

ner." Karl Hornuth, South Waterloo, said that the whole thing was Hydro and all moneys should be paid to them as Hydro Commissioners.

Wellington Hay, North Perth, called for a new accounting system in all departments of the Government.

Hon. George S. Henry maintained that a private member could not bring in any amendment because the bill was a money vote.

Hon. Thomas Crawford said that the legislation was regarded as a direct hit at the Chairman of the Hydro-electric Commission.

W. E. N. Sinclair, South Ontario, said he did not like retroactive legislation. Those who made mistakes in the past should, like the rest of the people, take chances on what had happened.

R. R. Hall, Parry Sound, said the bill was whitewashing; saying a man who is a thief is an honest man by passing an act of Parliament.

G. G. Halcrow said he hoped the Government would make the bill retroactive until 1917 so that there could not be any accusation of any injustice at all.

## DRURY ADMITS ERROR IS MADE

Tells Legislature Dispute  
Over Guelph Railway Due  
to Misunderstanding

WILL FULFILL PLEDGE

Premier Drury admitted frankly to the Legislature yesterday that there had been a misunderstanding regarding the Government's attitude toward the Hydro-electric Commission operating the Guelph Railway.

He made the definite statement that if the Government had pledged itself to validate the by-law approved by the Guelph ratepayers last January to permit the Hydro to operate the road, then the Government would keep the pledge. He announced that he would make a full statement on the matter to the House today.

### Buckland Raises Question.

The question was brought before the House by C. H. Buckland, South Wellington, who read extensively from an article in a Guelph newspaper covering the history of the proposed transfer of the road to the Hydro.

Mr. Buckland last week had asked the Premier in the House when the bill validating the transfer would be brought into the Legislature, and the Premier had replied that the agreement should first have been submitted to the Government; that the Government did not altogether approve of the agreement made, but if possible it would bring down an act validating the transfer.

The article read by Mr. Buckland included letters that passed between the Mayor of Guelph and the Premier, in which the latter had said that if the ratepayers of Guelph approved the agreement with the Hydro, the agreement would receive the sanction of the Government, which would initiate validating legislation in the coming session.

The article further said that Sir Adam Beck had stated to a Guelph official over the long-distance telephone that he had personally submitted to Premier Drury and the Attorney-General the agreement before it was voted on, and that there were variations and amendments made to suit them.

### Anticipated Hydro Operation.

"There is a misunderstanding which may have been, and probably was, partly my fault," said the Premier, in reply. He said the whole basis of the discussion up to December 17 (the date of his letter to the Mayor of Guelph) anticipated the Hydro taking over and operating the road.

"I will look into the matter," he said. "If the Government has de-

initely pledged itself to validate the by-law, then the Government will keep the pledge. If the honorable members will wait until tomorrow I will give them a full statement on the matter."

The Premier explained, in answer to remarks of Mr. Dewart and Mr. Ferguson, that they both had had the matter brought to their attention; that he had supposed the preparation of the by-law was along the line that the Hydro would operate the railroad for the city of Guelph. "There is no intention," he said, "that Guelph will suffer for what was perhaps laxity on the part of the Government or negligence in the supervision of the by-law." At the time the matter came to his attention, he said, he was under great pressure of work and had not perceived "that Guelph will suffer for what happens given it the consideration it deserved."

### Objects to Guarantee Clause.

The Premier said that the agreement seemed to involve purchase of the railroad and the guarantee of bonds by the Government. "I don't think the guarantee clause should be in it. We may be able to meet the case by leaving out the clause about guaranteeing the bonds."

Mr. Ferguson said he had had a copy of The Mercury, a Liberal paper, sent to him from Guelph, and he was concerned about attacks made in it upon the Attorney-General as the foe of radials. Mr. Buckland, in the paper he read, had touched a similar strain.

"Both these newspaper articles have referred to my prejudices," said Mr. Raney. "I have no prejudices against Hydro-radials."

"Everybody knows that," observed Mr. Ferguson.

## DESERTED WIFE ACT CRITICIZED

R. L. Brackin Thinks 5-year  
Period Will Work  
Hardship

SECOND READING GIVEN

Before the Ontario Legislature gave second reading yesterday to Hon. Walter Rollo's amendments to the Mothers' Allowances Act, R. L. Brackin, Liberal member for West Kent, vigorously attacked the provision under which deserted wives, left with children, are to wait five years before the board can recognize them as deserted and lend assistance.

"What is the deserted wife going to do in the five years?" demanded Mr. Brackin. "That is the very period, when the children are very small, when she will require assistance. I do not think that is a fair proposition."

Directing his attention to criticism expressive of the opinion that payments to deserted wives might encourage men to desert their wives, Mr. Brackin declared: "Any man who is such a low-bred, dirty dog that he will desert his wife and infant children will desert them irrespective of whether they are going to receive any assistance from the Government or not."

Hon. Walter Rollo explained to the House that, while he was not enamored of the five-year provision in the act, there had to be some lapse of time before it could be determined that the wife had been deserted. Hon. G. H. Ferguson was inclined to agree with the Minister. He recognized, he said, that a man's "going away" did not necessarily mean wife desertion, and some provision had to be laid down to safeguard the Province.