

Sidelights On The Legislature

Toronto, February 23, 1924. Of course it was budget week and nothing has arisen in the House subsequently to overshadow in interest and importance the new provincial treasurer's first financial statement. In point of accuracy Col. Price's report of a \$15,000,000 deficit on last fiscal year has not been seriously attacked by either Harold Fisher, Liberal critic, or Hon. Manning Doherty, leading off for the U.F.O. Mr. Fisher was critical of the treasurer's failure to detail just how expenditures were to be reduced, as promised, though he has no doubt received some light through announcements in the House, such as the prime minister's casual statement that a reduction in the official fleet of motor cars and trucks was expected to save some \$50,000. Mr. Doherty charged that the new Government had rather encouraged expenditure in the closing three months and a half of the year, but insisted at the same time that the Drury administration always paid its debts promptly. He was also reminded by Col. Price that some \$7,000,000 of hydro interest came due at the end of the year. The House was amused when Mr. Doherty, charging "window dressing," by paying all bills and discouraging revenue collections to make a bad showing in the last year of U.F.O. rule, added that it was "no new trick; it is done right along."

Mr. Fisher, though a new member of the House, made his first speech therein as financial critic of his party, and in respect to delivery and style of argument quite lived up to favorable advance notices. His attack on features of the budget was a bit discounted by the admitted fact that the member had made his acquaintance with the details of provincial politics only a few days previous. A principal point in his address, which was listened to by crowded galleries and a full House, was a proposition that the treasurer should proceed to balance his budget, raising the revenue as might be necessary. Col. Price had announced that he saw little chance of making ends meet for a couple of years, but that the Government proposed no new taxation, notwithstanding. It is evident that a practical sinking fund to retire provincial debt is not a matter for the immediate future. Some folks thought the Hon. Peter Smith had started one. He hadn't.

Readers who follow the Legislature reports will recall a formal statement by Hon. Manning Doherty more than a week ago that the U.F.O. group proposed to make protest in some form "at the opening of each day's sitting" regarding their non-recognition as official Opposition. That protest has been made with gradually diminishing force, simmering down during the week to a modest inquiry of Mr. Speaker at whether he had arrived at a decision on the petition presented, while on Friday there seems to have been



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no reminder of the matter whatsoever, unless it was whispered in "Joe" Thompson's ear. Perhaps the question is not so vital, now that it has been made clear that additional indemnity for Mr. Doherty is statutory, and that there is no intention his group shall not be recognized as "an" Opposition.

Hon. W. E. Raney, as a matter of fact, has been responsible for most of the "ructions" emanating from the group. He is a fighter by preference, and, one fancies, gets as much diversion out of Opposition status as ever he did on the Government side. Quite a lot of questions of the Government have been placed on the order paper in his name, and most of them have that disagreeable little twist of which the ex-attorney-general is master. Two such questions, which the Government regarded as political rather than bona fide requests for information, received answers from the prime minister which contained rather fewer details than Mr. Raney would have desired. He protested, and was reminded by the Speaker that no member may properly question the ministry on matters of policy, or as to what it is proposed to recommend to the lieutenant-governor.

Mr. Raney knows the rules better than most, and can quote them against other members, yet he is frequently under the necessity of making withdrawals. New members of the House have to pick up procedure as they go along. Up to the present there has been a tendency for movers of bills to get up and introduce them before the clerk has given first reading to the preceding measure. A. G. Wallis, Liberal member for Algoma introduced a bill, naming as second-er Hon. James Lyons, of Sault Ste. Marie. Since Cabinet Ministers do not sponsor private measures, Mr. Speaker promptly read the name of some other member—a Conservative, as it happened. Another new member gave as his second-er a colleague who was not at the moment in the Chamber, and once again Mr. Speaker came to the rescue by a substitution. "Before the Orders" is proving as popular a stage as ever for ventilation of grievances, but no serious loss of time has occurred on this score, because the House has more than kept up with legislation, and on Friday afternoon adjourned at 4 o'clock after dealing with all bills which had been printed.

Two committees are now at work—Standing Orders and Agriculture—both of which have met twice, and that long-suffering body, the Private Bills Committee, will get down to work early in the week, with an unusual grist of legislation to handle. The House has several times been in Committee of the Whole on public bills, and on Friday Capt. Thompson called to the chair a former Speaker of the House, Hon. Dr. Jamieson of

Grey. The sessions have been very fully attended from the beginning and chronic absentees among the members are few. With regard to last session, Public Accounts show almost the full indemnity paid, a slight reduction from the maximum beyond statutory period of Tom Magadery, then member for Temiscaming. Rumors of a bonus to sessional indemnity, current from time to time last year, are heard not at all this session. Everybody realizes that the Government has nailed the economy flag to the masthead, and that any honorable member climbing up to interfere with it would find himself in an unpleasantly conspicuous position.

Flesherton

Continued from page 3. where he conducts an extensive implement and machinery business. A mild winter, very little snow, and cars running at Nepeawa is reported. Rev. R. G. Pritchard from Vandeleur is now stationed at Nepeawa. Mr. Archie Cairns, wife and daughter, visiting here from the West, visited over the week-end with Mrs. Cairns' brother, Rev. G. S. Scott, at Holstein.

Mrs. Wilson and little daughter of Egremont, visited over the week-end with her sisters, Mrs. Paton and Miss McMillan. Mr. R. G. Holland, principal of the Public school, who has not been well recently with heart and nerve trouble, became worse on Sunday and was ordered by his doctor to rest in bed for a month. Miss McMillan, formerly principal of a Fort William school, has been engaged to supply.

A meeting of the rural school trustees of the township of Artemesia was held in the town hall here on Saturday last for the purpose of discussing rural educational problems. It was a representative meeting, there being one or more trustees from each of the 19 school sections, together with a number of ratepayers interested. Mr. Herbert Corbett was elected chairman, and Mr. Edgar Patterson secretary. Questions deemed to be of vital importance to rural schools were well discussed and that the desired ends may be better secured an organization was formed, named Artemesia Rural School Association, and the following officers were elected: President, Fred Pedlar; Vice-President, Wm. J. Blackburn; Secretary, Richard Allen, to whom will be added one trustee from each section to form the executive. The first meeting will be held in the Town Hall here on February 29, to which the O.E.A. delegates will be invited. The infant daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. Johnston, Meaford Road, was taken to Toronto last week for a blood infusion, which proved successful. The child was brought home on Saturday and is reported improving.

A village is a place where there is nothing for the old men to do but discuss their asthma.

DOGS OF THE ESKIMO HAVE A DUAL NATURE

The Eskimo dog is a strange and a singularly fascinating beastie. He makes you think of Stevenson's famous story of "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," for he is partly dog and partly wolfe, the two natures in him are always fighting, and he is forever changing from one to the other, writes Fullerton F. Waldo, in "St. Nicholas." In winter the wolves come from the inland wilderness and mingle familiarly with the dog-teams, and the task of the master is to sift out the wolves from his dogs—a task more precarious than that of dividing goats from sheep. The wolf is bigger than the dog. The wolf may be about eight feet long from the tip of his nose to the end of his tail, and a "husky" measures about six and a half feet. Except for size, there are few perceptible differences between the wolves and the dogs. Every true husky has pointed ears and slanting eyes. With a tail curved plume-wise over his back, and the color may be tawny, or it may be white-and-black.

The Eskimo dog is a stranger to most kinds of fear, but he has a vast respect for a resolute man with a stick or a stone in his hand. The dogs stand up to the polar bear, which, when cornered, is one of the fiercest creatures alive. They go into the water after the young codfish, and they stay there till they get it. Sometimes they raid the trout nets. They are wonderful swimmers and no dogs are more enthusiastic for the chase of a stick or even a stone thrown into the water. There is so much drudgery in their lives that it is distinct novelty to swim after it, just for the fun of it.

The dogs are always ready for a meal, or for a fight. It is useless to try to keep any sort of domestic animal where these dogs are, unless it, too, has learned to fight. The dogs often eat the sealskin traces by which they are attached to the sledges. No reins are used—they are guided by shouts of the driver. "Ouk, ouk!" sends them sharply to the right, and "Urrah!" to the left.

Next to eating, the joy of life for the dogs is to start for somewhere with a heavy load in their wake. Their very eyes are dancing with delight. They are like those delightful dogs in Masfield's "Reynard the Fox."

So, though their noses roved, their feet Larked and trit-trotted to the meet. "There can be no doubt that the dogs love to be driven," says Dr. Grenfell. They go perfectly wild with excitement when they are in harness. The Komatik (sledge) must be lashed to a stump or stone, and the line cut only when the driver is ready to go. The team then shoots off like an arrow from the bow."

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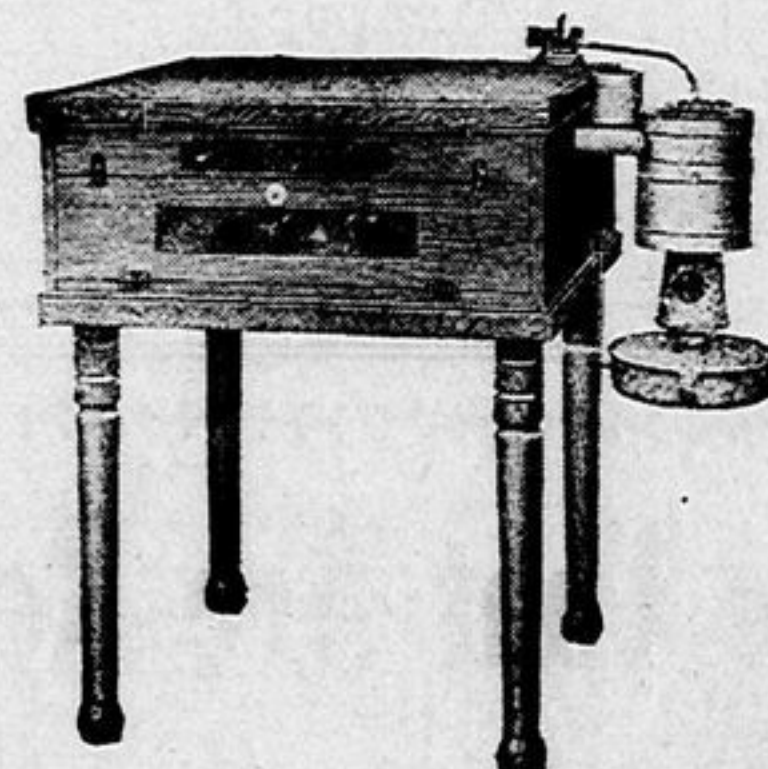
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