

Premier Protests.

The Premier rose protesting that he had not said in his Newmarket speech that he had asked Mr. Hanna to take the position. He had said, he declared, that he had talked over the general liquor control policy with Mr. Hanna.

"I'll take that explanation," said Mr. Sinclair, "but I'll take the former answer, too, and leave it to this House to judge whether I didn't ask a straight question and get a straight answer."

Continuing, Mr. Sinclair outlined the duties of the Strong Man, who received \$20,000 a year—more than the Chief Justice, the Chief Hydro Commissioner or the President of the university.

The Liberal Leader declared that Mr. Hanna's duties were to rent stores and sell liquor, to put the Ontario coat of arms on the stores, to wield a rubber stamp in the matter of appointments, to decide the quantities of liquor that might be purchased, and to give press interviews.

He thought that many a man would undertake all this for \$5,000 a year, and the \$20,000 was to impress the public with the solemnity of the office.

The Commission banned the advertising of liquor, Mr. Sinclair went on, yet they took good care to advertise well in advance the opening of liquor stores.

Stores' Coat of Arms.

Then he referred to the coat of arms on each store, declaring that he felt such insignia should not be there, since the question was a controversial one. The motto on the insignia was, translated: "As it began faithful, so may it continue."

"That's all over your head, Mr. Speaker," the Liberal Leader went on. "The same coat of arms that is on the windows of the liquor stores is over your head when you read prayers."

The Liberal Leader referred to the situation in Oshawa. Ex-Mayor John Stacey, defeated Conservative candidate in the riding, in charge of the patronage in South Ontario, said he, had backed one James Mallett to be in charge of the liquor store there. "The leaders of the party" in Oshawa had approached another man to take the position.

Premier Ferguson rose to say that the leading Conservatives of Oshawa had wanted to get a responsible man even if he wasn't of their party.

Mr. Sinclair protested that the Premier was trying to becloud his thought. His point was, he declared, why should the leaders of the party approach anybody, if the question was out of politics?

South Ontario Appointment.

Mr. Ferguson objected to this idea. Mr. Sinclair reiterated his thought. At any rate, he went on, Mallett got the job. "And," he declared, "the Strong Man had no more to say about the appointment of the liquor storekeeper in South Ontario than I did."

"It is a crying shame," he added, "that in the administration of this system politics should be supreme." He protested against the appointment of "ward heelers—always at the beck and call of the party."

"The act," he told the Premier, "is not being carried out along the lines you indicated it would be."

The Strong Man was to decide the quantity of liquor one could buy. Yet it took a court to reveal the fact that one man had purchased 468 bottles of beer.

"The Strong Man," Mr. Sinclair went on, "gives press interviews. He gets nearly \$20,000 worth of fun out of that. He is a Strong Man with a strong vocabulary. He says: 'Absolutely asinine,' 'bunk,' 'rot,' 'lie.'"

"Then the Strong Man has trouble with his customers. There was a Mr. Dewar who was two and a half ounces short in twenty-six and a half ounces—or 37 1-2 cents. I agree with Mr. Dewar that this is rather a serious matter. But the Strong Man became 'genuinely angry' at Mr. Dewar. He spoke of prosecution. Anybody who is in no more danger of arrest than Mr. Dewar needn't be scared. It seems to me that any one giving short weight would be the man in danger of being arrested."

Mr. Sinclair suggested that the Strong Man read Proverbs 16: 32; "He that is slow to anger is better than the mighty, and he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city."

Says Hanna Should Be Here.

It seemed strange, Mr. Sinclair continued, that just on the eve of the House opening Mr. Hanna packed his bag and departed for Bermuda. And then Hon. Mr. Manion was off to Ottawa to take his Federal seat. So that, altogether, \$30,000

worth of the \$40,000 Ontario Liquor Commission was "holidaying."

"I think," said the Liberal Leader, "that of all the times the Strong Man should be here it is when the House is in session. I hope he'll be back before the session closes."

There were many things, he noted, that members might like to ask regarding the Liquor Act administration, and Mr. Hanna should be on hand to answer.

Mr. Sinclair preceded the launching of his amendment with vigorous criticism of the Ontario Government's "neglect" to co-operate with the Federal authorities in the matter of old-age pensions. He said that the Government's "survey of conditions," as forecast in the Speech from the Throne, was but "a flag hung out of a window, waving 'Hang on until help comes'" to the old people of the Province.

The sum of \$365 a year, as provided by the Federal bill—one dollar a day for living, fuel and clothing—allowed no luxuries, but it was some help, and it was regrettable that Ontario could not see its way at the present time to establishing such payment.

The Western Provinces—many of them, he said—are adopting it. "But here in Ontario it's the same old story. If the Prime Minister can take up a thing first, all well and good. But if some other Government takes it up, he refuses to follow the lead. He hasn't the courage to say 'No.' He hasn't the courage to say 'Yes.' He just sits on the fence and lets our aged people get along the best way they know how."

Reads Newspaper Reports.

Mr. Sinclair read recent newspaper reports of Mr. Ferguson's attitude on the question. The Prime Minister was quoted as saying that the King Government, which had passed the bill, had not consulted Ontario on the matter, but nevertheless expected Ontario to pay one-half the pensions and the costs of administration of the plan.

"I think the Province of Ontario should feel ashamed of itself," said Mr. Sinclair. "We have more than 100,000 old people here who have given the best years of their lives to the Province. They need help. And yet the Ferguson Government refuses to go to their assistance simply because the King Government did not come down from Ottawa to Toronto to consult it."

Denial of Merger.

Right off the bat, Mr. Lethbridge took occasion to deny a newspaper story to the effect that the Liberal and Progressive groups of the House were to unite under Mr. Sinclair's leadership—and that, in the view of some speculators, "the Lethbridge leadership appointment was never anything more than a bit of camouflage designed for the benefit of the Ferguson Administration."

"In order to put this matter clear before the House," said Mr. Lethbridge, "I wish to say this group purposes retaining its identity as an independent body in the Legislature. And may I further say that we are prepared to co-operate with the Government or the Liberal Opposition in all matters we believe to be in the interest of our great Province. And we are also prepared to co-operate with the honorable members to our right in opposing the Government in all matters we believe are not in the best interest of the Province. Why should it be otherwise? Co-operation in all walks of life is the keynote today. We hope to be able to give some constructive criticism, not destructive."

Co-operative Marketing.

Mr. Lethbridge deplored the fact that agriculture had been given little space in the Speech from the Throne. "A brief comment about the year 1927 being a good year is all we have," he said. Of great interest to the farmer, he claimed, was the progress made during the year in co-operative marketing of his products. "This," he stressed, "is the burning question among farmers today, as witnessed by the wheat pool, tobacco pool, egg pool, and other pools."

"I confess," said he, "that I am not on the inside, and of course do not have to worry about financing such schemes, but I do believe that the time has come that some adequate provision should be made for the comfort in their old days of our deserving old people, who possibly have not been as fortunate in life as some others."

"Especially do I think that we should do something along this line when I remember that we are now superannuating some and paying out doles to others who are no more worthy than lots of our old people. I feel it is time the Province of Ontario stepped into line with other Provinces and the Dominion Government in this matter of old-age pensions."

Defends Drury Record.

Horace Collier, Prince Edward member, who seconded the Address last Friday, came under the new Progressive pilot's fire for placing the Drury Government in an unfavorable light in the matter of Provincial financing. Mr. Lethbridge said that on coming into office the Drury Administration had inherited the Chippawa Canal undertaking, on which alone they had to borrow more than \$70,000,000 on the credit of the Province and hand over to the Hydro Commission. On top of that, among other things, practically every Provincial undertaking held up four years because of the war had to be undertaken by the Drury Government, after the war, when prices and materials were at their highest.

Favors Health Policy.

Mr. Lethbridge said he would endorse, as he believed every member should endorse, every effort put forth by the Government for the cure and comfort of Ontario's unfortunate. He asked that the Minister of Health give serious consideration to the following resolution, concerning weak-minded parents, which was passed recently, at London, by the Middlesex Trustees and Ratepayers' Association:

"Believing that the propagation of children by weak-minded parents is not only detrimental to the community in which they live, but also to the nation, be it resolved that we approve of proper steps being taken by the Department of Health, in order that as much as possible of this condition be eliminated."

On the question of the St. Lawrence development Mr. Lethbridge reviewed the whole situation, past and present, outlining future power and ship canal possibilities, and expressing the belief that, as far as he could gather from the reports of the Joint Commission of 1921, "the rights of Canada have been thoroughly safeguarded."

Big Problem of Today.

"This," said the speaker, "is one of the big problems for Canada, and one that interests Ontario as much or more than any other part of Canada. It seems too bad this great project should be held up with a lengthy litigation in our Supreme Court and Privy Council—a matter we thought settled for 40 years. I quite understand there are conditions—power rights, navigation and international relations to contend with—which enter into the case. I hope, however, our Provincial rights will be maintained in these water powers."

Mr. Lethbridge deprecated the belief in certain quarters that "joint building of the great project would be playing into the hands of the United States, to the disadvantage of Canada."

"Selling" Campaign, He Says.

Swinging down onto the Government's boast of "strong and efficient Administration" of the Liquor Control Act, Mr. Lethbridge claimed that instead of a liquor control system which the country had been promised, and had expected, there had been supplied a liquor "selling" system, with the so-called "strong and efficient" Administration directing its activities solely toward the sale of "booze."

"This," he said, "is perhaps what some might have surmised would happen, but not what the people expected."