

LEGISLATURE GREETSS SIR GILBERT PARKER

U.F.O. Whip Expresses Lack of Faith in Proportional Representation

TORONTO BILL IS KILLED

Contrary to the usual dullness of a week-end sitting, Friday afternoon's session of the Legislature was unexpectedly enlivened by four incidents—the introduction to the members of Sir Gilbert Parker, eminent author; the declaration from Andrew Hicks, U. F. O. Whip, of a want of faith in the "tangled mess" of proportional representation and the single transferable vote; H. H. Dewart's comments on Arthur Hawkes; and a more or less earnest statement from F. Wellington Hay and Liberal members on the rumored U. F. O.-Liberal alliance. After these incidents the House straightened away into the business of second readings, the net important result being the demise of two bills.

Sir Gilbert Still a Canadian.

Introduced in terms of warm commendation by Premier Drury, Sir Gilbert Parker spoke interestingly for a few moments on conditions in the British House as compared to the Legislature; expressed a regret that his old Trinity College was to be moved down to the University of Toronto, and, amid the applause of members on all sides, declared that his affection and his sympathy for Canada and things Canadian would last with him as long as life endured.

Following a severe indictment by the Premier, a measure introduced by Hon. Thos. Crawford (Northeast Toronto) at the request of the Toronto City Council was then killed on second reading. Hon. Mr. Crawford's bill proposed two things: That in cities and towns tenants having leases for at least 21 years, and rated on the last revised assessment roll as lessees, shall be entitled to vote on money by-laws without a declaration; and that no erections should be permissible on property adjoining highways other than single or two family dwelling houses.

Premier Kills Private Bill.

The criticism was mostly directed toward the second provision, which, it was declared by the Premier, would give the Council power to destroy the equity of an individual in garage or other premises which he had erected in good faith prior to the coming into force of the proposed amendment. At first the Premier was inclined to let the bill go to committee for discussion, but a little later in the debate he arose again and said he had ascertained it was more far-reaching than he at first supposed. He said it was apparently an attempt to smuggle into a section of the act a clause that did not belong there at all, and that, with proper safeguards, was already embodied in another section. As it was at present proposed, he declared, it would have no safeguards, and, in his opinion, it was "red" confiscatory legislation.

Would Protect Municipalities.

Hon. Mr. Crawford and W. H. Price (Parkdale) set forth the view that municipalities should, in general, be given such enabling legislation as they asked for in the furtherance of municipal government. Mr. Price explained that it was very difficult at all times for municipalities to protect the better areas from eyesore innovations, and there was some reason for considering any request for legislative assistance in dealing with it.

The measure was finally killed by a standing vote, the small quota of members in the House splitting in all directions on the vote.

Another measure to go by the board was that of M. M. MacBride, Labor member for South Brant, introduced, he said, at the request of the Municipal Association of Ontario. It provided for the levying and collection of taxes which are not a lien upon the land during the year of assessment, and, Mr. MacBride said, was to enable the municipalities to

collect from the "carpet-bagger." Z. A. Mageau, Liberal member for Sturgeon Falls, presented what was apparently the view of many members—that it would mean exaction from a number of "poor fellows" who had not much money anyway, and it was killed.

The OBSERVER IN QUEEN'S PARK



Evidently members of the Legislature are beginning to hear from the folks back home regarding these rumors of a working alliance or a coalition between some Liberals and the Drury wing of the U.F.O. The question came up in the House again yesterday. Charles McCrea (Conservative, Sudbury) read The Globe's report of a meeting of eastern Ontario Liberals, and asked the Premier if there was any truth in the repeated rumors that Liberals and the Farmers were arranging to unite. "I wouldn't worry about it," the Premier laughingly advised Mr. McCrea, adding that he was glad "so many splendid and reputable Liberals" had seen fit to support his Government. It was evident the Premier was quite pleased at the rumors, and from his tone one would think he would welcome any working arrangement, though, of course, he did not say so.

Light in the Window.

Zotique Mageau, Sturgeon Falls, and R. R. Hall, Parry Sound, two Liberals who spoke at the eastern Ontario meeting Thursday, were forced to offer explanations. Mr. Mageau said he was quite prepared to support the present Government in any good Liberal legislation. While he admitted the Conservatives were the common enemy, he refused to state whether the Liberals should join the Farmers or whether the Farmers should come over to the Liberals. Mr. Hall had no doubts on this point. He said the light was in the window and the latch-string outside for the Farmers, and he thought they would "eventually come home to where they belong."

"Clearing the Atmosphere."

Next Wellington Hay, Liberal Leader, arose, as he stated, to "clear the atmosphere." One important sentence of his brief declaration reads: "No party in this Province, neither Conservative nor U.F.O., ever approached me, directly or indirectly, through anybody or any source, to co-operate with them in any way to form a coalition Government of any kind or to transact anything other than an honorable condition of business in this House." Mr. Hay concluded: "So far as I am concerned, I shall not betray any trust bestowed upon me by the Liberal party in convention assembled."

Mr. Hay's statement does clear the air, and provides the Liberal lead which seemingly is required at the present moment. A number of Liberal members had almost come to the conclusion that the only future for the party lay in some understanding with Mr. Drury and the scores of ex-Liberals who follow him. So far as anyone can judge, absolute loyalty to Mr. Hay and the word "Liberal" has deterred them from making any move toward the Premier. There are other Liberal members who are just as convinced that the party future lies in fighting as Liberals and having nothing to do with the Farmers or hyphenated party names. They think the U.F.O. strength is on the wane, and the day not far distant when the two old parties will fight for supremacy once more.

It is still too early to make any forecast of developments of the next few months. So far the nominations of either the Liberals or

the U.F.O. reveal nothing from which to form any conclusions. Only four Liberals are nominated to date for the impending Provincial contest, but that number will be augmented shortly by means of a series of meetings the party chiefs are arranging. If Liberals and Druryites are found not fighting the same ridings, some arrangement may be come to. This series of meetings, too, will enable the leaders to get closer to public opinion than perhaps they are now.

The fact remains, however, that there are hundreds of honest, fighting Liberals in this Province who have had their fill of coalitions and arrangements, and their influence will be strongly felt during the next few months.

The Whip and the Platform.

Andrew Hicks, U.F.O. Whip, yesterday chose to explain why he had voted against a proportional representation measure though his party platform called for P. R. He said his constituents in South Huron wanted nothing to do with such a "hazy maze and tangled mess."

"Do you refer to the U.F.O. platform?" he was asked.

"No; to the single transferable vote and proportional representation."

Mr. Hicks finds himself in disagreement with his Leader, but, judging from the U.F.O. applause for his remarks, Mr. Drury himself is out of step with many of his followers on P. R. "I believe the system is worthy of a trial, at least," repeated the Premier, who added that he had made no definite promise of P. R. to a recent Labor delegation.

Not a Day of Tension.

Sir Gilbert Parker had a place of honor beside Premier Drury for a while yesterday. He told the members about the British House, stating that the very smallness of the chamber at Westminster resulted in "tremendous tension." Sir Gilbert added: "I don't know whether you can get the same tension in a House of as few members as you have here." One could not help thinking that Sir Gilbert would have revised that utterance had he the privilege of seeing our Legislature in real action. It was Friday afternoon, and Sir Gilbert was spared tension, not the variety on which hangs the fate of empires, but quite enough for any human beings trying to enact laws.

About Arthur Hawkes.

As it was, Sir Gilbert was treated to an oration by Hartley Dewart, who took Arthur Hawkes as his subject. Mr. Hawkes recently appeared before the Gregory Commission on Hydro Power as a "voluntary witness," but Mr. Dewart claimed the Government could not escape responsibility for him and his evidence there, which was the reverse of complimentary to Sir Adam Beck. Mr. Dewart claimed Arthur Hawkes, whom he described as a "hireling" and "the worst type of journalistic scavenger," had attempted to betray the interests of the Hydro municipalities. Arthur Hawkes was being as carefully staged as any pre-election performing troupe, and he claimed the municipalities needed protection from this "bird of prey." Mr. Dewart also reminded the Premier that Arthur Hawkes had opposed both of them when they fought for reciprocity, to which Mr. Drury nodded assent, in thinking of that unfortunate battle.