

Friday - March - 1st

he reads the Treasurer's speech he will come and throw my teaching up to me, saying what the Treasurer does must be all right, because it is called 'sound financing.'

If the Government had something to show the people for its big expenditures, it might be a different story, said Mr. Nixon, but all he could see was a Government of over-officialdom; a Government of permits for this, that, and everything under the sun; a bureaucratic Government, if there ever was one.

In a brief attack on administration of various Commissions operating under the Government, Mr. Nixon cited a case of injustice from the Workmen's Compensation Board, and claimed that while the Ferguson Government took the credit for the Teachers' Superannuation Fund, it had really been launched with \$3,000,000 from the Drury Government after the Hearst Government had failed to carry along what it had conceived.

From the look of the Budget, said Mr. Nixon, one would naturally gather that instead of getting the money before spending it, the Government last year had first spent it and had then to scramble wildly about at the last minute to pick up enough cash to create a surplus. Paying back by the Public Trustee of some \$51,000 would indicate, he said, how hard pressed for funds the Administration was.

What had liquor revenue done for Ontario, asked Mr. Nixon, outside of making it "the barroom for a very large portion of the North American Continent?" "What did the people get in return for spending \$49,000,000 in booze?" he emphasized. "Well, we have our jails filled, greater loss of life in motor accidents, a trail of debauchery. It would have been far better to take the whole \$49,000,000 direct from the people."

Bootlegging and illicit home-brewing continued, he said, Court cases and drunks had greatly increased. There had been a marked jump in the sales of liquors during the last five months of the fiscal year of 1928, as compared with the corresponding period of 1927. "And what does the Liquor Board report say about it?" he asked. "This report carries the usual line of platitudes, and sermons on temperance, but what the board itself has actually done has been reduced to an irreducible minimum."

Mr. Nixon giped the Attorney-General on his attitude toward the long-discussed Provincial Officer Brien and Windsor Jockey Club cases, and said that he should furnish the House, as he had stated his willingness to do, with all the facts of these cases.

The \$2,000,000 payment by the Hydro to the Government—money put into ordinary revenue, he claimed, so that a deficit could be avoided, and the Hydro rates to "small municipalities" also came under the Brant member's fire. Small municipalities, because of their rates, found it very difficult, he contended, to compete with larger centres.

Different for the Farmer.

"A \$150 or \$160 Hydro bill a year," said he, "may not seem much to the aggregation of plutocrats on the Treasury benches, who pursue the delightful practice of summering in Europe, and wintering in Bermuda, but to the farmer who cannot get any more than 30 cents a bag for potatoes it is an entirely different matter."

Mr. Nixon strongly urged some new form of gas-tax collection, claiming that, in allowing "extremely wealthy" oil companies to collect it, as at present, the Department of Highways was simply taking money out of the taxpayers' pockets. Mr. Nixon also had a punch up his sleeve for the Minister of Highways, himself. A year ago he had brought before the House, he recalled, a case of extraordinarily large departmental payment for weed cutting. At that time the Minister had laughed his argument to silence, but this year, he said, he had taken the trouble to make inquiries, and he had found another case. This case involved, he said, the payment of \$2,004 for cutting weeds on nine and one-half miles of road—an average expenditure of \$211 per mile.

"It must be a dirty county where that happened," interjected Hon. George S. Henry.

"No, Mr. Speaker," Mr. Nixon retorted, "it's a good county, but a rotten Administration."

Opposition members greeted this shot with some of the noisiest desk-banging of the session.

Success on the Farm.

On the question of agriculture, Mr. Nixon said that it did not mean anything to have the Minister of Agriculture tell the House of the many successful farmers he knew. One might, said Mr. Nixon, just as well say that all blacksmiths were not Masseys, that all retailers were not Eatons, that all legislators, for that matter, were not Howardergusons.

Co-operative marketing was held up by the speaker as one of the great aids to the development of agriculture, and he strongly urged the Government to adopt some scheme of this kind.

Nixon Criticized.

Opening his address, Mr. Nesbitt told the House that, in the matter of Budgets, Hon. Harry C. Nixon was "hard to satisfy," and recalled former Budget addresses of the Brant member.

He observed that Mr. Nixon came to the defense of the Drury regime. Well, said Mr. Nesbitt, in law, if a man wasn't heard of in seven years, he could be declared dead. Apparently, Mr. Nixon was "staving off such a declaration in regard to the Drury Government."

Then, just before adjourning the debate, Mr. Nesbitt had a retort for Mr. Miller. He wanted to tell the financial critic of the Liberal party that the Ferguson Government had achieved a \$3,000,000 reduction in taxation.