

Friday, March 11th

EDUCATION PORTFOLIO RETAINED BY PREMIER TO REACH 'OBJECTIVES'

Ferguson Answers Query Regarding Appointment of Full-Time Minister, When House in Commit- tee of Supply Passes Nearly Two Million Dol- lars in Supplementary Estimates

\$5,000 EVERY YEAR FOR ENTERTAINMENT

Premier Ferguson informed the Ontario Legislature yesterday that he intended to retain the portfolio of Minister of Education for himself until such time as "certain objectives in the educational policy of the Province" had been reached.

The House was in Committee of Supply, engaged in passing nearly two million dollars in supplementary estimates, when Hon. Harry Nixon, Progressive member for Brant County, inquired of the Prime Minister whether he proposed "to let another four years go by without appointing a full-time Minister to the job." Mr. Nixon was not inclined to be critical of Mr. Ferguson's work in that capacity, but he just wondered if the latter had been able to give to "certain small details" the close attention that a full-time Minister would have been able to furnish.

"If my honorable friend would name the details," put in Mr. Ferguson, "I would be glad to brush up a bit."

Saves \$8,000 a Year.

A moment later he stated his attitude in regard to the Education portfolio, adding pointedly that in shouldering the responsibilities of this Cabinet post he was saving the Province \$8,000 a year.

"For," he said, "I have never drawn a cent for my work in this connection, and I do not intend to."

In an hour's time yesterday the House passed supplementary estimates to the extent of \$1,845,415. These were as follows: Prime Minister's Department, \$562,500; Legislation, \$1,000; Attorney-General's Department, \$7,355; Insurance Department, \$1,000; Education Department, \$188,267; Northern Development Department, \$1,500; Mines Department, \$19,552; Game and Fisheries Department, \$62,060; Labor Department, \$169,000; Provincial Treasurer's Department, \$82,580; Provincial Secretary's Department, \$600,789; Agricultural Department, \$92,209, and Miscellaneous, \$57,600. In the absence from the House of Hon. George S. Henry, Minister of Public Works and Highways, estimates of his two departments, totalling \$1,187,345, were held over until today.

To Show Ontario's Wonders.

In the estimates for the Prime Minister's Department, provision was made for a \$5,000 expenditure on "entertainment of distinguished visitors." Mr. Ferguson referred to the visit to Toronto last summer of the British Parliamentary party, and the effort the Government had made to show these visitors some of the wonders of Niagara and the Chipewawa development: the Welland Canal; the fruit district, and sections of industrial Toronto and Hamilton.

It was the Government's intention, he added, to continue "entertainments" in future. The \$5,000 appropriation would be voted each year. With the exception of one or two cases, expenses of affairs of this sort had been paid in the past by the Ministers of his Cabinet—out of their own pockets. In future the Province would pay for them.

Teachers Unfitted.

The estimates passed almost entirely without dissent. Aurelien Belanger, Liberal member for Russell, in speaking of grants to teachers, complained that French-speaking teachers in some of the schools in his section of the Province were unfitted for their positions. Questions concerning a \$30,000 vote in aid of the Government's fish and game propagation farm in North Victoria drew a comprehensive explanation from Hon. Charles McCrea, Minister of Mines and Fisheries, as to the work being accomplished in that respect. Hon. John S. Martin, Minister of Agriculture, was also called upon to explain certain minor expenditures in his departmental estimates.

\$15 Garnishee Exemption.

Three measures passed the House in Committee. Of these the chief was the amendment to the Wages Amendment Act, which evoked lengthy discussion at second reading recently. But it passed the committee stage quickly, because the Government announced that it had been revised to meet the amendments suggested by Opposition members. These revisions, now part of the measure, make the exemption of wages for garnishee \$15 instead of \$25, and provides that there shall be no exemption for single men without dependents.

When the amendment to the Assignment of Book Debts Act was considered by committee, Attorney-General Price explained that it increased registration fees from 25 cents up to \$1, and was intended as a preliminary step for an adjustment of court officers' salaries and other changes. The measure was carried, as was also the act to revise and consolidate the Mining Law of Ontario.

Exemption From Tax.

Second reading was given to the amendment to the Provincial Land Tax Act, and an act respecting stationary and hoisting engineers. Hon. Mr. Finlayson, Minister of Lands and Forests, explained that the Land Tax Act amendment provided exemption for church properties in the payment of land tax in unorganized districts, a provision which was omitted from the original act.

Shortly after the House opened, Premier Ferguson introduced the Toronto Radial Railways Act, which confirms the agreement under which radials running into Toronto are transferred for operation from the Hydro to the city.