

FRIDAY, MARCH 30, 1917.

'FEW BUCKETS OF WATER' IS VALUED AT \$360,000

Sir Adam Beck Quotes Superintendent of Niagara Falls Park With a View to Proving That Certain Waters Were "Stolen" by Electrical Development Co.—Replies to Sir William Mackenzie and Mr. R. J. Fleming

Sir Adam Beck made a warm reply in the Legislature yesterday to the recent letters of Sir William Mackenzie and Mr. R. J. Fleming regarding the alleged "theft" of water by the Electrical Development Co. and the alleged conduct of the Canadian Northern Railway in legislative "lobbying." He stated that the first intimation the Hydro Commission had that the Electrical Development Company had exceeded their rights in the use of water and development of power was in December, when Mr. P. W. Ellis, Chairman of the Niagara Falls Park Commission, advised the Hydro's Chief Engineer. Sir Adam said the attitude assumed by Mr. Fleming was that this was more or less a joke, but he stated that a total of \$230,000 worth of power was disposed of by the company "in these few short months," and "at the rate of the power they are selling now it will be equivalent to \$360,000 per annum. This is what Mr. Fleming calls a few buckets of water."

If these companies have the right to these diversions, Sir Adam maintained it would be suicidal to spend another dollar on account of the Chippawa development. If it was necessary to make the law clear, he called upon the Government to pass such legislation, if such could be passed, and also to make penalties which would be collectable. The Chairman of the Hydro Commission, referring to Sir William Mackenzie's reply, maintained there was a lobby wherever Sir William Mackenzie's interests were at stake.

"I refer him to 'Billy' Moore as to the system and methods they use in regard to the Parliament and Legislatures of this country," he said.

Replies to Power Magnates,

Rising to a question of privilege, Sir Adam Beck said that a letter had been written by Sir William Mackenzie, addressed to the Prime Minister, regarding his (Sir Adam's) remarks in the Legislature last week, and another had been written by Mr. R. J. Fleming addressed to the press, and copies of these communications had been supplied to the members of the House.

"Sir William Mackenzie, in his letter, refers to my personal spleen against him, and inferred that I have a personal grievance against him," said Sir Adam. "I am sure that those who know me best and who have followed my public career in the past seventeen or eighteen years will believe me when I say I have neither spleen nor vindictiveness in my composition against Sir William Mackenzie, Mr. R. J. Fleming or any other man with whom I come in contact in public affairs. I cannot, however, forget my duty to the project in regard to which I am somewhat responsible, the carrying out of which is arduous and difficult, and one that necessarily creates conflict, because it is more other than the principle of public ownership versus private ownership in the development and operation of public utilities in Ontario."

Mr. Fleming, in an interview published in The Star, said he would not be guilty of stealing anything so small as a few buckets of water.

Belittling the Action.

"Mr. Fleming," said the speaker, "knew better the value of money than to belittle a matter so serious and important to Ontario and to the Hydro project than to make such a statement. The Government of the Province have undertaken to construct a development plant at Chippawa, with a diversion of water from that creek to the Queenston Heights, and this development would entail an expenditure of \$15,000,000, the liability in