

LITTLE JIMMY

By Swinnerton



Last Week in the Legislature

Toronto, April 21.—The redistribution, transferable vote and "P.R." bills are all off, and election preparations are definitely on. That's the week in a nutshell. The nonstop debate inaugurated by the Conservative Opposition on Monday night ended only with Premier Drury's complete capitulation on Thursday evening and immediate withdrawal of all three bills. Even after he admitted the Government to be helpless, and surrendered accordingly, the prime minister sought to have the bills stand over, but Hon. Howard Ferguson was taking no chances and demanded a clear understanding. "Drop them now," advised J. Walter Currie, Liberal ally of Mr. Drury, and the premier complied. Leave to withdraw was formally asked just before midnight on Thursday; a few members remarked casually, "Carried," and that was the end of the debate, and of electoral readjustment for this session.

After some prodding from the Conservative leader, Mr. Drury confirmed May 4 as the objective date for dissolution, and said an election might be expected "in the latter part of June." The Conservatives have almost a continuous list of nominating conventions scheduled, and the other parties are also getting busy. Hon. Mr. Ferguson has more candidates in the field already than any other leader, and the party is entering the fray in high spirits.

"We welcome the opportunity to go to the country," Mr. Spence, said the leader in the House on Thursday and went on to inform Mr. Drury that "before you get there you will be praying for 'night or Blucher'."

It seems that Mr. Drury is not very fond of Mr. Ferguson. One of the great sorrows of the premier's life, one gathers, is that Parliamentary usage compels him to refer to the Conservative leader as "my honorable friend" or "the honorable member for Grenville." Last Saturday, just before "courtesy week" began, Mr. Drury at Milton described the group in the House as "the dregs of the leavings of the Conservative party." Having looked up the dictionary meaning of the word "dregs," Major A. W. Gray (Leeds) took occasion to reproach the premier for his harsh words. Mr. Drury retracted them "as regards some of my friends over there." There are others, evidently, for whom no words are too harsh. Later on Thursday evening he used the term "dastardly tactics" and then withdrew it. "Tyranny of talk" and "timber pirate" were other choice phrases which came to his tongue's end, and in the blow-up on Thursday everything which got that far came out. When he got through, Hon. Mr. Ferguson described the scolding as "one of the bitterest, most ill-tempered, pre-election, political harangues this House has ever listened to, vituperations without limit, most undignified and unequalled as an exhibition of ill-temper and bitterness by anything I have ever seen in public life." So ended Courtesy Week.

The primary object of the redistribution debate by the Conservatives was, of course, to kill time and force withdrawal of the bills. W. F. Nickle warned the premier early in the week that he was at their mercy because the Government had to furnish the quorum in order to prevent adjournment and the Conservatives could keep going with one speaker after another. So long as the Government failed to break the spirit of the Opposition the blockade was complete. And so it proved. But there were picturesque features from the public viewpoint. Col. John A. Currie spoke 10 hours—four on Monday and six on Thursday. He stopped rather unexpectedly at 9.35 on Thursday evening when Col. Price asked a question, turned a heavy volume on "P.R." over to the member for Parkdale and left the chamber for a rest. Col. Price at once took the floor, but was never called upon to proceed, as Welling-

ton Hay spoke and then the premier, who agreed to withdraw the obnoxious bills. The information given the House from Monday to Thursday on proportional representation would have made a fine handbook if there had been a Hansard staff in the House.

Major Lewis leaned heavily on the Encyclopaedia Britannica. He started in at the reign of Edward I. and finished somewhere about the time of Elizabeth. It was a heavy volume and a Liberal member suggested facetiously that the member for Northeast Toronto be allowed to sit down himself and read it. Hon. H.C. Nixon suggested further that he read it to himself. While Col. Currie was quoting from a huge book the report of the British commission on "P.R.," J. A. Pinard, Liberal member for East Ottawa, complained that the gallant member for Southeast Toronto was speaking with his back toward him. The colonel turned about and in a few minutes Mr. Pinard had moved into the Conservative section, behind Col. Currie, from whence he made the same complaint. This time he was ignored.

The suggestion has been made openly that Premier Drury did not desire redistribution any more than anyone else, except it were on his own terms, and with the transferable vote and "P.R." hooked on. The latter, Hon. Howard Ferguson charged, was designed to "hamstring" the Conservative party in Toronto. In any event the premier earned suspicion by withholding the measure until the 54th day of the session, notwithstanding the fact, as since brought out, that much preliminary work had been done by the law clerks, and the complicated bills were quite obviously drafted long before their sudden introduction to the House immediately after the announcement of impending dissolution. It must not be overlooked that Mr. Drury had repeatedly been urged in the press and in the House to take action toward redistribution, but he had consistently refused even an announcement and the general impression had naturally got abroad that there was to be nothing doing. Then, after the bills were brought in, and a committee proposed, the premier saddled the latter in advance with a suggestion for a four-unit system of representation, discriminating against Toronto in particular, and against other large urban centres in favor of the rural. The proposition appeared to the Conservatives as impossible and unjust and hence their successful effort to block the whole thing.

Hon. Howard Ferguson put it this way in the House: "We not only blocked an attempt to obliterate the Conservative party, but preserved for the people the opportunity of having better representation in the Legislature. It was the only constitutional method and I have no apology to make for it. If the prime minister feels he cannot put things through the House, it is his duty to go to the people and let them decide whether we are right or he is right, and we will be content. (Applause). When you get on the hustings, Mr. Prime Minister and Mr. Attorney-General, you will have a tremendous task convincing fair-minded people that you had the slightest idea of doing justice to the electorate or working out fair and well-considered redistribution when you introduced legislation at such a time.

The premier's attitude toward post-election coalition, expressed at Milton last Saturday in defiance of The Farmers' Sun, was amplified during the week by a statement given to the press. Mr. Drury counts that day lost whose low-descending sun sees no official statement finished or begun. This one was explanatory. What he really meant at Milton was that if returned in the election at the head of a minority group, which nevertheless turns out to be strongest numerically, he

would accept co-operation from elsewhere in the House and attempt to form a Government. As the premier took occasion at Milton to say that he could not co-operate with the Conservatives, about one guess will be sufficient to locate the party he means.

U. F. O. members affect to believe that the Conservatives had something to do with Andrew Hicks' bombshell, or at least knew of it in advance. Evidence of this feeling caused Hon. Howard Ferguson to say in the House on Thursday: "I am informed that the member for South Huron was formerly a strong Liberal. I never had 15 minutes' conversation with him in my life. But when you drove him by your betrayal, as he said, Mr. Prime Minister, of the organization you misrepresent to the province to-day, when you drove him to make these exposures, what was there left for you and the attorney-general to do but try to treat them with ridicule?" In view of the fact that the former whip's status in his home riding has been a matter of some comment. It may be stated that Mr. Hicks has received and is still receiving large numbers of letters from constituents containing comment of a most favorable nature. Repudiation of Mr. Drury as leader, as result of the South Huron member's conviction that the premier was dicker for a Liberal coalition, either before or after election, is evidently approved by a majority of Mr. Hicks' supporters.

Glenroadin.

(Our own correspondent.) We are all glad to welcome the warm spring weather. Sickness is very prevalent in the neighborhood, nearly every house being affected in some way. Mr. Byron Tyndall has returned to the city after spending a year in the neighborhood. Mr. Joseph Davison and Teddy Middleton spent a couple of weeks in Toronto. Joe is engaged with Mr. James Heslip for the spring season. Mr. Kenneth Vaughan is putting the crop in for Mrs. R. Banks as Mr. John Boyd is unable to discharge his duties.

WHERE CORN OR SUNFLOWERS GIVE LARGEST YIELDS

(Experimental Farms Note.)

Corn has given larger yields of silage on the Central Experimental Farm, Ottawa, during the last two years, than have sunflowers. It is apparent from these results, therefore, that there is no reason yet why sunflowers should be substituted for corn in parts of Canada which have a climate as suitable to corn as that at Ottawa. Inasmuch as Ottawa is situated in the northern part of what is usually called "Old Ontario," it is fair to presume that in all of Old Ontario, corn would be superior to sunflowers. In parts of Quebec also which have a similar climate corn would be superior to sunflowers. There is no object in growing sunflowers for silage in these districts because nothing would be gained either in quality of feed or in yield of crop.

On the other hand, in the cooler regions of Canada, sunflowers are distinctly superior to corn. In Northern Ontario and Northern Quebec, on the Dominion Experimental Farms at Kapuskasing and La Ferme sunflowers have proved much more successful than corn. In fact, in these regions, it is a mistake to attempt to grow corn. In Eastern Quebec at Lennoxville and Ste.

Anne de la Pocatiere, sunflowers have also proved more satisfactory than corn. Corn requires hot weather to make satisfactory growth, while sunflowers, on the other hand, will grow well in a much cooler temperature. In regions where corn cannot be depended upon every year to produce a satisfactory crop, it would seem wise to grow a proportion of the acreage in sunflowers.

It is interesting to note that while sunflowers often make a much taller growth than corn and produce a greater weight of green material, the amount of dry matter they contain is less. For example, at Ottawa in 1922, sunflowers yielded 25.2 tons per acre while, under similar conditions, corn yielded only 17.6 tons. However, the corn contained 22.6 per cent. of dry matter while the sunflowers contained only 15.3 per cent., making a dry matter weight per acre of corn of 4.2 tons and of sunflowers 4.1 tons. The sunflower crop stood thirteen feet in height in marked contrast to the corn, which was about ten feet; to the eye the sunflowers appeared a much heavier crop but, in reality, they contained less dry matter per acre.

Unlike corn, sunflowers cannot be fed economically as dry fodder.

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If there is no silo on the farm this crop cannot be grown for forage. In regions where it is preferable to grow sunflowers for silage the most suitable variety is the Giant Russian. The best results have been secured by planting with a grain drill in rows thirty-six to forty-two inches apart and thinning the plants to from eight to ten inches apart in the row.

The difference between "precious little thing and 'little brat'" is that you use "little brat" when its mother isn't present.

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