

# NO ELECTION IN ONTARIO UNTIL AFTER THE WAR

Opposition Leader, Mr. Proudfoot, Makes Proposal, Which is Accepted by Premier, and Regarded as Fresh Mandate From People—Mr. Dewart Regrets Opposition Not Called In

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1918.

Ontario's Legislature decided yesterday that there shall be no general election in the Province until after the war and until the Canadian soldiers have returned to their homes. The offer of an extension of the life of the Legislature was made by Mr. William Proudfoot, Opposition Leader, in a notable speech, his maiden effort in the House since assuming the leadership, and acceptance was announced in eloquent language by Sir William Hearst after dinner last evening. Mr. Proudfoot, in broaching the subject, said that a war-time election would place everything in a turmoil, and he earnestly opposed party strife when the efforts of the people should be directed towards assisting in the defeat of the Empire's foes. Amid loud applause from both sides of the House, Premier Hearst some hours later announced that he had decided to accept the offer of the Opposition Leader "in order that the minds of the people should not be diverted from the one great object before us, and to prevent the introduction of any dividing and disturbing elements among our men and women, many of whose hearts are breaking for loved ones that will never return." The Premier added that several vacant seats, caused by death, would have to be filled, but there must be no party by-elections. He also made it clear that the offer of the Liberal Leader was made on the distinct understanding that the act extending the life of the Legislature would be construed the same as a fresh mandate from the electors.

Mr. Hartley Dewart, who followed the Premier, said he was glad Sir William had accepted the offer of the Opposition Leader, but he regretted the Prime Minister had not gone farther and agreed to call to the Councils of the Province the Opposition Leader and other Liberal members of the House.

#### Give Soldiers Votes.

"If an election is to be held in the near future it would not be complete without the votes of the soldiers," said Mr. Proudfoot. "In fact," he added, "it would be most unfair not to make provision for taking the votes of the gallant men now fighting the Empire's foe. There were many spoiled ballots in the recent voting at the front in the Federal election, and a repetition of this should be avoided in the event of a Provincial election being held. Some way should be found, and one way of averting the necessity of taking votes would be to extend the life of the Legislature for one year or more. During the continuance of this war it is not desirable that the minds of the people who are working for the good of the soldiers at the front and at home in Red Cross and other patriotic work should be taken away from the fine work in which they are engaged. We would also require to secure a new voters' list, because the present municipal list would not be satisfactory.

#### No Election Till After War.

"What I had in mind at first was an extension of the life of the Legislature for one year, but on thinking the matter over I have come to the conclusion that the extension should be until a reasonable time after the close of the war. If I am right in suggesting that there should be an extension for the reasons stat-