

FRIDAY, MAY 19,

DEWART DROPS BOMB

With Lieutenant-Governor About to Sign Bill, Southwest Toronto Member Shatters Precedent in Final Objection to 'Rake-off' Plan—Tense Moment Follows, But Bill Is Signed

ACTION DESCRIBED AS "DEPLORABLE"

With his Honor the Lieutenant-Governor in the Speaker's chair waiting to give Royal assent to the Provincial Treasurer's Corporation Tax Act amendments, in which is embodied the clause to place a 5 per cent. tax on all race-track wagers, H. H. Dewart (Southwest Toronto), last night in the Legislature, adopted the unparalleled procedure of registering final protest against the enactment of the measure.

Voice Shatters Silence.

All members were standing, the Assistant Clerk of the House had read off a score of titles, foremost among which was the Corporation Tax Act amendments, and the clerk had made his dignified bow and uttered the first word of the sentence which enacted the bill into law, "In his Majesty's name, his Honor doth assent to these bills." The most intense quietness prevailed throughout the chamber, and the House and the galleries were visibly startled when the member for Southwest Toronto, standing in his place, commenced to speak.

"May I ask the Premier," he said, "whether his Honor has had the advice of independent counsel with reference to the Corporation Tax Act beyond that of the Hon. the Attorney-General, who has been associated with the Social Service Council, in the view he has so often expressed in the House?"

After a moment of quietness Premier Drury answered, "I am not aware that he has."

Then, Mr. Dewart continued: "May I ask, then, does the Premier think it is fair to the Lieutenant-Governor that he should be asked to approve of the bill when he has not had the benefit of independent advice?"

Nobody answered, the Clerk was signalled to complete his stereotyped sentence, and the incident was over.

Premier Drury later characterized as "deplorable" and "an unprecedented breach of the decorum of Parliament" Mr. Dewart's utterance.

Private members, among whom are a good many who are somewhat of authorities upon Parliamentary procedure and precedent, were still discussing the occurrence in the corridors at midnight. None of them had ever heard of a similar happening in any Parliament, nor had Hon. Nelson Parliament ever heard or read of anything similar.

The Premier said in his statement: "The effort made by Mr. Dewart in the House tonight to interject a question while the Lieutenant-Governor was giving Royal assent to measures passed by the Legislature was deplorable, not only as an unprecedented breach of the decorum of Parliament on such an occasion, but because of the reactionary constitutional principle enunciated.

"The suggestion that his Honor should reply upon the advice of other than his constitutional advisers is so entirely at variance with the principle of responsible government that it is surprising in these days of Parliamentary and democratic Government that anyone should venture to make it."

PLURAL VOTING WILL CONTINUE AT CIVIC POLLS

Homologous Line Project Passes Legislature and Receives Royal Assent

COMBINE PRIVATE BILLS

All the amendments to the Municipal Act introduced during the session by private members have been embodied into one bill, called the Municipal Amendments Act, 1922, and this measure, after an all-afternoon discussion, passed through committee of the whole of the Legislature yesterday.

One clause in the bill was deleted—that restricting property owners in cities or towns to only one vote on money by-laws, though they hold property in more than one ward. Premier Drury and Hon. H. Mills favored retaining the clause, but the great majority of the House voted against it.

After the dinner hour the bill was given third reading, and was among those which received Royal assent from the Lieutenant-Governor.

Homologous Line Section.

The other important part of the bill was the section permitting cities to fix a homologous line for the purpose of widening or opening out new highways. This section was approved with only one or two minor changes. The Toronto City Council has deferred action on street widening projects, awaiting the passing of this legislation.

Hon. H. C. Nixon, in whose name the Municipal Amendments Act stands, said, in regard to the clause restricting the number of times property owners might vote, that he was opposed to it.