

ment had the right to do this, in view of the present deficits there.

Mr. Raney admitted he had neglected to deal with many matters affecting his own department, and again the U.F.O. were given a chance to cheer when he eulogized the Premier, who, he said, had not sought his position, and who, if defeated, "will retire to his plow at Crown Hill and be perfectly content."

No Redistribution Words.

So ended as militant a speech as was ever delivered in the Legislature, and one which will require Conservative answers for many days to come. But, in case someone forgets it all in the heat of political battle, it must be mentioned that Mr. Raney had not a word to say on redistribution and the amendment to the Address calling for it.

Charles McCrea, Conservative, Sudbury, continued the debate, naturally entering into a totally different explanation of the Backus deal from that given by Mr. Raney.

RELIEF FOR NORTH DRAWS OUT PROTEST OF DRURY'S POLICY

Premier Combats Hon. G. H. Ferguson's Criticism of Fire Rangers' Withdrawal

SECOND READING OF BILL

The bill to incorporate the Northern Ontario Fire Relief Committee received second reading in the Legislature yesterday afternoon, but not before Hon. G. Howard Ferguson had voiced criticism of the Government's management of relief in the fire zone, and been answered at length by Premier Drury, who spoke in justification of what had already been done by his Government and detailed plans for further relief in the stricken area.

As outlined by the Premier the Government proposals fall into two groups, those which affect the town of Haileybury and those which concern the rural districts. The latter include the following: Rebuilding by the Department of Education of all schools, payment by the Government of the cost of re-erection of bridges, payment of half the cost of rebuilding burned roads, and payment by the Province of all the 1923 taxes on burned-over property.

Relieves Haileybury's Burden.

In so far as Haileybury is concerned the Government proposes to shoulder the payment of interest and principal on all that municipality's debenture debt for the next three years. Beyond that period the Province will continue to pay the charges on the debenture debt on municipal property which has been destroyed until such time as that debt is discharged. In addition the Government has undertaken to provide the Relief Committee with such funds as may be necessary.

Mr. Ferguson characterized the request for the withdrawal of fire rangers from the district which later suffered devastation as "an unfortunate piece of folly." He also criticized the Fire Marshal on the ground that, during the investigation which had followed the fire, he had attempted to protect the powers that be against being charged with responsibility for the catastrophe. He inferred that the Province was primarily responsible for the fire, in that the fire rangers had been withdrawn, and urged that there should be generous appropriation of the public funds to repair the damage that had resulted.

The Premier held that the fire had been a settlers' fire rather than a real forest fire. Hundreds of clearing fires had been started at a time when rain was expected. These fires were necessary, and he did not think that, even if the rangers had been present, they would have refused permits.

After detailing the steps the Gov-

ernment had taken to provide immediate relief, the Premier detailed further proposals as outlined above. He paid tribute to the spirit of the sufferers, complimented the Red Cross and advised against the discontinuance of voluntary relief.

"Anything that can be properly done will be done by the Province of Ontario in re-establishing those people," he said. "We are giving them all that they asked for. Their spirit was, I think, wonderful. I have never seen such courage."

The OBSERVER IN QUEEN'S PARK



At about a quarter after nine last night Hon. W. E. Raney finished his speech on the debate on the Address—a speech delivered in three parts, and lasting in all about three hours and forty minutes. Yesterday was devoid of much of the excitement that made Wednesday's session historical for the Legislature, but still there was plenty of entertainment, and the chances of a fighting row kept the House and the crowded galleries always interested. The Attorney-General again carried a relentless war into the Conservative camp in general, and against the member for Grenville, Hon. Mr. Ferguson, in particular.

It was as severe an arraignment as has been heard in politics in years. It was presented more in a legal than a Parliamentary manner, the reading of lengthy extracts from official documents, the explanation, the argument, and the appeal to the House as to a jury.

Conservatives Nervous.

Mr. Raney had the Conservatives showing nerves. They did not like it, and they fidgeted and whispered among themselves and interrupted and tried to appear amused. The Attorney-General was merciless in piling fact upon fact and argument upon argument. To give Hon. Mr. Ferguson credit, he sat through it all, when he was not interpolating, but his followers were less faithful. Gen. Hogarth of Port Arthur remained with his Leader most of the time, but Col. Currie, Herb Lennox, and others of the ginger group found it convenient to be out of the Chamber at some critical periods.

Ministers Are Delighted.

Of course the U.F.O. members were out in force to cheer their Attorney-General. Premier Drury stuck closer to his desk than has been his custom. His face showed that he was pleased — greatly pleased. Mr. Drury has not yet attained statesmenlike control of his mobile countenance, which seemed to reveal the thought, "Well, the hides are now going on the fence, and they are not our hides. They are Tory hides, and all is well." But the man on the Government side who obviously enjoyed the oratorical pounding the most was Hon. Peter Smith. Yesterday had been set aside as Hon. Peter's day, when he would deliver the Budget speech, but he gladly gave way to see and listen to Mr. Ferguson get his medicine. Hon. Peter led the U.F.O. applause, and after most occasions on which he pounded his desk he indulged in a whole-souled laugh, which must have been irritating to his friends opposite. Hon. Peter may be strongly U.F.O., and he may have been a Liberal once, but there is not much doubt he never loved the Conservatives, and he laughed at their discomfiture.

Defends the Inquiries.

Mr. Raney defended the Government's appointment of commissions. Outside the three main inquiries, on timber, Hydro-radials and Hydro-electric, the total cost had been \$57,043. One of these had cost \$9,500, and it had returned \$81,000 to the Province, and opposite this he set \$28,000 paid to one Toronto lawyer by the late Admin-