

was designed to act as a "feeler" to show how the Legislature would receive a Government measure introducing the system to the Provincial sphere. The guess was repeated by Hartley Dewart, K.C., who declared that the Government should have sponsored the measure.

This suggestion the member for South Waterloo indignantly denied, stating that he consulted no one, and introduced what bills he pleased.

#### Run Counter to Law Society.

Prior to the "P. R." debate the members talked for an hour or more on the advisability of giving second reading to a bill to admit Daniel Solomon Denberg, a Russian Jew, to practice at the Ontario Bar. The applicant had been rejected by the Manitoba Bar, on the ground that he had not offered himself for military service during the war. The Ontario Benchers had refused to act contrary to the decision reached in Manitoba, with the result that J. McNamara (Independent Soldier-Labor, Riverdale) introduced a bill to override the decision of the Ontario Law Society. Despite objections from many of the lawyer members, the measure secured second reading without division.

#### Says It Was a Feeler.

Joseph Thompson, Conservative Whip, charged that Mr. Homuth was just throwing out a feeler for the Ministry in introducing the bill. The same sentiment was more delicately aired by Mr. Dewart, who asserted Mr. Homuth was allowing himself to exploit certain ideas which the Government did not care to exploit itself. These aspersions, Mr. Homuth claimed, were without fact or foundation. He maintained the bill would do a lot of good in teaching the people the benefits of P.R. Incidentally, Mr. Hill put up an elaborate defense for the bill, voted against his party on the issue, and then went down between his Chief Whip and Col. Price, Conservative, Parkdale, to show there were no hard feelings. J. W. Curry, Liberal, Southeast Toronto, felt that there was no demand from the municipalities for P.R., but he intimated he would like to see an experiment in the principle in the general elections. Mr. Hay, Liberal Leader, was also against the measure, and he pointed out that if the municipalities demanded P.R., then the Government should itself introduce such legislation. Mr. Dewart pressed for the Government attitude, and again was rewarded with silence. Apparently no person is going to get any information from the Government on P.R. or redistribution until the Premier makes his Budget speech. In the meantime there does not seem to be the slightest chance of an early agreement among the U.F.O. regarding Proportional Representation, at least not until the mem-

## OBSERVER QUEEN'S PARK



It now seems fairly well established that the U.F.O. members in the Legislature hold widely divergent opinions regarding Proportional Representation. Yesterday Karl Homuth's bill to give municipalities the privilege of having P.R. in local contests came up for second reading, and was killed. Only eleven members in the whole House voted for the bill, while on the standing vote the majority favoring the slaughter was so apparent no person took the trouble to count it. Only four Ministers were in their seats for the verdict, these being the Premier, Mr. Raney, Mr. Doherty and Mr. Mills, and they all voted for the bill, but their votes can hardly be taken as an indication of the Government's mind. On all the Opposition benches the bill found but one supporter, H. P. Hill, Conservative, West Ottawa, who, by the way, was Chairman of the House committee a few years ago on the P.R. idea.

#### Do Not Understand It.

Last week the U.F.O. held a caucus on P.R. as applied to Provincial elections. At the time it was rumored that the meeting broke up without any approach to a decision. It is reported now that many members confess they do not understand the principles of P.R.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson, in voicing the vigorous opposition of his party, told the House that it was common knowledge that at the caucus an election was staged to illustrate how P.R. worked, and the Premier and members got so muddled in the mazes that they failed to elect a candidate. Premier Drury laughed heartily at this reported confusion in a secret meeting, but he would neither deny nor confirm it when directly asked by the Conservative Leader.

But the voice of rural Ontario was not backward in asserting itself. Andrew Hicks, U.F.O. Whip, unfolded his long form and gave the bill a few sentences of denunciation. He admitted P.R. was in the U.F.O. platform. "Of course, this is in our platform, but it does not state the day nor the hour when these things are to come to pass. The platform does not say that parties cannot change their opinions," confessed Mr. Hicks. Having taken his fling at P.R. and the platform, the U.F.O. Whip bluntly concluded that there was no demand for P.R. from the people he represented. As the subsequent vote showed, he voiced the opinion of about nine-tenths of his party.

bers put more study on the problem.

Gordon Waldron, K.C., well-known U.F.O. lawyer, may have spoken the mind of a big wing of the party when he denounced P.R. before a Toronto audience some days ago, notwithstanding the fact that Premier Drury afterward said he disagreed with him.

#### Platforms as Charts.

Incidentally, when Rt. Hon. Mackenzie King, Premier of Canada, argued that party platforms were merely charts setting the general direction of policies he gave a convenient excuse which doubtless will be dragged out again and again. In this, of course, the Conservative party does not count, that party not being handicapped with an official platform.

#### About an Alliance.

Thomas Marshall, Liberal Whip, opened yesterday's proceedings by taking as his text a sentence or so of an interview with a Legislature member which appeared in these columns on Saturday, to the effect that it was not out of the bounds of possibility to see a majority of the present Liberal members accept Drury as Leader and raise the Progressive-Liberal flag.

Mr. Marshall feared that some readers might draw the conclusion that this was a reflection on his Leader, Mr. Hay, and he said Mr. Hay would continue as Leader until the Liberals in convention chose another Leader. Naturally the rumors of a working alliance between the Liberals and the U.F.O. contained no reflection on Mr. Hay, who seems to have fewer enemies than any other member of the Legislature. It was pointed out in the lobbies afterward that Mr. Marshall made no denial of the political gossip in this column of Saturday. As was the case with P.R., the Government benches were silent, Premier Drury smiling and busying himself with his correspondence.

#### Creating a Lawyer.

The House gave second reading to a private bill authorizing Daniel Solomon Denberg to practice law in Ontario. In itself the procedure was not of political significance, but in view of the fact that a bill giving the same privilege to Hon. E. P. Blondin, formerly a Federal Cabinet Minister, was thrown out last session, the present legislator

assumes some magnitude. Denberg came to Canada from Russia shortly before war broke out, going to Winnipeg. No one questions his educational qualifications, but he cannot obtain his lawyer's certificate in Manitoba because of a Benchers' regulation that all applicants must at least have offered themselves for military service. Then he came to Toronto, entering the office of Mills, Raney & Dewar. J. W. Curry, in opposing the bill, first drew attention to the comparison between the Blondin case and this one, saying that Mr. Blondin's war record had more than atoned for any rash expressions he may have used in the past. This referred to the alleged utterance about shooting holes in the British flag. Mr. Dewart made a reference to the fact that Denberg was working in the office of Mills, Raney & Dewar, which brought the usual indignant retort from the Attorney-General that he had now no connection with the firm. Then, a little later, Mr. Dewart referred to the "Pooh-bah" of the present Government. Again the Attorney-General was on his feet, and, looking at the Speaker, appeared to ask for a withdrawal. Hurriedly Mr. Dewart interrupted to show that the word was used in some modern literature in no disreputable sense. Mr. Raney was appeased to some extent, adding: "Under no circumstances do I object to any epithet the member for Southwest Toronto may care to use toward me."

"It was not an epithet. It was a title," returned Mr. Dewart. Mr. Marshall, as a layman, also opposed the bill, but when the Speaker asked the question the cries of "Lost" were quite weak when compared with those of "Carried." And so Mr. Denberg becomes a lawyer.