

SATURDAY, MARCH 3, 1917.

ONTARIO'S MACHINE GUNS ARE CRITICIZED IN HOUSE

Mr. Rowell Tells of Complaints Heard in France and Mr. McGarry Makes Warm Reply — Budget Debate Ends

A sparkling finish to the Budget debate was witnessed in the Legislature yesterday, when Mr. Rowell and Hon. T. W. McGarry addressed the House. The criticism of the Liberals brought a vehement counter-attack by the Provincial Treasurer on the Liberal leader and Mr. Hartley Dewart, member for Southwest Toronto.

In thunderous tones Mr. McGarry accused Mr. Rowell of telling half truths in reference to the machine guns contributed by the Province of Ontario to the Canadian troops, and vigorously scored the member for Southwest Toronto regarding his speeches on the nickel question.

Mr. Rowell had stated that he had been informed by officers at Shorncliffe that the Lewis machine guns made in the United States had "jammed" in much the same manner as the Ross rifles "jammed" under active service conditions. He did not bring the matter to the attention of the Government in any controversial or partisan spirit, but he thought it was worth looking into.

Mr. McGarry answered the Opposition leader's remarks by the statement that the British Government had ordered a large number of Lewis machine guns from the United States factory which supplied the Ontario machine guns, and quoted from a letter from Sir Edward Kemp, Minister of Militia, to the effect that the Lewis machine gun was one of the surprises of the war, and it was generally conceded that the Germans had nothing to compare with it.

Ontario's Prosperity and Its Cause.

Mr. Rowell said it was a matter of congratulation that the financial position of the Province was exceedingly good. "We have a prosperous and progressive people in the Province," said the Speaker, "and by reason of the increasing wealth and prosperity of the people, producing ever larger financial returns, the Provincial Treasurer is able to assure us this year that we have the largest income of any year in the history of the Province. That the Province is in such a good financial position to-day, I think we must recognize, is due to the careful and thrifty manner in which the finances of this Province were handled for at least the first 40 years from Confederation on. For practically that 40 years the Province had no public debt whatever, except that invested in the T. & N. O. Railway. In fact, when my hon. friends came into power in 1905 there was a substantial surplus apart from the investment in the T. & N. O. By reason of the careful handling of the finances of the Province during the first 40 years the extravagance of my hon. friends in such buildings as Government House and other matters which have been discussed here has not, fortunately, seriously impaired our financial position; but because they have not seriously impaired our financial position is no justification or excuse for continuing expenditure on such a scale."

Mr. Rowell Finds Deficit.

Referring to the statement that the net public debt this last year had been decreased by \$810,000, Mr. Rowell argued that in fairness to the House it should have been pointed out that this was arrived at by taking into account on the capital side of the Treasurer's statement the unexpended balance of \$1,250,000 of the