

# MINISTERS SILENT ON POWER POLICY.

General Member Inquires, and  
is Out of Order.

DEBATE STILL GOES ON.

Inertia of Agricultural Department  
Talked About.

Mr. Thompson of North Wentworth  
Tells How Interests of Farming  
Community Are Being Neglected  
—Mr. Hugh Clark on Educational  
and Local Option Matters—Spoils  
System.

In view of events of the last few days an attempt to obtain from the Government a statement as to their power policy was deliberately foiled by Premier Whitney in the Legislature yesterday. Colonel Munro (North Oxford) drew attention to certain newspaper reports with reference to the Electrical Development Company deal, but the Premier insisted that the member for North Oxford was out of order, and in this he was upheld by the Speaker. Mr. Thompson (North Wentworth), who was the only Opposition speaker in the debate during the afternoon, devoted most of his attention to the Minister of Agriculture and the conduct of that department. Mr. Thompson scored effectively when he mentioned the inertia and lack of progressiveness of the present Government with respect to agriculture. Mr. Hugh Clark (Centre Bruce) at length defended the Government's educational policy, and also dealt with local option. Speaking particularly in regard to the three-fifths clause, he contended that the Government were acting wisely in not repealing it because it had not been sufficiently tested. Mr. T. H. Lennox (North York) denied that the Government had brought into existence the spoils system, and alluded to cases where members of the civil service had under the late Administration taken part in political campaigns. The Whitney Government would have been within their rights had they dismissed these men, he said, but had refrained from doing so. Before the House adjourned Mr. Whitney stated that there would only be a formal session to-day, as the majority of the members intended to visit the Ontario Agricultural College.

### A Little Breeze.

Before the orders of the day were taken Colonel J. Munro (North Oxford) endeavored to ascertain the Government's position with regard to the Electrical Development Company. He called the attention of the Government to the following quotation from an editorial in *The Mail and Empire*:—"Should Mr. Mackenzie's supremacy in the government of the Electrical Company result in power being supplied consumers by the distributing agency of the Toronto Electric Light Company at prices low enough to be on a parity with those at which power could be supplied by the Hydro-electric Power Commission and the civic distributing plant, Toronto ought not to complain."

Colonel Munro was proceeding to quote an editorial published in an even-

ing paper, dealing with the same subject, when he was interrupted by the Premier.

The Premier—I am afraid that the hon. member is utterly and completely out of order. I should have no reason to object if he were taking exceptions to anything credited to himself, but he is going on making a speech, and when he endeavors to get an article attacking the Government read in the House I can only say I object.

Colonel Munro—I have no desire to make a speech.

The Premier—You want to read an editorial.

Colonel Munro—I represent a constituency interested in this matter.

The Premier—I distinctly and decidedly object. The hon. member has not hesitated to come out in the open and express his desire to have an editorial read attacking the Government. All I have to say is that he is out of order, and if he does not know it he ought to. The hon. member is not ashamed to stand up and endeavor to get read an editorial attacking the Government for the purpose of making a little capital. I have no reply to make either to the hon. member or the editorial.

Colonel Munro—Am I out of order?

The Speaker ruled Colonel Munro out of order.

Colonel Munro—I only wish as representing a city—

The Premier—The hon. member is out of order.

The Hon. A. G. MacKay—Surely it is not out of order at this time to ask what is the Government's policy in a matter of public interest.

The Premier—Then my hon. friend's knowledge of the rule is even less than that of the member for North Oxford.

### A Majestic Form.

Mr. Clark (Centre Bruce), resuming the debate on the reply to the speech from the throne, devoted some sentences to congratulating the leader of the Opposition. He told how the present leader was the third man to occupy that position since 1905. Hon. Geo. P. Graham, he said, had gone throughout the country feeling the pulse of the people and drawing on his fund of optimism. Yet Hon. Geo. P. Graham had gone to Ottawa, and now the "majestic form of the present leader" graced the chief seat of the Opposition. Mr. Clark thought he could name four or five members of the Opposition who were unwilling to follow their present leader. Turning to more political matters, Mr. Clark stated that the member for Sault Ste. Marie had found fault with the Government because they had not voted for the "Soo" loan. While the industries of the "Soo" were progressing, the speaker argued that no amount of success could justify the voting for the loan. Regarding educational affairs Mr. Clark said when the present Minister took charge of the department he "found the public school system in a deplorable condition."

### Die a Natural Death.

"Now, I want to tell the hon. gentlemen," said the speaker, "that the model schools are going to remain in the Province just as long as there is a demand for them. When they go it will not be an act of murder. They will die a natural death."

Mr. Clark stated that the Opposition leader had emphasized a charge that the Government had introduced legislation which compelled trustees to pay a minimum salary. When the bill was introduced it contained no reference to trustees at all, but merely made it a teacher's duty not to accept less than the minimum salary.

### The Three-fifths Clause.

Mr. Clark then took up the question of the three-fifths clause, saying that it had not had a sufficient test as yet. The Opposition, he said, might make capital out of the fact that the three-fifths clause had been repealed in Manitoba by the Roblin Government, but, he added, the Roblin Government had a right to reduce the majority required. The Manitoba law required a majority of three-fifths of the number of names on the voters' list, not of the total vote polled, as in Ontario. Under the Manitoba law, as formerly, local option would not have passed in one place in Ontario in 1907, and only in two places in 1908.

### Farming Community Neglected.

Mr. Thompson (North Wentworth) first referred to educational matters, calling to mind that the compulsory clause regarding teachers' salaries had been practically withdrawn owing to the complaints which had come from all over the Province.

"Have the people of this Province to thank this Government for any special

aid to agriculture?" asked the speaker. "It appears to me that the Government have not come to the aid, have not come to the support, of the farmers in any way."

The amount of money invested in agriculture in Ontario, he said, was \$1,189,119,000, or \$550 for every man, woman and child in the Province, while \$319,000,000 was invested in manufacturing concerns. The returns from manufacturing amounted to 92 per cent. of the investment, while the farms returned 18 per cent., which showed that something more should be done for the agricultural interests. In 1906 and 1907 the attendance at farmers' institutes was 110,765, or 15,000 less than the year before, or 37,000 less than in 1902. The membership of the farmers' institutes had dropped off considerably also, he said.

### A Serious Falling Off.

"What excuse can be given for this serious falling off?" asked the speaker. "Is it because not enough energy has been displayed by the Minister in charge? Does it not look as if the policy were one of drifting, always drifting? These farmers' institute meetings have been a success in the past. The Minister of Agriculture has not made his department prominent enough before the eyes of the public, so that the people can be led to expect anything new. In fact some Conservatives in my riding do not know who the Minister of Agriculture is."

### Shifting Responsibility.

Regarding immigration Mr. Thompson expressed the thought that the Minister of Agriculture was shirking the duty which devolved upon him. Men were wanted for farms all over the Province. Still the control of this immigration had been allowed to pass from the Province to the Dominion. The address from the throne foreshadowed much of the legislation to be passed this session, but there was nothing of importance mentioned in that address as emanating from the Department of Agriculture. "Where," he asked, "had the present Minister made his impress on the councils of this Government?"

### An Eulogy.

Mr. T. H. Lennox (North York) dwelt at length on the policy adopted by the present Administration with regard to the Montreal Pulp & River Company's concession and that of the previous company. He asserted that the first agreement with the company did not, as claimed, provide that a mill should be erected only in New Ontario. In that respect, therefore, there was no difference in the agreements, but under that entered into by the present Government the revenues had benefited to the extent of \$300,000. Mr. Lennox also denied that the Liberal party had ever favored the giving of mineral rights to bona fide settlers. Far from having given away twenty-seven miles of timber lands, as accused, the Government had compelled the Georgian Bay Lumber Company to pay a further royalty of \$50,000 for concessions they had received from the previous Administration. Mr. Lennox also thought the Government deserved credit for the action they had taken with reference to the public service. He deprecated the accusation that the Government had introduced the spoils system. In thirty-three years only one Conservative was appointed in North York a Justice of the Peace by the Ross Government. The present Government had appointed twenty-eight Liberals and thirty-eight Conservatives in North York. Mr. Lennox spent a considerable time in stating that officers of the Crown Lands Department had been employed in political campaigns by the late Commissioner of Lands. The Gov-