

### Forest Wealth Will Be Much Better Protected Under New Legislation

THE promised bill for the protection of Ontario's forest wealth from fire was introduced into the Legislature by Hon. G. Howard Ferguson and has been adopted in principle. The occasion did not pass, however, without some remarks by captious Liberals, who never lose an opportunity to howl about "patronage." But this time they howled too long, for it gave the Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines an opportunity of stating to the House just what has actually taken place in Ontario under the administration of the present Government.

Speaking of the inside service, Mr. Ferguson said that there were fifty-six employees in his department, thirty of whom were appointees of the late Government. Since the present Government had assumed office he said that only two employees had been removed, and that for "good and sufficient reasons." With regard to the fire ranging and woods service, he declared, that not in one instance had he ever inquired the political feelings of an applicant, but rather his height, weight, and physical fitness for the work, and what experience he had had. Similarly the superintendent in each district in Northern Ontario had all been retained in their positions, except one who had since died.

In explaining the provisions of the legislation, Mr. Ferguson said that a Provincial Forester, Mr. G. A. Zavitz, would have charge of the bureau, and he, by the way, is a son-in-law of the late Minister of Agriculture, Hon. John Dryden, who would have power to control the burning of slash, etc., by settlers and woodsmen, and also to step in and clear slash and debris that constituted a fire menace around settlements. The right would also be given municipalities to clear danger spots near their borders, and would co-operate with the lumber companies, so that the great natural heritage in the north would not be further dissipated by fire.

Step by step Ontario is advancing in social legislation. Two years ago the Workmen's Compensation Act was passed, which has since become the model for all countries adopting this proper and wise scheme for the protection of human life and energy. The eight-hour day has been given to miners; factory and shop legislation has been greatly improved, and a fortnight ago the Prime Minister announced the extension of the franchise to women. More recently the Minister of Education introduced a measure to provide pensions for school teachers, and immediately upon the introduction of that bill a deputation from the educational profession from all over the Province met the Cabinet and applauded the action of the Government.

The Bill provides for a contribution by the teachers of 2 1/2 per cent of their salaries, and a similar amount will be provided by the Government. The scale of pensions will range from \$350 per year to \$1,000. Provision is made for retirement after twenty-three, and forty years of service, and, in the case of sickness and disability after fifteen years. It is also arranged for those who leave the service after contributing to the fund for six years that they may withdraw all they have paid in. This is to meet the cases of those, mostly young women, who leave teaching to get married. It is expected that the amount immediately available for the fund will be \$475,000, and will meet many cases of teachers who for years have been anxious to retire into private life. To guard against the experience of other pension schemes, that have collapsed after a few years, this scheme has been considered by an expert actuary, and the bill requires the fund to be revised by an actuary every three years, so that all concerned may be advised as to its stability.

From all sides the Government was complimented upon this legislation, and it was agreed that there was no diminution in the steady line of progress that the present Government was making, following the lines laid down by Sir James Whitney. Bringing into concrete form the promise that the Government would institute a system of provincial highways, extending from the southwestern corner of the Province to the Quebec boundary, Hon. F. G. McDiarmid, Minister of Public Works and Highways, brought down legislation authorizing this to be done. The bill gives power to the Cabinet to lay out such a system of highways under proclamation, after filing plans of the roads to be taken over in the local registry offices. For the portion of these roads running through local municipalities, the Province will pay 70 per cent. of the cost, and the local municipalities 30 per cent. In cases where the road traverses a suburban area, defined under the Highway Improvement Act, the Province will pay 40 per cent., the cities (that is the municipality defining the suburban area) 30 per cent., and the local municipalities 30 per cent. Where it is necessary to allot the cost in this ratio a clause in the bill provides for a general reference to the Ontario Railway and Municipal Board, where all parties interested may be heard and an equitable adjustment made.

#### Record Jumpers.

The beings that can leap the greatest distance are found to be among insects—the flea and grasshopper. The former can hop over an obstacle 500 times its height, which is the same as if a man could hop over a mountain 3,000 feet high. A grasshopper can jump 200 times its length. How tall are you? Four feet? Well, if you were a grasshopper you could leap 800 feet.

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#### In Arctic Siberia.

"Among the strange and little-known peoples dwelling in remote and trackless regions of the far North are the primitive native races of Arctic Siberia. Their vast habitat extends from the extreme corner of north-eastern Asia, for thousands of miles inland and along the Arctic Ocean. Two of these peoples, the Yakuts and Koryaks, are especially interesting.

"The Yakuts are the largest and most cultured of all the primitive races of Siberia. They live in the great province of Yakutsk, a territory five times larger than that of Texas together with all the New England States. The extreme northern part of their country is the coldest region on earth, the temperature falling to eighty and ninety degrees below zero. Here the soil is eternally frozen for hundreds of feet below the surface; even at the height of summer, only a yard of unfrozen soil veils the admixture of earth and ice, affording foothold for the gray tundra-moss and occasional patches of grass and dwarf willow.

"The natives live in yurts, or semi-underground huts, and a few one-story log-cottages, as do the Russian administrative officials. For ten months the country is a dreary, trackless sea of driven snow, with far lower temperatures than the regions about the north and south poles. During the brief summer thaw of two months, the tundra, as the open country is called, is an impassable swamp.

"The Yakuts are the most numerous tribe of eastern Siberia, numbering some 250,000, and are typical representatives of the culture of the Turkish tribes of Central Asia. In spite of their present isolation from the other branches of the Turkish race and their probable mixture with Mongols and others, the Yakuts, in the course of their migrations, have preserved one of the oldest and purest dialects of the language spoken by the Kirghiz, the Tartars, and other Turkish peoples."

#### Ship Scuttlers Failed.

FLORENCE, S.C., March 12.—Eight officers of the German steamship Liebenfels, sunk in Charleston harbor the night of January 31 last, Saturday were sentenced to a year in the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary and to pay a fine of \$500 each. They were convicted Saturday of sinking a vessel in a navigable stream, in violation of the navigation laws. Bond was fixed at \$6,000 in each case, which the defendants were not immediately able to give. While efforts were being made to arrange for bonds, the prisoners were kept in the Federal Court House under guard. The defence gave notice of an appeal. Nine officers of the vessel were indicted, but as Captain Klatschhoff was ill in Charleston his case was postponed.

The Government charged that the men not only opened the Liebenfels' sea cocks, causing her to sink, but that they wrecked the machinery and opened the wireless plant officially sealed by United States officers.

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### Controversy Now Kaging

#### Round Lord John Fisher

#### England's Naval Genius

ONE result of the remarkable interim report on the Dardanelles campaign will undoubtedly be to renew the clamor for the return of Lord Fisher to the Admiralty. Ever since his resignation Lord Fisher's friends have been working with might and main to reinstate him, on the plea that he is the greatest naval strategist in England and the only man capable of dealing with the submarine menace.

This belief seems to be founded, in so far as it has any foundation, on the tradition that the failure of the submarine campaign of 1915 was due entirely to Lord Fisher's genius and energy. Only the other day a Member of Parliament, at one time Civil Lord of the Admiralty, predicted that in three months' time, "when people's belts were tightening," popular pressure would force the government to take him back, and prayerfully adjured them to take him now, when he could be had on easy terms.

The complaint of these ardent partisans has always been that Lord Fisher was scandalously treated when the failure of the Dardanelles enterprise had been demonstrated,



LORD JOHN FISHER

and now that it appears clearly that he never approved of the methods adopted, that he was from the first a more or less active opponent of those methods, they will, of course, be more than ever zealous to increase his power and authority.

"But, after all, even his enemies never believed that Lord Fisher was responsible for the experiment so boldly defended by Mr. Winston Churchill on the occasion of his resignation. They never really believed that the attacks which resulted in the fruitless sacrifice of ships and men were conceived by Lord Fisher or that Mr. Churchill's amazing attempt to justify his course reflected the opinion of his naval adviser. 'We had seen,' said Mr. Churchill, 'great fortresses, reputed to be the strongest in Europe, collapsing, fort by fort, under five or ten shells from 15-inch howitzers. Here was the Queen Elizabeth, with eight 15-inch guns on the broadside,' and so forth. No one supposed that this absurd comparison was conceived by Lord Fisher, or, indeed, that he ever could have countenanced Mr. Churchill's wild gamble.

The real complaint against Lord Fisher is that he tacitly consented to the scheme. His critics hold that he ought to have resigned when his advice was overruled and not afterward, when the disastrous consequences had already been achieved. The truth appears to be that he did offer to resign, but 'reluctantly yielded to Lord Kitchener's entreaty and resumed his seat.' Be that as it may, it is evident that his attitude was throughout too passive, and that in effect he allowed Mr. Churchill to carry out what he obviously objected to—a purely naval attack, which he knew to be full of danger and wholly unjustifiable. If he had stuck to his well founded opinion and refused absolutely to allow the adventure his associates would hardly have dared to pursue it further. That is the probable reason why no change is being made in the organization of the Admiralty in spite of the steady clamor of Lord Fisher's friends. That he is a naval genius, no one denies, but he is not any more infallible than other men.

#### Town to Aid Gardening.

With the idea of inducing citizens generally to aid in food production, Mayor C. W. Hoare, of Walkerville, is urging residents of the town to utilize all available vacant land in the town. The facilities of the corporation, such as horses and plows, will be available for those who desire to make use of them. A nominal charge will be made to those able to pay. Any citizens unable to do so will have the use of the teams free, and in addition will be supplied with free potatoes. The plan promises to meet with instant favor.

#### His Morning Run.

"I missed my regular morning exercise this morning."  
"How was that?"  
"The seven thirty-five was late, and I didn't have to run for it."  
Tit-Bits.



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## F. C. McDIARMID Local Representative

#### The Wrong Language.

In 1909 there were 6,000,000 people speaking English—a smaller number than spoke Italian, Spanish, German or French. To-day there are 120,000,000 English-speaking people—about double the aggregate of those who speak either Italian, Spanish or French, and fifty per cent. more than the number of those who speak German or Russian.

The sixth German war loan was reported to have been a failure.

Poice Chief McLennan of Vancouver and a small boy were killed in a battle with a negro dope fiend named Bob Tait Detective John Cameron and Constable Johnson were wounded, the former seriously, and Tait killed himself after being wounded.

Bonar Law is likely to be mediator on the Irish question.

Hon. P. E. Blondin has resigned his position as Postmaster-General in order, to serve in the overseas forces.

Herbert G. Wilson, a Winnipeg lawyer, has been appointed Commissioner to administer the workmen's compensation act in Manitoba, at a salary of \$7,500.

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