

HOUSE DEFEATS NICKLE MOTION.

Suggestion Not to Pay \$600 Extra Finds Few Friends

D. M. ROSS REFUSES CASH

After debating for one hour and a half early this morning on a motion by W. F. Nickle (Kingston) to strike out of the estimates a \$67,000 item, which is to provide a \$600 bonus for each of the 111 members of the Legislature, the House, in Committee of Supply, at 1.05 this morning defeated the motion and carried the bonus item.

Mr. Nickle had as supporters John Joynt, Conservative, North Huron; D. M. Ross, U.F.O., North Oxford; J. C. Brown, North Middlesex, and J. G. Lethbridge, West Middlesex.

Twitted by Premier Drury upon his failure to state that he would not accept the bonus, Mr. Nickle, in reply, stated that of course a man opposed to the bonus item could not accept the money, even if the item carried. The House thereupon directed its mirth at the other opponents of the bonus, who, according to Mr. Nickle, were now precluded from accepting it.

J. C. Brown rose, amid laughter, and declared that Ontario was under majority rule. If the House carried the bonus and the rest of the members accepted it, so would he.

Mr. Lethbridge said that if the House raised the indemnity he would have to abide by it; therefore he would accept the bonus, along with the other members, if the majority voted for it.

D. M. Ross, however, pounded his desk with his fist and declared he had lived without the bonus all his life and still could live without it.

Mr. Joynt made no declaration. Premier Drury drew the applause

of the House when he said that the man who had serious objection to the bonus would not accept it, but would leave it in the public Treasury. Times were not sufficiently settled, in his opinion, to have a committee revise permanent salaries. When times became more normal Mr. Nickle's suggestion of a committee might be acted on.

"I would not feel easy," said the Premier, "to know that men were going back to their homes poorer than when they came here."

Hon. G. H. Ferguson said that when a man was elected to the Legislature he was supposed to exercise his judgment on public affairs of the Province, and he, Mr. Ferguson, thought he would be considered capable of estimating the value of his time and services to the Province.

He was prepared to accept the bonus and justify his action before his constituents.

Should Be \$2,000 Yearly.

W. H. Casselman, U.F.O. member for Dundas, said he knew that the electors of Dundas were not so niggardly as to expect him to make a personal sacrifice in order to serve them. His only criticism was that the Government had not fixed the indemnity at \$2,000 a year.

Charles McCrea, Conservative, Sudbury, announced his intention of supporting the vote. When he was elected the salary was not an issue at all. He could not see any great good to come out of the suggested committee.

Thomas Marshall, Liberal member for Lincoln, said the Government had to deal with this as with any other question of expenditure. There was no other way of doing it. He first came into the House in 1912, and the \$1,400 received then was worth only about \$700 now. Nobody throughout the Province was going to criticize the members in placing an honest and fair value on their services.

J. McNamara, Soldier-Labor member for Riverdale, supported the bonus, only he thought the Government made a mistake in not making it a permanent addition to salary.

Pay Speaker More.

M. M. MacBride, Labor, South Brant, justified the bonus on the ground that it was necessary. He suggested that the vote be increased sufficiently to place Speaker Parliament on a salary basis comparable to that of a Cabinet Minister.

D. M. Ross, newly elected U.F.O. member for North Oxford, said he would have to support the amendment of Mr. Nickle.

H. H. Dewart, K.C., said no member who attended to his legislative duties should be ashamed to vote for a \$2,000 remuneration. He twitted Mr. Nickle upon opposing the bonus, but not refusing to accept it.

In moving to strike out the \$67,000 item in the estimates which is to cover the \$600 bonus for 111 members, W. F. Nickle, K.C., Conservative member for Kingston, recalled that it had been his lot on several occasions in recent years to oppose similar contemplated measures. He admitted his position was embarrassing, but said that he could not sit still and allow the vote to pass unchallenged without swallowing his convictions.

Mr. Nickle, in a carefully stated presentation, took the ground that members were elected on the basis of a \$1,400 indemnity, and so understood when elected. They ought not, he said, to take the ground, after being elected, that \$1,400 was not sufficient. They ought not to be a party to any vote that would directly or indirectly, benefit themselves. He described such a vote as "bad public policy."

Mr. Nickle referred to the losses being incurred at the present day by all classes of the community, the unemployment throughout the Province, and the soldiers marching to Ottawa, taking the position that they were suffering from the ingratitude of their country.

He thought that changed conditions made it worth while considering at this date whether there ought not to be a revision of indemnities, and to that end he suggested that the Prime Minister at the next session name a committee to consider the matter, together with the remuneration of Ministers of the Crown, who, he said, ought to get a salary such as would attract the best men within the Province.

Lessen Parliament's Dignity.

The committee could make recommendations in time to have the next Parliament properly constituted in the matter of drawing an increased indemnity. Increases ought not to be undertaken in piecemeal manner. He urged that the Legislature "get away from these periodical, irregular, unfortunate bonuses or gifts, which, in my judgment, lessen the dignity of Parliament, and do not add anything to the glory that should be about the privilege of serving one's constituents and one's country as a member of Parliament."

J. G. Lethbridge, Middlesex, in seconding the motion to strike out the item in the estimates, said he thought this was no time to be granting bonuses or increased indemnities.

John Joynt, North Bruce, said that when he was elected he understood the indemnity to be \$1,400, and therefore he did not feel that he should take part in raising that amount. He believed now, however, and also at the time he was elected, that the \$1,400 was pretty low.