

Fuel, notwithstanding the price. Hardwood is plentiful in certain sections of the Province. It, too, has, because of its price, not compared favorably with coal as fuel. The Government is investigating the cost of cutting and shipping this wood. The peat bogs along the T. & N. O. Railway have been examined by Government experts, and a further report from them is expected shortly.

Hydro Great Service.

It would require four million tons of coal per annum, said Sir William, to take the place of the power furnished by the Hydro-electric Commission. The total expenditure on the system up to October 31, 1917, was a little over nine million dollars. The total expense in the last three years amounted to over forty-one million dollars. This shows that the Province has been going ahead under the Electric Power Commission by leaps and bounds.

In reference to Mr. Proudfoot's query as to whether or not the contemplated Government bill dealing with the public service was to abolish patronage, Sir William said that the Government's desire was to make the public service as perfect as it possibly can be made.

Not Shirking Responsibility.

Dealing with the offer of the Opposition Leader of an extension of the life of the Legislature, Sir William Hearst said that in the ordinary course of events this would be the last session of the present Legislature, and an election would be held in the not distant future. The offer of the Opposition Leader had placed a tremendous responsibility upon his shoulders—one of the greatest since he became Prime Minister—but he had never shirked his responsibility, and he did not intend to do so now.

Sir William diverted for a moment or two to say that the policy of his Government since the outbreak of the war had been to assist the allies in every possible way. He realized that to accept the offer of the Opposition Leader for an extension would be bad politics for the Government and for the Conservative party, because if an election were to be held in the near future the Conservative party would undoubtedly have an easy victory. Many of his followers would probably find fault with the action he was about to take, but the fortunes of political leaders and political parties were as dust and ashes in the balance when the liberty of the world was at stake.

"I care nothing for the fate of my Government or for my own political fate if I can shorten by ever so small a span the days of agony through which this country must pass." The aims and objects of the Government had been to take every step and adopt every measure that would assist in winning the war. How far they had succeeded they asked the people to judge.

Accepts Extension Offer.

"In pursuance of the policy I have outlined, and in order that the minds of the people should not be in any way 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 who will never return. I have decided to accept the offer of the hon. Leader of the Opposition, made on behalf of his followers in the House and his party in the country. (Loud applause.) He and I can no doubt agree on the details of a bill necessary to carry out the proposition. This House has within itself the power to pass the necessary legislation. Of course, the proposition necessarily involves the cessation of party activities and party hostilities. I don't mean exemption from proper criticism; we do not ask and we do not want that. But we have vacant seats in the House that must be filled, seats that have been left open in expectation of an early election. It would be senseless to postpone a general election if we are to have party contests in by-elections. The object is to permit our people to devote their whole energies to the prosecution of the war, forgetting as far as possible party politics and every hindering influence."

No Great Issues at Stake.

The Premier said that, fortunately, there was no great Provincial issue which demanded the verdict of the people at the present time.

"In accepting this suggestion made by the Leader of the Opposition," he said, "it must be on the distinct understanding that the act extending the life of the Legislature will be construed the same as a fresh man-

date from the electors, so that we will feel free to enact any legislation we may consider to be in the interest of the Province, no matter how radical and far-reaching that legislation may be."

Mr. Hartley H. Dewart followed the Prime Minister. He congratulated the previous speakers on their stand, and urged that the brotherly love should continue. He was glad to see the Prime Minister accept the suggestion for an extension of Parliament. However, he regretted that the Premier had not gone farther and agreed to call to the councils of the Province the Leader and other members of the Opposition and carry out the policy advocated when supporting the Union Government. He believed that the policy enunciated by the Government at the last session and re-enunciated were of sufficient importance to call Liberals into the Cabinet, even if not requiring endorsement at the polls. Union Government, he said, had always been accepted by himself and Liberals, but what stood in the way was the question of personnel and policy on the part of the Government.

The nickel question was dealt with briefly by the speaker. Since the last session, he said, the Government has granted a total of 1,541 acres to companies and individuals for use as mines, and he said some declaration was expected from the Government as to its policy with regard to protective legislation. He suggested that Dr. Creelman should be given a seat in the House, probably North Oxford, so that a capable agriculturist would be able to answer the questions of members. Mr. Dewart regretted that there had been no mention of the abolition of patronage in the Speech from the Throne. The speaker asked the Premier to implement what he had said in his address so far as patronage was concerned.

Medical Reforms.

Dr. Forbes Godfrey said he considered the report of Mr. Justice Hodgins on the medical profession very fair. He believed that it would have been better to appoint such a man as Dr. McCullough, Provincial Officer of Health, to report on venereal diseases. Dr. Godfrey thought that it would be better to establish an up-to-date reception hospital in Toronto for the treatment of temporary insane patients than to send them to a permanent institution.

The debate was concluded by Mr. Sam Carter of South Wellington, who in the course of a very earnest speech expressed hearty approval of the decision of the two party leaders to defer the general election until after the war. Mr. Carter said this was a time when all should put country before party and concentrate their energies upon war winning.

The Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne was then unanimously carried and an engrossed copy is to be presented to the Lieutenant-Governor by members of the Executive Council.

The Provincial Treasurer, just before the House adjourned, intimated that the annual Budget speech would be delivered on Tuesday.