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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY,

TORONTO, February 14th, 1922.

Tuesday, 3 o'clock p. m.

This being the first day of the Third Session of the Fifteenth Legislature of Ontario, for the Despatch of Business, pursuant to a Proclamation of His Honour HENRY COCKSHUTT, Lieutenant-Governor of our Province of Ontario, and the House having met;

His Honour entered the House; and having taken his seat on the Throne, was pleased to open the Session by the following gracious Speech:

Mr. Speaker and Gentlemen of the Legislative Assembly:

In welcoming you to your Legislative labours, I desire to join with you in an expression of gratitude to Almighty God for the blessings we have enjoyed during the past year, both in material respects, and in those influences which make for the moral and social welfare of the community.

It is my privilege to-day to address the Members of this Assembly for the first time in my official capacity, and to express the pleasure it affords me to greet you as representatives of the people of this Province in Parliament assembled. I desire to take advantage of this occasion to refer to the passing of my distinguished predecessor, the late Mr. Lionel Herbert Clarke, and to pay a tribute to his personal worth and to his valuable public services. For years his time and energies were freely devoted to the advancement of useful public undertakings, and his administration of the office of Lieutenant-Governor contributed in many ways to the promotion of worthy objects, which endeared him to all classes and sections of the community.

Since last Session the Dominion of Canada has extended a hearty welcome to Baron Byng of Vimy as Governor-General, and to Lady Byng. In this welcome the Province of Ontario has cordially participated. It is a matter of pride

to our people that a citizen, who has served the State so well in war, represents the Sovereign in this Dominion in times of peace and security.

The special claims of agriculture, as our basic industry and source of prosperity, have not been lost sight of by the Government. Adverse climatic conditions and the deflation of the prices of farm products made the past year a trying one for this important industry. I am glad to know, however, that the prospect for the coming year is much more satisfactory. My Ministers feel that the future of agriculture requires the development of further plans for the marketing of farm products. The organizations for the selling of fruit are meeting with success, and other plans along similar lines will be developed during the present Session. The rural credit system created by the Legislation of last Session gives promise of beneficial results. Good service has been rendered through extended local classes for agricultural instruction, and the results justify the application of the principle in a more comprehensive way in future.

Much consideration has been given to the unemployment question by my Ministers, and by an Advisory Committee appointed some months ago. As a result of these deliberations the Government has undertaken to encourage employment by a plan whereby the Province will contribute to the extra cost of works initiated by the municipalities for relief purposes, the Dominion and local authorities also sharing the expense. In addition, the Province has agreed to contribute to the cost of supplying food and materials urgently required to relieve distress and privation. Realising that a speedy return to normal conditions could best be brought about by such voluntary action as would lower the cost of living and bring the prices of commodities within the reach of the consumers, the Advisory Committee undertook certain appeals to the public from which it is believed results are being obtained. The signs of reviving business activity, encourage the hope that the necessity for relief measures will disappear in the near future.