

LIQUOR PROSPECTS IN ONTARIO

What has the Liquor Control Act done for the people of Ontario? What is it likely to do? It has utterly failed to accomplish what its advocates said that it would do. It has enormously increased the sale and consumption of intoxicating liquor and all the well-known evils which naturally follow from the use of liquor.

While prohibition was in force in Ontario, the brewers and distillers carried on persistent propaganda to discredit it. They said that it was a failure; that it did not prohibit; that it created disrespect for law; that it increased the consumption of liquor—and bad liquor at that. This persistent propaganda undermined and was intended to undermine the confidence of the people in prohibition; and the motive actuating brewers and distillers was the desire to obtain larger sales of intoxicating liquor with increased profits.

In 1921 the Conservative Government, of which the Honourable Mr. Ferguson was a member, took a vote of the electors to say whether the Ontario Temperance Act should be continued or not and the electors voted by a large majority, for its continuance. In 1924 the Honourable Mr. Ferguson was Prime Minister and under his leadership the Conservative Government again called upon the electors to decide by vote whether or not the Ontario Temperance Act should be continued. Mr. Ferguson gave the temperance people his unqualified pledge that, if the electors gave a majority in favor of the Act, his Government would abide by the result and faithfully enforce the Act. He at the same time gave his followers an intimation that he preferred a Liquor Control Act. It is asserted that the liquor interests assured Mr. Ferguson that they could defeat the Ontario Temperance Act by a large majority. The vote was taken and a majority of more than 30,000 was given for continuing the Ontario Temperance Act. Mr. Ferguson then gave his solemn assurance that the Act would be continued.

BREWERS AND DISTILLERS had met with an unexpected defeat but they determined to obtain the fruits which a victory would have given them. They continued to undermine the Ontario Temperance Act. They

kept handing out propaganda against it but their difficulty was to get the Government to advocate their case and thereby violate the direct pledge which the Prime Minister had given. **They wanted Government Control and Mr. Ferguson wanted Government Control** and a way out was found. **Mr. Ferguson's excuse was the pretended discovery that notwithstanding his choice of a reference to the people to settle the matter by their own votes, this method was wrong.** It was un-British. The Government should accept responsibility for its own Acts; and so on, and he began laying his plans to accomplish by other means the defeat of the Ontario Temperance Act. He sent messengers to other Provinces and they brought in reports favorable to Liquor Control. **As soon as he had all things prepared, he sprung an election long before it was due and he tied his Conservative followers up to a Liquor Control policy.** He joined the brewers and distillers in defaming and trampling in the mud the very Act that he had helped to place upon the Statute book. His followers adopted many of the slogans and cries that had been prepared for them by the brewers and distillers; and by representing that the new Act would be "a real temperance measure," he contrived to retain a large dry Conservative vote and win practically a solid wet vote and he was again returned to power with a large majority.

PROHIBITIONS OF THE L.C.A.

The Liquor Control Act introduced by Mr. Ferguson is full of prohibitions. **The old cries about "liberty" and the "British right to eat and drink just as man desires" have quite disappeared.** Every person is now prohibited from buying liquor unless he first obtains a permit. Everyone is **prohibited** from buying except in a Government store. Even if a person has a permit and buys liquor in a Government store, he is **prohibited** from breaking the seal and taking a drink in the store or on his way home, or in any building, or on any part of his own land, except in his dwelling house. Even the brewers and distillers are **prohibited** from advertising their goods. Everyone is **prohibited** from supplying liquor for beverage purposes to any one under the age of twenty-one years, and so on through scores of prohibitions. **Underlying all these prohibitions is a recognition of the fact that intoxicating liquor is harmful and dangerous and should be handled with unusual**

care.

The chief difficulty with the Liquor Control Act is that **in spite of all its prohibitions it opens wide the door to the greatest danger of all, namely, the sale and use of liquor for beverage purposes.**

Another Liquor Election

The Government has now brought on another election before its normal time to snatch another victory before the people have had a full opportunity to judge of the merits and demerits of the Liquor Control Act.

Mr. Ferguson professes to believe that Liquor Control **has not had a long enough trial** to accomplish the good results promised for it. **He wants to experiment a few more years to determine its value.** He does not take the people into his confidence as to how much liquor has been sold this year, but we do know that the number of permits issued to the people of Ontario goes on increasing each year. **During the first full year of its operation 376,839 permits were issued to residents. During the first nine months of this year, this number was increased to 399,751, an increase of 22,912 in nine months over the preceding twelve months of 1928.**

The **TOTAL SALES** last year amounted to **\$48,955,591.** **This would average about \$105.00 for every permit holder** and, as many permit holders would spend less than \$5.00 each, it is certain that many others would each spend \$200.00, \$300.00 or more. The fact of the matter is that under so-called Government Control **any permit holder is free to buy 12 quarts of whiskey or 120 quarts of beer at one time.**

Even if the Government has doubts as to whether the Liquor Control Act is a success or not, the **BREWERS AND DISTILLERS have no doubt**

MILLIONS OF GALLONS AND MILLIONS OF PROFIT

In a statement of **one Ontario Distillery** just sent broadcast over the Dominion, it is shown that its **profits for the year ending August 1, 1929, amount to \$4,117,668.00 as compared with a profit of \$3,442,378.00 for the previous year, an increase of \$675,290.00.** This showing is made we are told, after the value of the **goodwill** of the Company has been **written off,** and **after the value of 12,500,000 proof**

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gallons of spirits has been placed at 55 cents a gallon, and we are told that the **market value of the spirits runs from \$3.00 to \$6.00 and even \$7.00 a gallon**, and the **average value** is estimated to be conservatively **\$4.00 a gallon, which would work out at \$50,000,000.00**. Here is one distillery that, under Government Control, shows a profit of \$4,117,668.00, in one year, and **still has ready for sale 12,500,000 gallons on which it expects to make a profit of \$3.45 a gallon**. This Company has no doubt as to the complete success of Liquor Control. It is able now to supply about 4 gallons of proof spirits to every man, woman and child in Ontario. The **total assets** of the Company **are placed at \$39,803,272.00**, and it is claimed that the Company **has an equity of \$78,000,000., a sum far in excess of the total income of the Province of Ontario for an entire year**. The Company proposes to build new warehouses to take care of its increased production. This is one distillery alone. The other distillers and brewers can tell a somewhat similar story about their greatly increased sales and greatly increased profits.

Brewers and distillers will vote that Mr. Ferguson is a great statesman and a prince of good fellows, he is doing great things for them. The dry voters of Ontario will pronounce him a wonderful bluffer, but not a great statesman, nor a desirable one.

Always professing to be greatly interested in the moral and material welfare of the people, he has been able to break his pledge and introduce legislation enriching Brewers and Distillers. They in turn spent large sums to ensure his return to power and they succeeded. Now they want to do it again. Will they succeed?

The voters of Ontario now have a first rate opportunity of declaring whether their millions of hard-earned money are to be swallowed up by Brewers and Distillers, or to remain with those who earned them.

Let us all vote against Mr. Ferguson and all who support his wet policy.

Published for
THE COMMITTEE OF SEVEN
by the
Ontario Prohibition Union