

Feb. 12th.

LAWBREAKERS MADE OF HONEST FARMERS, SAYS HON. MR. NIXON

Provincial Government's \$2 Gun License Attacked in House by Progressive Leader as "Unfair and Vicious"—Blamed for Rabbit Plague

Strong opposition to the \$2 gun license which was made applicable by the Government last year to many sections of Western Ontario was renewed in the Legislature yesterday by Hon. Harry C. Nixon, Progressive Group Leader.

"I have been opposed to this business for years," said Mr. Nixon, "and I'll always be opposed to it. It's very unfair as a taxing bill, and it is most vicious in principle."

The Progressive Leader contended that it has made a lawbreaker out of many an honest farmer, who had merely to step off his own property to be checked up by the law, and that it had aided the jackrabbit menace immeasurably.

"Last year certainly was a good year for the rabbits," said Mr. Nixon, "and the only conclusion that I can draw is

stock and prospect could be submitted for approval—had not been established. Such an act, said the Prime Minister, would have had the effect of placing the Government's stamp of approval on stocks. "Very properly," he added, "people might say that they had put money into a stock because it had the approval and backing of Government officials." It would have been a most unwise piece of legislation, said the Premier, both for the Government and the public. For that reason it has never been adopted.

Reviews Safeguards.

Mr. Ferguson referred to the aims of the Security Frauds Prevention Act, and its restrictive power; mentioned the audits that had been instituted on the exchanges; told of Messrs. G. T. Clarkson and George Edwards, prominent chartered accountants, being called in to advise the Government in connection with the recent brokerage-house clean-up; and emphatically stated that things they had revealed in their check-up had provided sufficient information to arrest the broker against whom Mr. Sinclair claimed no action would have been taken by Queen's Park but for the instance of Ottawa.

"This man, I may tell you," said the Prime Minister, "was arrested on our own information before the Attorney-General ever received from the Ottawa authorities the name of his firm."

Mr. Ferguson stated that he did not want to detract from anything Ottawa had done in the investigation into the brokerage business, but he wished to state that action Ottawa had advised had already been taken by Ontario before that advice was received.

"So," he continued, "the honorable member from South Ontario must not rely on rumors and hearsay when he makes a statement of serious charges in this Legislature."

Steadying Effect Claimed.

Business men, the Prime Minister went on, could testify that the Security Frauds Prevention Act and its administration had a steadying effect on business here when there was the panic in New York last fall.

What had been done under the act? Well, the Premier continued, there had been warrants issued and arrests made. "But it would be unfair to convict any one in this Legislature," he observed. There had been the "drastic-action" seizure of accounts and business; but that was done to protect the public.

Moreover, Mr. Ferguson declared, the Government was consulting with the greatest experts of the New York Stock Exchange with the hope of finding methods of improving the situation and protecting the public without interfering with the efficiency of business.

Mr. Sinclair, he noted, wanted a Royal Commission. To do what? In inquiry into such a situation as the brokerage business, he observed, one affecting commerce generally, the investigation has to be held in camera, the facts discovered without publicity. He believed that the public approved and expressed its confidence in the method of procedure adopted by the Government and the Attorney-General.

"And," he declared, "I don't think any cheap suggestions of relations in business or of any other kind will affect the standing of the Attorney-General in the esteem of the people."

The Amendment.

The Liberal amendment to the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne was moved by Mr. Sinclair and seconded by Dr. George A. McQuibban (Northeast Wellington). It follows in full:

"That all the words of the Motion after the first word 'that' be struck out and the following substituted therefor:

"This House condemns the apathy, indifference and neglect of the Government to regulate and control stock transactions in the Province, and its refusal to institute a searching inquiry by way of Royal Commission into the whole system of speculation, countenanced by and carried on upon the Mining Stock Exchanges and in many brokerage houses in Ontario, notwithstanding its knowledge of existing conditions warranting such inquiry."

Even the Prairie Chicken Is Migrating to Canada

Drift of the prairie chicken from the Western Provinces and the State of Minnesota into Northern Ontario is becoming more and more noticeable. Thomas F. Sutherland, Acting Deputy Minister of Mines, who recently returned to his Queen's Park office from a visit to the Government's new lignite coal deposits at Blacksmith Rapids, on the Abitibi River, reports having seen a flock of eight of these birds in the vicinity of the mining camp.

that they must have all voted for the Government at the last election.

In more serious vein, Mr. Nixon expressed the hope that if the Government were going to leave to the store vendor alone the question of how much liquor a man might buy on his permit, it behooved the Government to exercise extreme care in the selection of their officials. The drink bill, along with the losses on the stock exchange, was seriously affecting the condition of the country as a whole.

Mr. Nixon entreated the Government, in the interests of the country, to shoulder the full maintenance costs of Provincial highways; urged them to go carefully into the milk and cream question; and expressed the belief that at present there was too great a gap in the rates between the rural and urban users of Hydro power.

With Mr. Sinclair, he agreed that the cheaper rate program outlined and promised by the Prime Minister during the last election campaign looked like a case of "buying the people with their own money." But he was quite in accord with any scheme that would extend to the housewife "tolling over her smoky lamp and hot stove" the advantages of Hydro, as long as the extension lay within the farmer's means. For that reason the group which he spoke for would do its utmost, "by way of suggestion and accommodation," to help the Government in its policy of carrying "the great asset to the rural parts of the Province."