

February 28

Lively Tilts Mark Roebuck's Review on Hydro

Attorney-General Appeals Against Persistent Inter- ruptions by Macaulay

CAUSTIC EXCHANGES

The searching and serious review and forecast of Ontario Hydro affairs, commenced in the Ontario Legislature yesterday, by Hon. Arthur W. Roebuck, Attorney-General and a member of the Hydro Commission, was not without its moments of humor and entertaining tilts between Government and Opposition members.

The Attorney-General's address was a lengthy one—requiring over two and a half hours yesterday to reach the half-way point. It was, he told the House, an address very carefully prepared and thoroughly up-to-the-minute. The balance will be delivered in the House today.

Shortly after the outset Hon. Leopold Macaulay, Minister of Highways in the Henry Administration, showed an inclination to interrupt. Mr. Roebuck appealed for an unbroken hearing, but the Conservative member from South York persisted in interruption.

"If my honorable friends on the Opposition benches had listened more in the past and had less to say they would have been better off," remarked the Attorney-General, amid laughter.

Mr. Macaulay was the object of another thrust when a map was swung from the Press Gallery which apparently he was unable to see clearly.

"I suggest," he said, "that the Attorney-General produce a map we can at least read."

"This is an economy Administra-

tion," put in Alderman J. J. Glass, Liberal.

"I am sorry," Mr. Roebuck replied. "if my honorable friend's eyes are growing weak from old age."

"I guarantee I can see more on that map than can the Attorney-General," answered Mr. Macaulay.

The speech of the Attorney-General concerned the production and sale of electrical energy, but the question of gas was introduced to the amusement of members and crowded galleries.

The Attorney-General referred to the purchase some years ago of twenty-one companies from the Sun Life Company, with a combined capacity of 22,500 horsepower. This was in connection with the Eastern Ontario system.

"There were also included in that purchase three gas plants." Laughter followed.

"I didn't know that the members of the Opposition were in need of any gas," Mr. Roebuck said.

This remark aroused Hon. G. H. Challies (Conservative, Grenville-Dundas).

"You didn't do so well in the East—what about Prince Edward?" he asked, and there was considerable commotion.

"Well," answered the Attorney-General, "it is just possible that those three gas plants so asphyxiated the electors that they did elect some Conservatives down there." (Applause and laughter.)

There was a lively exchange when the O'Brien power purchases were mentioned. "There's where Johnnie got his \$50,000," put in the Attorney-General referring to the \$50,000 payment to John Aird Jr., for his part in negotiation of this deal.

The Galette plant had been closed, Mr. Roebuck explained. This was one of the companies purchased in the O'Brien deal.

"It looks like a grist mill," was Premier Hepburn's comment.

"Yes, indeed, like a grist mill," the Attorney-General agreed.

"It's a cemetery," some one put in from the floor of the House.

"Yes, my good friend," the Attorney-General said with a broad smile, "it is a cemetery—the last resting-place of Conservative hopes."

"I think," the speaker added, "that this deal took care of a great many more people than Johnnie Aird. There were others who hid behind the skirts of poor Johnnie."