

15-Gun Salute In Queen's Park Marks New Era

Liberal House Meets for
First Time in 30
Years

HISTORY IN MAKING

THE heart of Liberal Ontario was warmed for the first time in thirty years by the echo of fifteen guns which boomed across Queen's Park yesterday.

Heard Over Radio.

For the past three decades their intermittent roar has been a doleful sound—a monotonous announcement that once again Conservative legislators were in complete command of a session about to be opened by the Lieutenant-Governor of Ontario.

Thirty years ago the bursts of heavy artillery were truly an echo—reverberating through the newsprint columns. Yesterday they shook the timbers in the homes on the back concessions. Radio receivers in remote sections of the Province thundered the advent of a Liberal Administration in Ontario.

Pages of Ontario's history were turned back at the opening of the nineteenth Legislature. There was no mistaking the voice of those fifteen guns. The affairs of the Province had been definitely wrested from the hands of Conservative forces—a party which gathered full momentum under the Administration of James Whitney in 1905. The Conservative Party was welded into a powerful machine to dominate, with the exception of the four years of the Drury regime, for twenty-six years. Its grip on Ontario was broken eight months ago when an aroused electorate returned Liberals to power in one of the greatest land-slides in the history of the Province.

Liberals' First Rise.

It is a far cry over the years to the formal opening of the last Liberal Administration. It was opened on March 10, 1903, under the Premiership of George W. Ross, and ended a continuous series of Liberal Administrations which had been in power for thirty-two years. Liberals first rose to power in Ontario in 1871 when the Administration of John Sandfield Macdonald was defeated.

The true Conservatism of the Macdonald Government is not admitted by all. He was called to form an Administration immediately following Confederation in 1867. Of the complexion of this regime an authoritative history says that it assumed "more and more a Conservative character."

With the downfall of this Government Liberals rose to power, and the Province was served for about thirty-four years by four distinguished Prime Ministers. Hon. Edward Blake headed the first Liberal Administra-

tion in 1871. He was succeeded the following year by Sir Oliver Mowat, whose Administration endured for twenty-four years. Then came the Hon. A. S. Hardy in 1896, and about three years later Hon. George W. Ross.

History Repeats.

Sir Oliver Mowat continued to serve Ontario for many years following his retirement as Premier. He was Ontario's Lieutenant-Governor at the opening of the Legislature in 1903. Ill health, however, prevented Sir Oliver from performing his State duty, and his place was taken on the Throne by Chief Justice Moss, who had been sworn in as Administrator of the Province for the occasion. James Whitney was Leader of the Opposition, and it was on his shoulders fell the duty in 1905 of forming a Conservative Administration.

Yesterday at Queen's Park history repeated, and the Hon. Mitchell F. Hepburn, the youngest Premier in Ontario's history—37 years of age—took his place in the Legislative Chamber, a vigorous apostle of Liberalism, who honors the memory of distinguished Leaders of the party whose place he has taken.