

FRIDAY, APRIL 4, 1919.

# PLEA TO CUT MEMBERS FROM 111 TO 89 MAKES HOUSE LAUGH

## Knowledge of "Round Robin" Asking for Increase in Sessional Indemnities Denied by Ontario Government

Ontario's Legislature must have its daily laugh. The debate on women's dress provided it on Wednesday. Mr. William McDonald's resolution urging that the number of members in the House be reduced provided the mirth yesterday. The member for North Bruce attacked the Senate, and said its members were old fogies who were beyond redemption. He urged, however, that the reforms be started nearer home, and that the number of representatives in the Legislature be reduced from 111 to 89. The debate took a serious turn toward the close. Mr. Allan Studholme, the East Hamilton Labor man, put an end to the merriment, and caused both the Prime Minister, the Opposition Leader, and the Whips of the two parties to take the debate in deadly earnest. This sudden transformation occurred all because Mr. Studholme averred that a "round robin" was being circulated among the members to ask the Government to increase the sessional indemnity.

Before this matter had been cleared up half-a-dozen members were drawn into the debate. Sir William Hearst; Mr. Proudfoot, the Liberal Leader; Mr. Charles McEwen, the Government Whip, and Mr. G. C. Hurdman, Liberal Whip, declared that there was nothing in the statement of Mr. Studholme, and that it was the first they had heard of it. The Labor member's statement drew Mr. W. H. Fraser, the North Huron Liberal, into the dispute, for, he alleged, the newly-elected representative had been canvassed at noon to put his name to a "round robin."

Mr. Fraser promptly declared that "Mr. Studholme is mistaken," while the members of both sides thumped their desks noisily. He explained that he and another gentleman had been discussing the proposal to increase the indemnity of the members at Ottawa, and he had been told that should such a thing be wanted in the Legislature, if the Liberal members all signed a petition the Government would grant the request. If such a procedure was called a "round robin" he knew nothing of it, as he had never heard of the term before.

"That bears out what I said," shouted Mr. Studholme.

### News to Government.

Col. Machin was the first to rise and declare that he, as a Government member, had heard nothing of the "round robin" referred to by the East Hamilton member.

The Government Whip, Mr. McEwen, said that he had never heard of the suggestion until it was made on the floor of the House.

Mr. Studholme stuck to his guns, and said there were members who could back him up. He refused for some time, however, to give the name of the member, finally stating it was the member for North Huron. If the Government Whip knew nothing of it he should have.

"There is absolutely no truth in that statement, no matter who it came from," hotly retorted the Government Whip.

Mr. Hurdman then rose and added his denial to that of the previous speakers, of ever having heard of such a proposal.

Sir William Hearst said that he had never heard of the "round robin." No one had suggested that the indemnity should be increased, nor had they since he was Prime Min-