

HOUSE SPEEDS UP IN FIRST READINGS OF TRIO OF BILLS

Amendments to Important Measures Go Through in Record Time

MOOD IS MORE AMIABLE

Although the Legislature deliberately wastes days in a Redistribution Bill blockade, it demonstrated yesterday that it could, if it willed, facilitate business to an almost startling degree. H. H. Dewart, K.C., interested in workmen's compensation matters, was able to get seven motions for returns through the House in just about half that many minutes.

Courtesy Counts.

It was Mr. Dewart's good House tactics, and, as Premier Drury afterward said, his extension of the quality of "courtesy," that brought about the brief business spurt in the "House of Stagnation." Rising before the orders, he asked the Minister of Labor when the House could expect the returns that had been standing on the order paper since February. Mr. Rollo said the House could have them in 15 minutes if it would pass the motions.

"Well," said Mr. Dewart, "why are they not called? Will the Premier consent to call them if there is no discussion?"

Premier Drury and Hon. Mr. Raney responded in one voice: "Yes."

The Southwest Toronto member seized the proffered opportunity, questioned from his seat in the House each mover of the motion as to his willingness to dispense with discussion on the motion, and, having received unanimous acquiescence, called upon the Premier to "make good." Mr. Drury was as good as his word, and turned from the routine proceedings to call motions, and the orders went through one after the other.

"I always appreciate courtesy," said the Premier, upon conclusion, "and I appreciate the courtesy of the member for Southwest Toronto."

Important Bills.

With dissolution promised two weeks hence, not an estimate passed and scores of bills and motions held up by the redistribution blockade, the Drury Government brought down for first reading in the Legislature yesterday three important bills amending the Adolescent School Attendance Act, Workmen's Compensation Act and an Act to Facilitate the Federal Authorities' Grain Inquiry. Introduction of the new business brought from Hon. G. H. Ferguson, Conservative Leader, an expression of opinion that the Government was veering toward postponement of dissolution.

Following the demand from W. H. Casselman, U.F.O. member for Dundas, for action upon the Government's promise to exempt rural Ontario from the stipulations of the Adolescent School Attendance Act, Hon. R. H. Grant introduced for first reading the promised bill. The amendment, as explained by the Minister, sets out that the application of the governing section shall not apply to any adolescent whose parents or guardians reside in a rural school section and whose services are required in the household or on the farm, provided such adolescent is in regular attendance at school for at least three months during the year and attains to such standards of education as are afforded by his particular school section.

Compensation Act.

Hon. Walter Rollo introduced amendments to the Workmen's Com-

penation Act which would raise the compensation to dependents only. For children, he said, it would provide for compensation up to \$15 a month, and where there were no parents of \$20 a month, and that the compensation receivable by a widow shall be raised from the old 66 2-3 per cent. limitation to 100 per cent. of the husband's wages. The waiting period is also reduced from seven to three days. When Mr. Rollo explained the purpose of the bill, H. H. Dewart, K.C., tersely commented, "Election propaganda."

Then Hon. Manning Doherty introduced concurrent legislation with

Ottawa, to facilitate in Ontario the investigations of the Federal Government's Grain Inquiry Commission. Mr. Doherty gave his bill extended explanation and touched upon a principle which Hon. Mr. Ferguson, J. A. Currie (Southeast Toronto) and H. H. Dewart, K.C., contended gave the Opposition the right to discuss it on first reading.

All Three Spoke.

All three spoke to the measure, Mr. Ferguson stating that if it were not for the urgency of the bill he would oppose the introduction of a measure of such importance at this late date.

Mr. Dewart opposed the bill on two grounds, saying that "the appointment of a commission which will have power to sit during the throes of a general election in the dying days of a moribund Government should not be made," and on the ground that "the bill purports to confer upon commissioners who are not appointed by this Government, but by the Dominion Government, unlimited power to inquire into any matter affecting the grain trade in the Province of Ontario."