

KAPUSKASING DEBATE IN LEGISLATURE ENDS

H. H. Dewart Replies to Hon. G. H. Ferguson—Declares Colony a Scandal.

Debate on conditions at Kapuskasing was wound up in the Legislature last night, when the House carried Major Tolmie's motion, as amended by Premier Drury, calling for adoption of the commissioners' report, but giving the Government power to make necessary modifications.

H. H. Dewart and Premier Drury spoke in the debate during the evening. The former passed strong censure upon the colony, and replied to criticisms directed against him by Hon. G. H. Ferguson, with whom he clashed several times during the evening. Premier Drury defended the commission, and expressed hope that the Government's policy with regard to the colony might be productive of beneficial results.

Ferguson's Crack of Doom.

Mr. Dewart, who had a good reception, said Mr. Ferguson's speech might be his swan song in the House. "The crack of doom is impending so far as he is concerned," said the Liberal leader. "He fears the impending trial in the election court."

Mr. Dewart said he had no apology to make to the people for having introduced the question into the discussion during the last political campaign, and as to the charge that he had been discussing it with a political motive, he did not know any higher motive that a man could have than in endeavoring to lay bare the fault of the last administration, and in endeavoring to show how matters should be remedied in the interests of the soldiers.

Having made a mistake why would not the former Minister of Lands, Forests and Mines realize he had made a mistake. Mr. Dewart alluded to the investigations made by Hon. Mr. Carmichael, the commission and others, and said the whole trend of the investigations came to the same point, the same result—that conditions were there of such a character that they needed a remedy and it was a case in regard to which the Government had to deal. The member for Grenville had endeavored to draw a curtain over **Kapuskasing**, endeavored to discuss Northern Ontario, as if anybody was attacking Northern Ontario or its future possibilities. Mr. Dewart said this formerly paternal Government did not have the right idea with reference to the place in which to locate these men.

"Absolute Lie," Says Ferguson.

Mr. Dewart read a communication from one of the settlers named Lowe, which led to a lively incident. Just before the 1917 election, the communication said, Hon. Mr. Ferguson told the settlers he was going to give them three months holidays in the summer and they could go and cut pulp-wood and would be paid the same and get a bonus as well.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson: "I want to say emphatically it is an absolute lie."

Mr. Dewart continued to read, and it was further stated Mr. Ferguson, his brother, and Hon. Frank Cochran were at another meeting. Hon. Mr. Ferguson, it was asserted, told the men their votes were needed and that just before Christmas they would get ten days' leave and their fare to Toronto with pay.

Hon. Mr. Ferguson interjected that in 1917 the member for South-West Toronto did not go for the soldiers.

Mr. Dewart retorted that he had always supported anything for recruiting and in the interest of the returned soldier. In 1917 he urged upon the House the necessity of the Provincial Legislature, asking the Dominion Parliament to see that the Militia Act was put into force. "I do not take off my hat to my friend in advocating what is in the interest of the soldier," declared Mr. Dewart, amid applause, "and I stand where my friend don't stand in the esteem of the soldiers in the Dominion. When men have fought and served as these men have, and when they have found candidates such as they have described, and when they laid the blame on a man who undertook to adopt the autocratic spirit of his master, I say so far as these matters are concerned I propose to take their word."

The speaker declared he believed **Kapuskasing** should be done away with as a soldier's settlement. It had been a costly failure, but it was sometimes better to pay the cost than to carry on an unprofitable venture.

A Just Report, Says Premier.

"I quite agree with seven-eighths of what has been said by my honorable friend from Grenville," observed Premier Drury, whereat the Conservative benches applauded, until the Premier added: "But that did not relate to Kapuskasing."

Dealing with Mr. Ferguson's charge t

that a stenographer's report had not been taken of the evidence at Kapuskasing, Mr. Drury admitted that the evidence had not been taken verbatim. It had been condensed. But, declared the Premier, there was no reason to believe the condensation had been other than just and accurate.

"The chairman of the commission took notes on the evidence and read them over to every witness before the latter signed them," stated H. H. Dewart.

"If anyone gave a black eye to North Ontario" the Premier continued "it was surely the man who devised and carried out the scheme. The whole scheme was badly conceived and worse carried out. We have done our duty in a manner to win the confidence of the settlers. They were not being treated as men. To-night, in pursuance of our policy, they are holding a meeting in Kapuskasing, to select one of their number to act with two other men, on a board of adjustment. This, I am sure, will give better results than any policy of vicious benevolent despotism."

Total Cost \$,000,000.

"We hold that the country owes that much to the individuals there" Mr. Drury went on "We will come before the House in a day or two, and ask leave to spend the necessary money, and I believe we will get it. The scheme, no matter how we may polish it, no matter how rhetorical we may grow, has been an absolute failure. It has cost the country \$857,000, and will cost nigh a million before we are finally-clear of it. For that amount each man on the colony would have been given a farm in old Ontario, where he would have neighbors near at hand to help him.