

SAYS CRIME AND FRAUD WERE WINKED AT

Hon. G. H. Ferguson Makes Bitter Attack on Shevlin-Clarke Bill Before Legislature—Calls It "Political Settlement" — Defends Own Course

STRONG INDICTMENT BY HON. W. E. RANEY

Timber controversies and Shevlin-Clarke Lumber Company affairs resounded once more throughout the Legislative Chamber yesterday when Attorney-General W. E. Raney brought forward for second reading his bill to validate the \$1,500,000 settlement with the Shevlin-Clarke firm. The debate lasted all afternoon and evening, and bids fair to consume many more hours of the time of the Legislature.

As usual, the Attorney-General and Hon. G. H. Ferguson, Conservative Leader, were the two principals in repeated cross-floor encounters which occurred during their respective speeches.

Presents Strong Indictment.

The Attorney-General presented a clear-cut indictment against the timber policy of the former Government, and pressed home facts and figures as to cuttings, overruns and receipts to support his contention of maladministration. He favored the settlement because he had no desire to force the Fort Frances company to the wall and create additional unemployment in the North country.

The Conservative Leader, who was at all times colorful and vigorous in his refutations of argument and denunciation of the Government's actions in what he termed a "political settlement," opposed the compromise. The Shevlin-Clarke people, he said, had been forced and coerced into a settlement, although if they had been permitted to carry the Logie judgment to appeal they would have won against the Crown.

In his speech he declared that if the Government was correct in its contentions as to the amount of money that had been stolen from the Province, or out of which the Province had been defrauded by the Shevlin-Clarke Company, it had settled for something like \$3,000,000 too little.

Calls It Empty Victory.

To head off an appeal which it knew would be successful, and to seize a political advantage while it was in its hand, the Government had forced a settlement. He asked if the Drury Government had reached such a political stage that it was going to "condone fraud and crime" in order to win an empty victory upon those who were opposed to its regime?

"Does my honorable friend say that the Government got too much or too little?" asked the Attorney-General caustically.

"If you had let me state the matter," replied Mr. Ferguson, "my firm belief is that justice would have been done in the end and would have shown that these transactions were bona fide, the over-run justified, and the department would not have recovered."

Hon. Mr. Ferguson caused considerable amusement in the House by repeated references to Premier Drury's personal and intimate friend, E. W. Backus. The Backus interests, the enemies of the Shevlin-Clarke people, he intimated, had been hurriedly enlisted on the side