

the old-age pension legislation without consulting the Provinces, although the committee appointed to study the question had recommended that a conference of all the Provinces should be held. He said that the Alberta Government, "a Liberal Government although recently refused to enact old-age legislation before studying the question.

"The Government," Mr. Ferguson said, "wanted to understand the problem before launching into a scheme which would cost millions every year. If you are going to make legislation successful you must first make it acceptable to the people."

He explained that he had been informed recently by the National Welfare Bureau, which for some time had been making a study of the question, that it was not yet in a position to suggest or outline the type of organization necessary to operate the old-age pensions scheme.

#### Suggestions Ridiculed.

Mr. Ferguson ridiculed the suggestion that it might be operated under either the Compensation Board or the Mothers' Allowances Commission. "The man who says that has no idea of the work necessary," he said.

"Before we can undertake the scheme we should have a thorough understanding of the machinery which would be necessary for its operation."

"But," said Mr. Ferguson, "no one has heard, as far as I know, a syllable from any member of this Government opposing the suggestion that we should contribute to the maintenance and comfort of the old and needy people of this Province."

"The Government hopes that by the time the next session comes around it will be able to present a safe, sound, businesslike method to handle the situation adequately and give relief where relief is needed."

#### Tourists and Money.

Charles A. Robertson (Liberal, North Huron) doubted whether tourists left as much money in the Province as was popularly supposed, and he was of the opinion that the benefits of the tourist traffic should not be overestimated. He urged better consideration in the matter of roads for the more remote parts of the Province. Mr. Robertson regarded rural Hydro as a blessing, "if the farmers could get it at a rate that was not prohibitive."

#### Says Rates High.

Mr. Robertson instanced another case in which the Government had made a 14-mile extension of Hydro lines in a neighborhood in which they had hoped to encourage its use. But only two contracts had been negotiated on that line.

Mr. Robertson asked why it was that houses of refuge in the cities should be given a per diem grant of 10 cents per inmate when county institutions did not receive it. The Prime Minister asked that he submit him a memorandum on the point raised for his consideration.

Conditions in the schools were not, in Mr. Robertson's opinion, as they should be. He referred to the Township School Board Bill, suggesting that it would still be unpopular, since it was, in many ways, unworkable.

#### Commends Mr. Wilson.

Referring to Government control, Mr. Robertson commended the action of Frank W. Wilson (Conservative, East Windsor) in supporting beer by the glass, since he had been elected on that platform. There were other members in the House, Mr. Robertson suggested, who would have voted for the measure if they had been true to themselves instead of party.

Leslie W. Oke (Progressive, East Lambton) characterized the U.F.O. party of three as "still going strong," and as something that should not be underestimated at the next Provincial election. Because of their economic position, farmers could not stay out of politics.

#### Temperance Teaching.

Mr. Oke was prepared to accord the Liquor Control Act a "fair trial." He deprecated the idea, as suggested from some sources, that the Government should send temperance lecturers and educationists throughout the Province, arguing in this connection that every man and woman of sound judgment—"not fanatics"—should be a temperance worker, and that every member of Parliament should set an example to his constituents, not only in temperance teachings, but in "temperance actions."

While, he said, the Attorney-General had made a good defense of the act in the House, he could not help wondering if the some \$17,000,000 spent on liquors in the first five months of operation of the new law was going to do Ontario any good. He knew men who had made a lot of wealth through liquor, and had not fared very well in the end. "If it is to work out the same way regarding the Province," he said, "the Province has my sympathy."

Speaking of conditions in East Lambton, he said there was no liquor store there. He had had no demand for any. He did not think the riding either wanted one or needed one. As far as law observance was concerned, there had been no particular change worked by the Liquor Control Act.

Mr. Oke argued that the Government had made a mistake in taking the ballot inquiry out of the hands of the Legislature and turning it over to a Royal Commission. He said that the Prime Minister rightly wanted to get it "out of politics," and he and his

U.F.O. group could have handled it as well as any Royal Commission.

"Then, perhaps, we would lose the rest of the ballots," smiled Premier Ferguson.

#### Judgment and Reason.

"Sound judgment and good reason," said Mr. Oke, "would settle the question in practically no time. In my opinion, it is a big fuss made out of nothing."

Mr. Oke registered a strong plea for old-age pensions, saying that he and his two followers would support the Sinclair-Mewhinney amendment before the House in this regard. When, he said, the Government was in a position to make grants to pretty nearly every request of merit which came along, it should have money with which to take care of the aged and needy after they had passed the age of 70 years.

George S. Shields (Conservative, Toronto-Woodbine) declared that the chief objection of Mr. Belanger to Regulation 17 had been the "blood pride of the French." They had principles, he said, and so had he. His were that the English language should be the language of the schools of Ontario, both public and separate. "I would stuff them with English just as the Minister of Agriculture stuffs his cockerels before he sends them to market."

#### Teaching of English.

He wanted, he said, the assurance that the English who were in the minority in a French section of the Province should not suffer in the matter of learning their own language because instruction was given in French. When the French come to Ontario it is in their best interests that they should learn English, he said.

On the question of old-age pensions Mr. Shields thought that the Government was quite right in looking before it leaped. "But I wish they had looked sooner and were able to leap now," he said.

He lauded the friendliness that Mr. Ferguson had shown toward Hydro. He had, however, visited the Gatineau and he sounded a warning against the "menace of such large corporations as could purchase newspapers." "They get what they're after," he said.

He deplored the fact that the liquor question had such prominence. "Everybody is talking about liquor," he said; "leave it alone for five years, don't issue all these figures and reports, and watch quietly to see how the act is working out."

Peter W. Pearson (Liberal, North York) distributed the weight of his attack on the Ferguson Administration between Regulation 17, old-age pensions and the Liquor Control Act. He thought that the definition, "dismal failure," which had been applied by Hon. John R. Cooke to Regulation 17 was open to question. Study of the Merchant Inquiry Committee report had led him to believe that failure of schools in certain localities to measure up to standard had not been the fault of the regulation itself, but the fault of unqualified teachers.

In spite of the Government's argument, he felt that it had not "the will to do" on the question of old-age pensions. "Any Province," said he, "which can afford to spend \$38,000,000 or \$40,000,000 a year for liquor can well afford to pay out the money required to give proper care to people who have given their lives in the interests of the Province."

#### Those "Reputed Quarts."

Mr. Pearson tackled the "short weight" in liquor conditions which had been disclosed by a man named Dewar. He said that in the days of the open bar there had been slick bartenders who had not been averse to short-changing a fellow, but the least that one could expect from the Ferguson Government in respect of its liquor system was honesty of administration. Yet, apparently, it was not to be had, he said. He said there was an inclination to pass off lightly this "short weighting" of liquor. A farmer's wife could not go to market, he said, and sell a pound of butter two ounces short, even though it came from a regular print, without being hauled up before a Magistrate in a hurry.

At some length, Mr. Pearson disputed the Government's claim that bootlegging had been cut down by the new act, and that there was less drinking by young people and at young people's parties. He used the recent "beer-by-the-glass" argument of Frank W. Wilson, East Windsor member, to show, as he contended, that retail sale by bootleggers had increased. He used newspaper statements credited to Rev. W. A. Cameron, Toronto, and to Rev. Father Coyle of Kingston, respectively, to show that young people have recently been carried out of Toronto dance halls, drunk—and that the appalling extent to which drinking has increased in Kingston among the youth of the community is "unbelievable."

Mr. Pearson related the story of a young man in his home town who only that morning had had his permit taken away from him. A 30 per cent. disability case, a chap who had no job, and who frequented poolrooms, he had been able, nevertheless, to buy 31 bottles of spirits and "hundreds of bottles of beer" from the Liquor Board. For one purpose only—resale.

#### Hammered on Barber Shop.

The North York member's story of a woman who recently staggered along Bay Street, hammering on a barber shop window, using profane language, and who sprawled all over a policeman, and yet went unapprehended, because, in the policeman's words, "We don't bother with people like that," drew an indignant interruption from Frederick G. McBrien, Toronto Conservative member.

"Where was that barber shop?" asked Mr. McBrien.

"I don't know," said Mr. Pearson.

"I didn't think you would," said Mr. McBrien.

"You don't need to talk to me that way, young man," snapped Mr. Pearson, and Mr. McBrien wilted.

In relating the story of a travelling man who knew conditions in Northern Ontario intimately, and who had said that in Sudbury and North Bay he had seen more drunkenness and had heard more barroom language in the last few months than in the three previous years, Mr. Pearson drew the fire of Premier Ferguson.

"Are you sure of that?" asked Mr. Ferguson.

"Well, I haven't been there," said Mr. Pearson.

"Well, I have," the Premier returned, "and I don't believe it."

"This man of whom I speak is a very estimable gentleman," said Mr. Pearson, "and I'm confident that he would not mislead me."

#### Praises Liquor Act.

Frederick J. Skinner (Conservative, Leeds) declared that conditions in his constituency under the Liquor Control Act, socially, morally and industrially, showed improvement even though the act had been in force but a few months. The Leader of the Progressive

group, John G. Lethbridge, had produced permits, Mr. Skinner said, showing that vast amounts of liquor had been purchased, but he could, he said, produce permits with very few of the spaces filled. Referring to the Hydro transmission line being carried across from the eastern side of the Province, he declared that in the east it was felt that industrial progress was being retarded by lack of power. The east, he said, with the added power soon to be available, would rival the southwestern part of the Province industrially. He offered the suggestion that when the St. Lawrence River development was begun a two-phase system should be used, since it would make the power available five years earlier and would require the flooding of a smaller area of land.