

proposition, and one totally out of all proportion to the needs of the Province, especially when a staff of Deputy Ministers and assistants, costing some \$116,000 annually, had, he declared, to do most of the work.

Mr. Sinclair said he could anticipate the Premier's speech on the debate. It would be, he said, the old, old story of "Mr. Sinclair in a petulant mood," "Mr. Sinclair offering no constructive criticism," and so on, and so on.

"Well," said the Liberal Leader, "I just wish to call to the attention of this House that the Liberal Opposition forced the hand of the Government on four major issues at the last session. The old policy of keeping ridings vacant for long periods had been abandoned by the Government. Last year vacant seats had been promptly filled."

"Filled well," interrupted Karl Hornuth (Conservative, South Waterloo). "I don't know about that," retorted Mr. Sinclair. "Judging from the speech made by one of these by-election members the other day, before he speaks again his speech will have to be looked over."

"Propaganda" in Gazette.

Mr. Sinclair also claimed that, through the criticism directed by the Liberals last session, the Government's policy of "disseminating propaganda" through The Ontario Gazette had also been discontinued. With only one exception—when the Provincial Treasurer had published his pre-session financial statement—the Gazette had been free this year of "front-page" stuff from the members of the Cabinet.

"Not one of them," he gibed, "had a single article to his credit. How they must have yearned for the old days, when they were making the front page regularly—at the expense of the people of the Province."

Old-age pensions had also been forced by the Liberal group, Mr. Sinclair declared. While he preferred to withhold lengthy comment until Premier Ferguson's bill had actually reached the House, he reiterated his opposition, and that of his supporters, to any move of the Government to "saddle" the municipalities with a share of its financial obligation.

The case of the nineteen "wandering Ottawa ballots" had been another instance where the Government had been prodded by the Liberal Party into activity.

Opposition Far From Anaemic.

"Surely, Mr. Ferguson cannot say tonight when he speaks to this House," said the Liberal Leader, "that the Opposition has been inactive—that it has been suffering from pernicious anaemia."

Strong criticism was launched by Mr. Sinclair at the Government's method of bringing down departmental reports to the House. They came in nicely sealed and bound, and carried by pages, he said, but the Opposition members saw nothing of their contents until "next October or November." On the very last day of the 1928 session thirteen reports, he said, were tabled.

"How can this Legislature fulfil its duty," he asked, "if these reports are not made available to the members and for their consideration while the Legislature is sitting?"

Premier Ferguson interrupted to point out that, as the fiscal year of the Province does not close until Oct. 31, it was difficult for the departments to get their returns in shape for printing in time for the House.

"Then what's the use of tabling them at all?" said Mr. Sinclair. "As they come down now, we over here don't know whether there is anything more to them than the ribbon and the red seal."

Charges Delay in Returns.

Mr. Sinclair also ripped into the Government for "delaying" returns that had been asked for in the House by the Opposition. "We are an inquisitive lot on this side," he said, "and when we ask for returns we want them. Moreover, the people should know, too. A lot of the stuff that is ordered by return never sees the light of day."

Mr. Sinclair cited the case of a return asked by the Liberals on March 30, 1927, concerning S. L. Squire, former Deputy Minister of Highways. Notice of the order was before the House for several days, but the return was not ordered by the Government until the last day of the session. And then the return was not made until the very last day of the 1928 session.

"A whole year passed," said Mr. Sinclair sarcastically, "and then it was shoved under the door, where nobody could see it, or even guess what it contained."

Returns that were ordered last session concerning crushed stone and Hydro power in Northern Ontario had not, as far as he knew, come down yet.

"If we are going to pass these resolutions," said Mr. Sinclair, "it is the duty of the Legislature to see that they are brought down. Some one is responsible, and he should be brought to task. To date the Opposition has been entirely ignored in this matter. If we are going to be ignored in future, it is high time that we knew it and the people knew it, too."

Continuing to point out to Mr. Ferguson certain arrangements to facilitate the business of the House, Mr. Sinclair suggested that at least there should be two or three days' advance notice of bills to be taken up.

Increasing Taxes.

Turning his guns on the financial administration of the Ferguson Government, the Liberal Leader contrasted the situation in Ontario with that in Canada generally. The Ontario authorities, he regretted, had fallen far behind the example set by Ottawa. The Federal Government had continued to reduce taxation. The Ontario Government increased the burden on the people of the Province.

Having fired his blasts at Mr. Ferguson in his position as Prime Minister, Mr. Sinclair let loose a bombardment on him as "our Minister of Education." He first pictured Mr. Ferguson in this portfolio as "letter-writer, book-writer and educational traveller."

First—the letter-writer. No doubt the members of the Legislature who watched Mr. Ferguson during sittings of the House remarked that he kept so busy writing something. What were these letters? Well, said Mr. Sinclair, he could refer to at least one. The Premier had written a letter to the teachers of the Province, a document which voiced a temperance message, which spoke of the worth of sobriety, which emphasized that the textbook on hygiene in use in the schools warned against intemperate habits.

Mr. Ferguson interrupted to say that if Mr. Sinclair was so interested in that letter no doubt he'd be glad to know that a second one had gone out to the teachers.

"Is it any better?" inquired Mr. Sinclair.

"Well," retorted the Minister of Education, "there's a little improvement in language, more terminological exactitude."

"Well, there's room for it," said Mr. Sinclair.

Safeguarding Liquor Sales?

But, the Liberal Leader continued, why had the Minister just sent a temperance message to the teachers? Why didn't he write a letter to the people of the Province generally? Was it because the letter to the teachers would not affect the revenue of the Government liquor stores, because the pupils to whom they passed on the message were all minors, and barred from buying liquor? Did the Minister of Education withhold a letter from the people because its distribution might affect the Government's liquor business?

Then there was the Minister of Education as the book-writer, Mr. Sinclair

continued. At least, he had sponsored a book and written the preface, and that was John Henderson's "Great Men of Canada." Of course, said Mr. Sinclair, there were several John Hendersons in the world. Just who was this particular one?

"I'll tell you," Mr. Ferguson interjected. "He's a well-known biographical sketch writer, known in the Old Country. He's been in Toronto and is writing for the Southam people."

"Well," said Mr. Sinclair. "He's not in Who's Who with the Premier and myself."

Why, the Liberal Leader continued, had such men as Sir Oliver Mowat been "left out"?

"I am not," he continued, "capable of strong enough language to deal with this procedure of using public money to place such a book in the schools and libraries."

Brings Premier to Feet.

This brought Mr. Ferguson to his feet, declaring that a second volume was being prepared, and that the first had dealt with men particularly connected with Confederation. "I would be very sorry," said he, "if my friend entertained the idea or suggested that this book had been distributed because of any political interest in the Department of Education. That department has always been remarkably free from politics."

"I do think it was done for political purposes," retorted Mr. Sinclair, "and the Liberals of this Province think it has been done for political purposes."

This retort brought cries of "No" from Government members, and even a whistle of surprise from a spectator in the galleries.

"And," Mr. Sinclair went on, "I say so from the floor of this House. And I have heard many people say so as strongly as I do now."

Mr. Sinclair contended that it didn't help matters to publish a second volume now as an addition. The second volume should have been announced with the first book, he declared. Apparently it was only after public opinion had expressed itself that a second book was prepared.

Surely, said he, the friends of those great men who had been "left out" wouldn't "relish" a second book, when these great characters should have been in the first publication.

The Educational Traveller.

Then he pictured Mr. Ferguson as an educational traveller. Just back from England, the Minister of Education had described educational institutions here as being like a "sausage machine," grinding out products. Well, said Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Ferguson ought to know, because he "operates" the machine.

Going on, Mr. Sinclair noted that Hon. George S. Henry had also made a trip to England. Yet when these two Government officials came home their interviews given to the press on agriculture in England contained a divergency of opinion.

Next Mr. Sinclair criticized Mr. Ferguson's project of university work in high schools, on the ground that it cast a burden on the municipalities involved. It would cost, said he, every municipality \$30,000 to \$40,000 a year in taxes. It would be cheaper for those municipalities to send their ten to twenty students, who would benefit, to the university, and pay their tuition and expenses.

University Work in Schools.

Mr. Sinclair pictured a municipality in which this university work would be done in the high school, say, in Peterboro'. There would have to be five teachers on university subjects, each with a salary of \$4,000 a year. There was \$20,000 in one shot. Then there would be costly equipment.

"You're carrying the argument to the point of absurdity," Mr. Ferguson interrupted. "Just take Peterboro', for example. All the equipment and staff necessary to carry on the work is there."

Mr. Sinclair retorted that Mr. Ferguson's stand was proof that he did not deserve to hold the portfolio of Minister of Education any longer. Every one knew, he continued, that these municipalities had not the equipment of the great university centres, and the teachers in high schools were busy now. If they had time to teach university subjects under the new plan, they were not fulfilling their duty now.

Lighten Farmer's Burden.

Mr. Sinclair delivered an impassioned plea for light taxation for the farmer. "Since he is unable to shift the burden of taxation imposed upon him," said he, "the Government should do everything in its power to lighten that load."

By reducing his automobile license fee; by reducing road tax; by allowing one motor-operating permit to do for an entire family; and by repealing the land tax, the Government could, Mr. Sinclair asseverated, considerably ease the farmers' burden.

"At present," said he, "the Government ignores the farmer. They can afford to do it, I suppose. They gerrymandered a lot of rural ridings and added them to the cities so as to make it safe to go to the country when they felt like it."

Credit for Hydro.

At some length, Mr. Sinclair scored the Government for its Hydro "preaching." "You would think," he said, "that the Conservative Party was the only party that had ever done anything for Hydro."

William H. Ireland, Conservative Whip, thumped his desk resoundingly. "There," said Mr. Sinclair, "the Whip sits and pounds his desk, seeking to make political capital out of a matter that means bread and butter to the people of this Province."

Many of the true friends of Hydro, said the Liberal Leader, were men who sat in the Opposition, criticizing, and by their criticism seeking to reveal the true state of affairs.

"Let me show you people what you are eternally blowing about," said Mr. Sinclair, and he proceeded to quote sta-