

Thursday, March 1st

By Vote of 68 to 27 Legislature Members Approve of Address

*Premier Ferguson Signifies
That Government, Within
Year, Will Formulate
"Sane and Efficient
Method" of Old-Age
Pensions Plan*

BUDGET OF 1928 TO COME TODAY

*Many Speakers in Last
Day of Debate—North
York Member Alleges
Breaches of Liquor Act
—U.F.O. Member Says
Royal Commission on
Ballots Unnecessary*

The Ontario Legislature, at 11.05 o'clock last night rang down the curtain on the first act of the present session when by a recorded vote of 68 to 27 it carried the Martin-Reid sub-amendment to the Address in reply to the Speech from the Throne, and afterward adopted the Address itself.

This subamendment stated: "That this House receives with satisfaction the announcement that steps are being taken to gather information regarding the care of our dependent aged population, so that the people of the Province may have a proper understanding of this great problem and of the financial obligation to be assumed by them under a plan of old-age pensions framed to meet the needs of this Province and to receive the approval of this Legislature."

Straight Party Vote.

Worded entirely with the idea of killing the "want-of-confidence" amendment expressing regret that no old-age pensions act was introduced, moved earlier in the session by Liberal Leader Sinclair, the Martin-Reid subamendment achieved its purpose last night. The division was a straight party affair, all Opposition members voting against the Government. Four pairs were recorded. The Government benchers made their victory an occasion for considerable jubilation.

Today Hon. Dr. Joseph D. Monteith will bring down a Budget which will be practically featureless, except for a surplus for the last fiscal year of approximately \$350,000. No tax reduction nor any new tax levy figures in his pronouncement.

The closing hours of the Address debate last night were featured by a half-hour speech from Premier Ferguson, in which he talked vigorously in support of the Martin-Reid subamendment, stating that no one had ever heard a member of the Government side of the House express any opposition "to any suggestion that we should contribute to the maintenance and comfort of the old and needy people of the Province."

Next Year —

He expressed the feeling that by the time the next session rolls around the Government will have formulated "a sane, sound and efficient method of handling the problem adequately, and giving relief where relief is needed."

Mr. Ferguson was generous with his acclaim. He said that "no more valuable contribution" had ever been made to the debates in the House than Attorney-General Price's liquor-control speech. He gave the "glad hand" to Frederick J. Skinner, Conservative member for Leeds, who in his maiden speech to the House aroused Government and Opposition members alike with his utterances regarding research—a subject which, while included in the Speech from the Throne, has been severely left alone this session to date.

Associated with Mr. Skinner in giving the debate its wind-up yesterday were Charles A. Robertson (Liberal, North Huron), Leslie W. Oke (U.F.O., East Lambton), George S. Shields (Conservative, Toronto-Woodbine), Peter W. Pearson (Liberal, North York), Edmond Proulx (Liberal, Prescott), and Dr. Paul Poisson (Conservative, North Essex). The whole gamut of controversial issues was run, with more discussion on Regulation 17 being heard than on any other day this session. The Liquor Control Act came in for considerable bombardment, with the North York member, particularly, "stinging its hide" on a number of occasions.

Rely On Administration.

Mr. Ferguson said that there had been a complaint of the meagre "bill of fare" provided in the Speech from the Throne, but he believed that "the less legislation brought before the House the better it would be for the Province." The Government, he said, sought rather to rely on efficient administration. "I think the public are desirous of having the laws of the Province stabilized, and not continually tinkered with," he declared.

Referring to industrial research, he commended its mention in the speech of the member from Leeds, and declared that it was the basis of manufacturing and agricultural progress. He regarded it as absolutely necessary to the expansion of industry.

Regarding Hydro, he said that it had been complained by several members that it could not be sold cheaper in the rural parts of the Province, and declared that, if the principle of power at cost were to be maintained, there could be no talk of a flat rate for the Province.

Question of Language.

On the question of Regulation 17, Mr. Ferguson said that the difficulties had been that it had been regarded with resentment and antagonism by the French people of the Province, rather than as helpful, and that there had been a lack of qualified teachers. An effort had been made, he said, to overcome those two difficulties. "This is not a bilingual Province," he said, "but 10 per cent. of its population are people of another tongue, who wish to use the English language, and we should give them the opportunity."

Mr. Ferguson declared that any anxiety that might be felt by certain members that English children in French communities would not receive careful instruction in their own language could be quickly dispelled. "The idea," said the Premier, "is so far out of the range of possibility that I can't imagine how any one could get it into his head. I can give the strongest kind of undertaking that no occasion will be lost to give every English child the fullest opportunity to get education in its native tongue. I don't think it can be forcibly argued that the knowledge of another language as well as English can be a detriment to any child's progress."

Old-Age Pensions.

Turning to the amendment to the Speech from the Throne offered by the Opposition, Mr. Ferguson explained his attitude toward old-age pensions. He had already said, he explained, that the Dominion Government had passed