

Thursday - February 28th.

"Quit the Hypocrisy," Cries Ottawa Liberal On Contributions Bill

"We All Get Subscriptions," Argues Albert Pinard, During Lively Argument in Legislature — "Legault, Proulx, Belanger and Myself Only Real Liberals in House," He Says

SECOND READING GIVEN MEASURE

Albert Pinard, Liberal member for East Ottawa, upset the calm, complacency and whatnot of the Ontario Legislature yesterday when he went after the principle of Progressive Leader Lethbridge's new "prohibition of political contributions" bill with all the dash of a Barcelona bull after a matador's flag.

The bill would stop brewers, distillers, liquor associations and such from aiding campaign funds, but Mr. Pinard wouldn't, and he made that attitude perfectly plain in the House in one of the most impassioned, merry-go-round arguments that the Legislative Press Gallery has ever had occasion to record.

"I am satisfied," shrilled the East Ottawa member, "to accept money from all quarters. Last election I had money from both the wets and the dries. And if it wasn't for a personal friendship, I could tell where I got the money to beat the Jew they put up against me in my municipality."

Gibes at Leadership.

Coming, as they did, on the heels of Premier Ferguson's and Liberal Leader Sinclair's comparatively non-bellacose concurrence in Mr. Lethbridge's suggestion that the bill be read a second time and sent on to a special committee for consideration, Mr. Pinard's all-round protest against the legislation; his cry of "Quit the hypocrisy—we all get subscriptions"; his sharp denunciation of the people who do not mind "coca-cola" money, but who won't take "wet" funds; and his gibe at the Sinclair leadership through the boast that "Legault, Proulx, Belanger and myself were the only four Liberals in the House who proved so much tonic to a headachy sort of day, and kept the slim House on edge and in uproarious laughter in turn."

In explanation of his measure, Progressive Leader Lethbridge admitted that there was "very little new about it"—that it was chiefly a composition of the Anderson and Rowell bills of 1914—that it was practically the same bill as Hon. Mr. Justice Raney, his predecessor, had brought down to the House at the 1927 session. Revelations during the Customs probe of distillery contributions from Montreal and British Columbia concerns; the recent Toronto Central Conservative Association appeal for "wet" funds; and the still more recently contribution exposure in Manitoba circles, in connection with the Seven Sisters Falls power development, had, he said, actuated more than anything the drafting of the bill before the House.

"All Been Guilty."

"This is no matter of one political party," said Mr. Lethbridge. "We've been all guilty of receiving."

"We fare very poorly here," interjected Liberal Leader Sinclair.

Mr. Lethbridge thought that all members of the House were of the opinion that election laws should be clean, and the administration of the same equally above board. The great body of the press, he stated, had endorsed the principle of the measure. On those grounds he appealed for a fair hearing, and the granting of second reading.

Premier Ferguson, after expressing his belief that the House would endorse the sentiment behind the moving of the bill, stated that the Conservative Party was proud of the fact that, since 1905, when it had been entrusted with the administration of the Province, there had been a new era in elections, and corrupt practices had been at a minimum.

"It's fifteen years," he said, "since this Legislature began an earnest effort to grapple with this problem successfully, and it's perhaps a bit of irony that the first man to introduce a bill of this kind—Mr. Anderson—was the first man ever to be unseated in the Province for accepting a consideration to get out of a campaign."

Publicity Best Cure.

Publicity, as The Globe stressed, declared the Prime Minister, was the best cure for the contribution evil, but it struck him rather funny that the party with which Mr. Lethbridge once had been identified had made no move in this particular direction. Mr. Ferguson referred to the "contribution" instances mentioned by the Progressive Leader, adding that the Customs probe had produced no evidence that money had been paid to any political party in Ontario. Public opinion had frowned, in this Province, on that sort of thing, and felt that it should be stamped out. While agreeing that every effort should

be made to eliminate all corrupt practices and illegal procedure in connection with elections, there was little chance, he believed, of stopping a distiller from contributing by saying the law forbids. The distiller, if he wanted to, could get around the law by contributing through some other person or in some other name.

"I think," Mr. Ferguson concluded, "that this House is in sympathy with the spirit in which the bill has been brought before us, and is desirous of purifying elections of the suspicions of corrupt practices. It should give consideration to the bill, and I suggest that the bill go to the committee dealing with the Election Act."

Doubts Results.

The Progressives applauded these remarks with enthusiasm. Then Mr. Sinclair rose and told the House that he doubted if, with the present construction of the bill, Mr. Lethbridge would get the results he hoped for. The Liberal Leader expressed his favor of discussion of the measure in committee, and continued, saying: "The Prime Minister, in view of his statements the other day, will no doubt lend his assistance to the Legislature to get the bill in the best shape to prevent anything happening—or, better, let me suggest, to prevent anything getting out. That part of it should be stressed more than the happening."

"But," Mr. Sinclair declared seriously, "this matter should be looked square in the face. Legislate as you may and define as you may, there will be ways and means by which such legislation can be evaded."

"Fifty Cents and Up."

He suggested that Mr. Lethbridge revise the clause in his bill requiring a statement of contributions of \$50 and over and make this "fifty cents and up."

"No objection," said the Progressive Leader.

"This matter," Mr. Sinclair continued, "is one of great importance. The public has been thinking on these matters, and recently they were given cause to think more. I hope that the committee will arrive at some solution better than the present legislation."

He would, he said, be glad to join with the Prime Minister in referring the bill to the committee. But he wanted to object to what he considered to be the Premier's point of view, that the Conservative Party was the only one that was free of the stigma of "contributions." There was, said he, no evidence that the Liberal Party "received funds." And, said he, in conclusion, so far as the Conservative Party was concerned, sometimes "something gets by" the Prime Minister. He referred to the Toronto Central Conservative committee incident.

Keep Premier Informed.

"I have always the Star and my honorable friend to keep me informed," Mr. Ferguson retorted jocularly.

"I knew it was happening, but I didn't expect it to be so publicly announced on the floor of the House," said Mr. Sinclair, and referred to the Premier's reading of the Central's letter to wineries and the Ferguson letter to J. R. L. Starr, K.C.

Mr. Ferguson retorted that on the Monday that the matter came up in the House, he could have given Mr. Sinclair a lot more information. In fact, said the Premier, he could have shown him copies of telegrams sent out by the Star to wineries asking if they had received letters from the Central and if and how much they had contributed.

"Probably," said Mr. Sinclair, "the Premier could tell us how much money was sent back."

"I could get the information," Mr. Ferguson smiled.

"You don't know now whether Mr. Starr obeyed your commands," said the Liberal Leader.

"Admonitions."

"Mine were not commands," the Premier was still smiling, "but admonitions."

"Well," said Mr. Sinclair, "we hope for better days. The Premier has consented to the bill going to the committee. Let us hope that legislation is evolved that is a credit to the Legislature and to the people of the Province."

Then Mr. Pinard opened his bombardment. And first he denounced the people who "don't mind coca-cola money," but "object to wet money." Then he wanted to repeat what he said in the House last year. He wanted to reiterate, said he, the words of an honorable member at Ottawa, now in the Senate, the declaration that "elections are not won by prayers."

"You ought to know," F. G. McBrien (Conservative, Toronto Brockton) interrupted Mr. Pinard, amid laughter from the Tory members.

Wants to Correct Him.

And A. C. Calder (Conservative, West Kent), saying that he understood that Mr. Pinard referred to Sir George Foster, wanted to correct him. Mr. Calder attributed the words to Andrew Blair. "Order," members protested against Mr. Calder's interruption.

"Well," Mr. Pinard retorted, "he said many a time, 'Turn on the tap and leave the oil flow.'"

"To put forth this bill," Mr. Pinard continued, vigorously, "is the greatest hypocrisy. I get subscriptions. Why we all get them. The Labor party gets them; maybe a hundred dollars from one man and then they put down a hundred names. It's the old question of whether you can check it up."

"No, no," Progressive members objected.

"I am satisfied"—Mr. Pinard ignored the interruption—"to accept money from the wets and to accept it from all quarters. Last election I had money from the wets and the dries. And if it wasn't for a personal friendship I could tell where I got the money to beat the Jew they put up against me in my municipality."

"Why Not?" He Says.

"Why not accept that kind of money?" he went on.

"Hear, hear," shouted some backbenchers on the Government side.

"Isn't it as good as the money that was salt-petered during the war?" Mr. Pinard continued. "I am not going to