

# "DISMAL FAILURE" IS COOKE'S OPINION OF REGULATION 17

## Crosses Verbal Swords With East Elgin Liberal in Legislature

### GOVERNMENT ADVERTISING

With Hon. J. R. Cooke, Minister without portfolio, using the Government's strap on Regulation 17; with Charles G. Fletcher, young Liberal member for South Essex, assailing the Government's attitude toward weekly newspapers with an O.T.A. complexion; and with W. G. Medd (Progressive, South Huron) advocating no liquor permits for holders of motor-driving licenses, the debate in the Legislature was advanced three more paces yesterday.

Crowded galleries assembled to hear Hon. W. H. Price lay down his defense of the Liquor Control Act—its administration and its enforcement—found Mr. Cooke "pinch-hitting" for the Attorney-General, who was a bit "under the weather," but who will be able, it is expected, to go on on Thursday. Mr. Cooke battled well, getting the interest of the whole House with his Imperialistic utterances and his optimism for Canada's, and more particularly Ontario's, future, and winning loud acclaim from his side of the Chamber when he tangled with E. Blake Miller (Liberal) on the bilingual school question, and forced what he termed "the humiliating retreat" of the East Elgin member.

#### On Hydro Later.

Mr. Cooke had little to say about Hydro, but that will come later, when he speaks on the estimates.

At some length Mr. Cooke discussed Canada's future position in world affairs. Regardless of racial and political differences, all her people, he said, were animated by the same desire to promote her welfare. To the north, east and west they should look for development, but not to the south. (Applause.) One of the great tasks before the Dominion was to instill into her foreign-born population "that loyalty and that reverence for Imperial institutions which have always been typical of the Canadian race."

#### Federation, Not Separation.

"For," said he, "there will soon come a time in our history when it will be beneath the dignity of this country to remain less than a sovereign State. But no matter how prosperous she may become, no matter how important a position she may take in world affairs, instead of separation there will be federation with the British Isles and her Dominions overseas in a common Empire, making for peace and prosperity throughout the world."

Mr. Cooke contended that prosperity was to be found, to a great extent, in a contented people. He related what was being done industrially, educationally and agriculturally to achieve this objective. He referred to the "drift from the farms" and told how the Ferguson Government last year contributed \$3,000 per day to the establishment of rural power service and to the improvement, indirectly, of farm conditions. He spoke of good roads and school legislation, aiming at the same target. He referred to the efforts of Ontario to bring in coal from Alberta, and in this connection charged that, although the Dominion owned the Canadian National Railways, "she cannot make it possible for us here to reap the benefit from our own natural resources."

#### Bilingual Question.

Then Mr. Cooke turned to the bilingual question. It was, said he, the duty of the Legislature and the Government to abolish any legislation that did not afford the same opportunity in primary education to every child in the Province, and which did not give every child the same chance of learning the English language.

"If ever," said he, "there was a regulation or piece of legislation that received the endorsement of this Legislature, and yet miserably failed in achieving the object the Legislature had in view, it was Regulation 17."

The Minister of Education, he continued, would have been derelict in his duties if, in view of the information coming to him from every part of the Province, and especially after the Merchant Commission Report, he had failed to try and work out some system more effective than Regulation 17.

"A careful perusal of the report submitted by the Commission, of which Dr. F. W. Merchant, an outstanding educationist, was the Chairman," Mr. Cooke went on, "will indicate most clearly that Regulation 17 had proved a most sordid and dismal failure."

"Is the regulation in force yet?" interjected E. Blake Miller (Liberal, East Elgin).

#### "More Effective Methods."

"I should think," replied Mr. Cooke, "that the question is entirely unnecessary, because intimations have been given to the House and to the public that the Government is seeking more effective methods to gain the effects in which Regulation 17 failed."

"Was Regulation 17 ever enforced?" queried George Shields (Conservative, Toronto-Woodbine), popping up from the seat temporarily vacated by F. W. Wilson (Conservative, Windsor East).

"If," began Mr. Cooke, "the honorable member from—ah—ah—Oh, I've forgotten."

"From Woodbine," piped up the "peppy" Mr. Shields.

"Well," Mr. Cooke continued, "if any one will take the trouble to spend two or three hours studying the Merchant Commission report he will get a clear idea of why it could not be enforced, and why good results could not be secured." He quoted extracts from the report pointing out the desire of French-speaking citizens that their children learn English, and other extracts referring to the inefficiency of teachers.

#### Why Not Abolished?

Mr. Miller shot over another question. "If," he queried, "Regulation 17 was such a miserable failure, why was it not done away with?"

Mr. Cooke—The desire animating many people is evident in the member's attitude, which is one of detraction, not one of sympathetic co-operation, to see if we can't get better results.

Mr. Miller—Will the honorable member answer or refuse to answer my question?

Mr. Cooke—If you'll try and make yourself plain.

Mr. Miller—Why is Regulation 17 now in force when it was such a miserable failure?

Mr. Cooke—When an honest effort was made years ago by this Legislature to try to overcome the difficulties then presenting themselves, time and experience were needed to demonstrate the worth or failure of that effort. It is to be even expected regarding the experiment we are making today that we will review its progress in five years. Have you read the report?

#### "Read All of It."

Mr. Miller—Yes. I have read all of it. "Well," said Mr. Cooke, "what can you tell us of it, supposing I give you the opportunity?" He sat down and waited for Mr. Miller to divulge his knowledge.

"Possibly," said Mr. Miller, "I could discuss it in just as intelligent and gentlemanly a way as the honorable member."

"I have never," said Mr. Cooke, rising, "in all my years in this House, witnessed a more humiliating retreat from an offer than the honorable member has just made." (Loud applause from the Government benches.)

\* Mr. Miller was silent. Mr. Cooke continued with his subject, saying: "The report is clear justification of the sane, conscientious method in which the Department of Education is trying to deal with the problem to ensure that English will be taught in every school in the Province."

What did it matter, he asked, what political party led the way, so long as all realized the need of working in harmony?

Mr. Fletcher criticized W. G. Martin, Conservative clergyman-member from Brantford, for "slighting" references to Premier King and Hon. Vincent Massey, Canadian Minister at Washington.

#### Praises Services of Mr. Massey.

"Down in my section of the Province, which is close to the border," said Mr. Fletcher, "I believe that there is unanimity of opinion that it is highly desirable that Canada should have official representation in the United States. During the course of the past summer, when changes in the United States immigration regulations threatened to throw out of employment thousands of citizens who live in the border towns and work in the United States, the services of Mr. Vincent Massey contributed much toward straightening out that situation in a satisfactory way."

Mr. Fletcher advocated the lowering of the license fee on a Ford runabout from \$16 to \$9. "When," he said, "a farmer places a box on a Ford car, that car is no harder on the roads than a touring car, which pays the \$9 fee."

Mr. Fletcher charged that the party patronage system had crept not only into Liquor Control Act appointments, but into Government advertising. Many weekly newspapers the past year had, he said, been cut off the Government's advertising list. He quoted from The Essex Free Press to the effect that newspapers which had supported the O.T.A. in the last election had been "blacklisted."

#### "Ridiculous Situation."

"The weekly press," submitted Mr. Fletcher, "is not political, and therefore should not be subject to the patronage system. It seems to me to be a ridiculous situation that when, for example, a Sheriff wishes to advertise a sale in a certain community he is not permitted to make use of the local press, but, following instructions from the Government, advertises in a paper which is perhaps 20 or 30 miles distant from where the sale is to be held."

Mr. Fletcher referred to "Strong Man" Hanna's administration of the liquor law, picturing him "with the monotony of a Samson in the prison house grinding corn." Mr. Hanna's responsibility of office was not heavy, declared Mr. Fletcher. He had only one class of commodity to handle. He had not to concern himself with advertising, his wares were not perishable, and he did not have to find a market for his goods. And yet he drew \$20,000 per year for filling a job which, in the South Essex member's opinion, would not bear comparison—as far as the importance of his executive function was concerned—"with the executive demands required by the successful operation of a corner grocery store."

Speaking of bootlegging conditions under the new law, Mr. Fletcher charged that last fall's "clean-up" in Windsor and along the border had not been initiated by Mr. Hanna. Nor had the Attorney-General started it. It had remained for a newspaper to arouse public opinion to the extent of demanding action from Queen's Park.

Looking at the situation from a farmer's point of view, Mr. Fletcher discussed agricultural possibilities in

the Northern Ontario clay belt. "There seems to be a feeling up there," he declared, "that the Government shows more interest toward and gives more favors to the big interests, mining companies, and pulp and paper companies, than to the settlers." Picturing Mr. Ferguson as "the Santa Claus of them all," but a Santa Claus who bestowed most of his gifts on friends of the Government, Mr. Fletcher appealed for "better treatment" for the settlers. He cited their hardships and their requirements in the way of cutting concessions, and roads for development purposes.