

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 8, 1921.

# DRURY ADVISES ALL INTERESTS TO TAKE LOSS

Only Solution for Unemployment  
is Undamming  
Trade

HOT DEBATE IN HOUSE

Biggs Says Relief is Mis-  
handled—Refuses to  
Withdraw Charge

Industrial unemployment, with its correlatives of dole systems and distress, occupied the entire attention of the Legislature yesterday. Resumption of the formal debate was set aside while members of all groups addressed themselves to the emergent question introduced by the statement of Hon. Manning Doherty upon British immigration.

Faced on all sides with requests to "do something at once," Premier Drury expressed his grave concern at the state of affairs in urban centres and invited the co-operation of all groups in formulating any scheme that might help to relieve the situation.

"The problem has given the Government serious concern," said the Premier, "and we regret exceedingly the extent of unemployment. There are some who think the Government has nothing to do but create work. That is not true. The credit of Ontario is not unlimited. Two millions per month is being spent on the Chippawa scheme alone—a very considerable expenditure—which is helping a large number of men. I am convinced, however, that with all the work the Government might plan it could not do enough to wipe out the unemployment situation.

#### Commercial Stagnation.

"That situation is the result of commercial stagnation. The longer we hold up the stream the more unemployment and the greater depression."

Producers and dealers in many

lines, the Premier declared, had taken their profits during a time of rising prices, and it was in the public interest that men who had so done should now take their share of loss. The farmer had done and still was doing this. Why should not all do their share?

"I think it would be a good thing if the influence of this House could be used to undam the channels of trade," continued Hon. Mr. Drury. "There is no unemployment in rural districts, though farmers are getting less for their products. If prices of other products were cut in half there would be no unemployment in other lines of industry either. I am convinced that if we could go ahead to-morrow and borrow twenty-five million dollars for immediate expenditure on public works we could not wipe out unemployment."

#### Relief Mishandled.

That much of the present "relief" had been mishandled was alleged by Hon. F. C. Biggs, who stated that some were receiving relief who had no need of help, while others actually had given up employment to secure financial assistance. In some cases, the Minister stated, assistance given had been bartered for gain. These remarks were taken exception to by several members, including Colonels Price and Cooper, who thought they saw in them a reflection upon the Relief Officer of Toronto, Sergt.-Major Crighton.

"I want the Minister to withdraw that charge," declared Col. Cooper.

"I don't intend to withdraw it; I'd sooner substantiate it," was the warm retort of the Minister, who

denied that he had had in mind Toronto officials. "I don't even know Mr. Crighton," he declared. "The point I want to bring out is that the system of handling the situation is improper." Earlier in the discussion the Minister of Public Works had stated that "the sooner the cities hand out work tickets instead of money the sooner will it cope with the situation."

Colonel W. H. Price thought the "blanket charge" by the Minister a very serious one, and hoped it would be investigated. The member for Parkdale made a strong plea on behalf of unemployed ex-soldiers, in which he was backed up by Major Lewis, Northeast Toronto, who delivered his maiden address during the afternoon's discussion.

#### Policy of Immigration.

Hon. Manning Doherty explained the Ontario Government's immigration policy to be one of encouragement to British tenant farmers. Only 66 immigrants, he said, had come to Ontario during November, December and January—all British and all experienced farmers. He believed when spring operations opened the Province could absorb thousands of such immigrants. There was not a single unemployed man in Toronto, he said, who had been brought out by the Ontario Government.

Hon. Howard Ferguson pressed for immediate action of some sort. Could not the Government proceed with the erection of much-needed office accommodation? he asked. If work were given to even 100 men four or five hundred people would benefit.

To this suggestion the Premier replied that present wants had been met by the rental of the old Knox College. "Moreover," he said, "our capital expenditure now is so tremendous and borrowings on account of the Chippawa scheme so enormous—"

"The fellows who are starving don't think of these things," replied the Leader of the Conservatives.

"No, nor does the Opposition have to accept the responsibility. We have to think very seriously about it," returned the Premier.

#### Dewart on His Feet.

Instantly Mr. Dewart was on his feet.

"I want to remark," he began, "that the economical running of this Province is as much the concern of this Opposition as it is of the Government. I want to ask here if the Government has rented two flats on Sheppard street for \$10,000?"

"I'll answer that," came from Hon. Mr. Biggs. "It is not true; we haven't rented a foot on Sheppard street."

Hon. Walter Rollo's contribution