

TINKER GOVERNMENT RULES IN ONTARIO, IS DEWART'S PLAINT

**Calls Drury "Tinker Boss,"
and Cabinet "Ten Major
and Minor Tinkers"**

REVELS IN BITING SATIRE

With sarcasm as brilliant as it was biting, with statistics as to "reckless extravagance," open condemnation of the attempt "to discredit, if not wreck, the Hydro public ownership enterprise," and a denunciation of a party which "fears to face the acid test of redistribution," H. H. Dewart, K.C., Liberal member for Southwest Toronto, delivered in the Legislature last night one of the most formidable oratorical assaults that the Drury Government has yet been called upon to face.

Alternating, in his three-hour attack, between shafts whose points were but slightly softened with humor, and steely, barbed arrows of open denunciation, the Southwest Toronto member held the House and galleries in the thrall of his satire. In his flowery moments he lapsed into poetry—authors, Dewart and Kipling—and, in a brilliant exposition of Liberalism, quoted extensively from a memorable speech of the Hon. George Brown in Parliament, dealing with the principles of responsible government.

No Ministerial Support.

"Responsible party government," Mr. Dewart declared, "is one of the fundamental principles of Liberalism. It implies the existence of parties in the State who accept responsibility for the business of the Government. It is opposed to the principle of Druryism that desires to govern without Ministerial responsibility, but Druryism will be a forgotten cult when responsible party government—the outcome of centuries of constitutional struggles—is well established in Canada and throughout the British Empire."

Outstanding, perhaps, in his criticisms of "the Ten Tinkers" and "the Government of broken pledges" was his vigorous condemnation of the Drury Government's pursuit of Sir Adam Beck. In language that bit deeply, he assailed the appointment of the Gregory and Sutherland Commissions, and denounced them as "propaganda ventures," and proceeded to put up a strong and seemingly unassailable argument for municipal representation on the Hydro Commission.

Besides Mr. Dewart, John Joynt, Conservative member for North Huron, and Charles Swayze, Labor member for Niagara Falls, contributed to the debate.

Trying to Wreck Hydro.

Delving exhaustively into Hydro matters, Mr. Dewart charged the Drury Government with "attempting to discredit, if not wreck, the Hydro public ownership enterprise of this Province, and failing to give the municipalities representation on the Hydro Board, to which they are justly entitled. The Hydro-electric business of the Province, though controlled and guaranteed by the Government, is really the undertaking of the municipalities of the Province."

After declaring that Toronto and other Hydro municipalities might well be concerned to see that there was a municipal representative on the Hydro Commission, he went on to show that the saving to power consumers in all the 215 municipalities in Ontario had amounted to the vast sum of \$92,000,000. He asked the House to consider the statistical evidence of financial strength which the Hydro displayed in all the municipalities, and the recent further decrease in Hydro power prices.

The Gregory Commission he described as a commission "to damn the Hydro and Hydro-radials and boost highways," and its Chairman,

"Warwick D. Gregory, the King-maker from Halton." The Hydro-radial Commission he declared to have been unnecessary, except as to propaganda, and the Hydro Inquiry Commission "unnecessary, except for the purpose of 'getting Beck.'"

Every finding of the Gregory Commission in the last two years was a "nail in the Government's coffin."

The Toronto member derided the Government for its actions in requiring the Hydro to repay money diverted to Hydro purposes other than those for which it was originally specifically voted, when, according to admissions of the Drury Government, he said, the Government itself had illegally diverted to highways and other projects money borrowed under the authority of the Hydro Act. If the Hydro, having given proper accounting, was wrong, how much more so was the Government which moralized on the subject.

His vigorous cross-floor declaration to Government members was that, in voting down his last year's resolution condemning the Government's practice in this regard, they alone must take the responsibility for voting as legal something that was not legal.

"The Ten Tinkers."

Mr. Dewart sent the House into roars of laughter with his description of "the Government of the Ten Tinkers." There was the "boss tinker," the Premier, whose offhand readiness made him perfectly willing to "mend or end Hydro"; the "legislative tinker," the "busiest little tinker of the lot," whose legal "solder bills" had mounted into hundreds of thousands of dollars—

"Tinker, tinker, little man,
Oft I wonder how you can,
With your little legal brain,
Stand the unexpected strain"

—the opulent road-mender, who had "tinkered" away millions, and "our plutocratic friend, the Provincial Treasurer, financial juggler and Tinker of Public Accounts." These, with the Minister of Agriculture and the "five major prophets."

"Everyday Tinkers."

"There are still five minor prophets—common, everyday journeymen tinkers, whose departments are run as they are run themselves—by their officials—the amiable Minister of Education, the lackadaisical Provincial Secretary, the Minister who wanted to put a tinkering tax on gold mines; the Minister of Labor, with his tinkering Labor legislation that gets you nowhere, and the Minister of Lands and Forests, who is not allowed to do his own tinkering. The boss tinker does it for him. I do not refer to the Minister of Power, who has never functioned."

Liquor Issue.

With that the speaker turned to touch on rumors of a referendum on the beer and wine issue. "The time

may come," he said, "when the people will be called upon to deal with the beer and wine issue. But that time is not now. The attention of the people of Ontario must not be diverted from the record of the Government."

"I find a growing body of public opinion in favor of Government control of the sale of liquors, and particularly of beer. There is apparent a revulsion of feeling against present conditions which place a premium upon hypocrisy. That is an issue which the people must decide in due course."

But there was another issue which should have been met squarely—redistribution. It was the duty of the Government, "unless it intended to hang on to power by hook or by crook," to redistribute the seats, and give fair representation to the larger centres of population.

Playing Politics.

But the Government had remained silent. There could be but one reason—"the Premier is playing politics in a way that no political party ever played them before in this Province." As for proportional representation, it should not be considered, unless it were to be applied equally to rural and urban districts.

"The Government that is so anxious to retain power that it is unwilling to submit to the acid test of redistribution," he went on, "is not entitled to be continued in power or to govern the people of the Province of Ontario, who look for responsible government, and who, I am satisfied, will return to the principle of responsible party government."

C. F. Swayze (Labor, Niagara Falls) pointed out that Governments from time immemorial had been subject to such fiery denunciation and such sweeping condemnation as had been poured out during the debate on the Budget. But in the last analysis all the talking had but very little real significance. "It's a contest of wits between men who make politics their business." When the hour of reckoning has passed, he felt that the country would discover that the people who formed the backbone of this Province did not share the party critics' views as to the success or failure of the Drury Government.