to the Prohibition Commission, and it was dispensed to the people of this Province. I believe it is also true that all liquors that are dispensed are analyzed and there are found to be more than that even in the Temperance Bulletin. I don't see any reason why liquor that is seized cannot be used, because I understand that some of it is of the very best brands. If it is not fit to use, then it is destroyed, I suppose.

Of course, my hon. friends say it should not have been done. I wonder what the objection to it is? The Commission probably bought it cheaper than they could buy it any place else, and they made a little more profit on it. That was the trouble! There is the damning principle, that there should be any profit made out of this; because, you know, the opinion which some of those gentlemen opposite have publicly stated is that not one dollar of profit should be made out of this business, notwithstanding the fact that every Government has taken the profits accruing from the Prohibition Commission. There was very little difference in the policy under the Stewart Government and under the first Commission that was appointed under the Act, composed of clergymen. It is quite a reflection upon the clergymen of this Province who composed that Commission, that they took any of this "blood money." The Commission under the Stewart Government managed their business a little better than under the Bell Government, that was the difference; because under the Bell Government, if you read the transactions of the Commission, the more liquor they sold the less profit they made. That is the way they were doing. But the Bell Government had no comparison in the matter; they even allowed the wholesale liquor houses to operate here. They say they cut them out eventually; but they need not have allowed them to come in, if they had chosen to put on a prohibitive tax. But no, they were satisfied to have them come here, and take the money.

Prohibition a Failure in Every Country.

This question is a big one, and it has been before the public for a great many years. The Stewart Government cannot be accused of putting it into politics. They say we should have taken a plebiscite on it. But we saw enough in four years of the Prohibition Act to know and to realize that it was not giving results. Here is the whole sum and substance of the matter. Our course was plain, even if we had no superior judgment than to follow the course that has been followed in other provinces; because they had the same experience. Every country that has tried it has had the same experience.

The United States have had the same experience. I wonder what is wrong with the United States now! If there is so much money going into the savings banks, and if they are so prosperous under Prohibition, what the matter with the States at the present time, when there are hundreds of thousands, and millions, out of employment, when there is a bread line in the city of New York greater than in war days or pre-war days? The experience of every country that has tried Prohibition is the same. It has not been satisfactory. It was not satisfactory here, and the Stewart Government decided to make a change; and because they decided to make a change their motives have been twisted and distorted in every imaginable way.

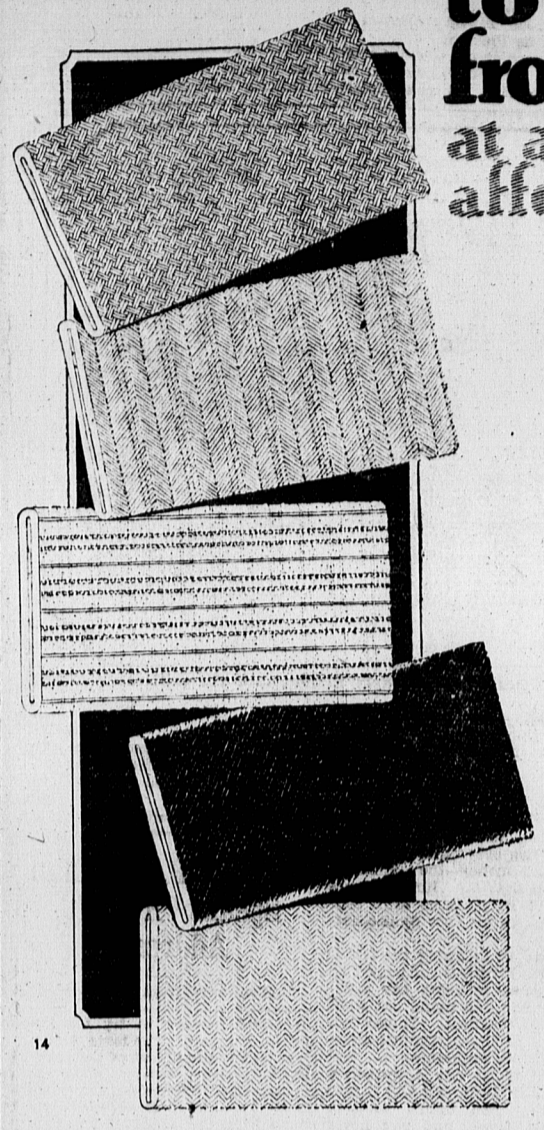
It has been said that all we wanted was to ride into power on this liquor control policy. I submit that the Stewart Government were never so solicitous of power that they would introduce any Act, especially an Act regarding liquor, to put themselves in power at the expense, as it has been said, of the souls of the growing youth of this country. We in the medical profession especially know the condition in this Province as well as anyone else; and we know that there must be something wrong with Prohibition which has been in operation here for twenty-seven years under every Government, and which has permitted such abuses to exist as are evident in any one who knows the facts. How is it, if Prohibition is such a wonderful Temperance agency, that our young people have learned to drink? How is it that the bootlegger and the moonshiner and everyone else connected with the illicit traffic is flourishing? Is it because the Stewart Government did not enforce the Act? That is the inference and the implication that was put out in the last campaign; it was all charged to the Stewart Government. I wonder

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where the Temperance Alliance have been for years, before they were galvanized into action after the announcement of this policy, after a great dormant period which they now regret? Things were allowed to go on, no matter what Government was in power, without any complaint from these gentlemen. But just as soon as the Stewart Government said: "Conditions under Prohibition are going from bad to worse, and we are going to try something else," then the whole flood burst. The Province was going to be ruined. We were going to open "a grog shop at every village cross-roads." We were going to have "free rum" everywhere; notwithstanding that it was definitely stated in our policy just what was to happen; that no more vendor's shops would be opened than there are at present unless the people by a definite recorded vote in their section or township passed it. That is just what this Government is purposing to do in 1929. If the people ask for it they are going to get it. But when that proposition was submitted by the Stewart Government, it was something desperate; it was awful; it was the straight road to perdition! That is the kind of campaign we had in 1927; and the result is—those gentlemen sitting opposite.

All are Equipped with Silvertowns



The Alliance and the Government. Now they have a problem on their hands, because the Temperance Alliance, as the custodians of Temperance in this Province, are going to see that that Act is enforced; and if it is not enforced they are going to put my hon. friends out! I suppose they can do that. They put you in, and I suppose they can put you out! They have got you, and they are going to see that you live up to your promises. We shall see whether a man can dissociate himself from the position of leader of his party and come out and say that what he said was his own personal views. They will show you whether you can make a personal matter of a transaction between officials representing the Alliance on the one hand and the Government on the other. That is the position that you are in, honorable gentlemen. And you deserve it. I hope you are happy in it! I know some of you must be very happy, because a lot of you believe in Prohibition just as much as we do!

It was all right as a means to an end. You were quite satisfied, because it elected you to power. Now the enforcement is in your hands. While I am on this subject I might draw attention to the great fact that if you want to make people temperate in this Province, or in

any other Province, you had better try some process of education. The very first requisite in that process of education would be—not temperance regarding the drinking of liquor, but temperance of language. Perhaps you will say that we ought to try it ourselves.

VOICES: Here, here! DR. MCMILLAN: You are all satisfied that I should try it first myself. But I am not a Prohibitionist! (Laughter.) It is only you fellows who are Prohibitionists who need that! Even the Temperance Bulletin! (Continued on page 10.)

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