

March 17

COST OF LIVING WILL BE LOWER, DR. ROBB THINKS

Government Then Would Be Paying More to Hospitals

NEW ACT IS EXPLAINED

Expectation that the index of living costs would come down was expressed by Hon. Dr. J. M. Robb, Minister of Health, in explaining the new Hospital Act in the Legislature yesterday. By maintaining grants at the present level, the Government would actually be paying a greater proportion of the cost of hospitalization if, as Dr. Robb hoped, the index of the cost of living came down.

The act was given a second reading yesterday and will probably come in for thorough discussion of its forty-two sections in committee. Referring to the provisions which enable the Government to regulate hospitals, Dr. Robb disclaimed any intention on the part of the Administration to disrupt hospital organization by interference. Heretofore there had been no provision for the Government setting up regulations. He felt that as the large individual contributor to the hospital the Government should enjoy the power.

Agreements Must Be Fair.

Three main considerations in hospitalization, he said, were the patient, the Government and municipalities which helped pay, and the hospital. Agreements between municipalities and hospitals would have to get the approval of the Government, the Minister explained. There had been several instances of agreements which were unfair to one side or the other, some municipalities being required to pay as high as \$4 a day for indigent patients.

The Government, he continued, had not seen its way clear to adopt the recommendation of the Ross Commission that the entire cost of hospitalization should be paid for on the basis of one-third by the Province and two-thirds by the municipalities. Some hospitals have the cost of indigent patients running up as high as \$8 a day. The Ontario Hospital Association was now opposed to this proposal, Dr. Robb added.

Astounding Statement True.

"There was an astounding statement in the Ross report which investigation proved to be true, namely, that one-third of the paying patients paid three-quarters of the entire cost of running hospitals," said Dr. Robb. "Thus, the man of moderate means is being asked to pay more than his share." The Minister referred to the large number of indigent patients and babies of indigent parents getting treatment at the Toronto General Hospital.

"These were looked after gratuitously by the medical profession," he explained, amid desk-thumping. He added a speculation that at some future date an arrangement which would remove the unfairness of expecting physicians to contribute their services gratuitously might be reached. Five hundred and seventy-six cancer cases had received free treatment last year at this hospital.

Dr. Robb approached his explanation of the act with an outline of the growth of hospitalization from early times to the present. Explaining the Government and municipal grants, he said that the establishment of most hospitals was due to local effort and individual generosity. Since the war, however, heavy taxes had tended to dry up the streams of individual philanthropy in this respect.

Grey Vest in Portrait Is Mrs. Ferguson's Victory

In Newest Addition to Premiers' Gallery, "Fergie" Is Portrayed in Pale-Hued Waistcoat Which He Never Wore, Despite His Wife's Pleadings

Perseverance has prevailed, and Mrs. G. Howard Ferguson, has, according to reports, won a notable victory.

Kenneth Forbes's painting of Ontario's former Prime Minister was hung, yesterday, in the Premiers' gallery at Queen's Park. It is a notable likeness of Kemptville's favorite son, down from the likeable little smirk that was singularly his, to the legs-apart stance he adopted when engaging in serious conversation, or scoring the Opposition in the Legislature. All day long, yesterday, the main corridor at the Parliament Buildings was thronged with people passing comment on the painting.

"Remarkable likeness," ran the usual remark, "but—" The "buts" all had to do with the waistcoat which Mr. Forbes had painted upon Mr. Ferguson.

"Nobody ever saw 'Fergie' wear a grey vest," the commentators would say, and in that grey waistcoat—the kind that "Fergie" never wore—lies the story (so rumor has it) of Mrs. Ferguson's triumph.

Repeatedly the wife of the former head of Ontario's Government would urge her husband to don a grey waistcoat, but the latter would turn aside the requests with a smiling "Some other time, maybe, but not now!" Mrs. Ferguson is said to have patiently bided her chance, and the chance came last January when they set sail for their new home in old London. At that time Mr. Forbes, the artist, had

New Gavel Comes From Kingston

Hon. T. A. Kidd, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, was presented with a new gavel of historic associations by Premier Henry at yesterday's sitting of the Legislature.

"Through the courtesy of Hon. W. F. Nickle, former Attorney-General, I wish to present you, Mr. Speaker, with this gavel," said Premier Henry. "The gavel is made from a beam of the first Parliament Buildings in Canada, located at Kingston. Since you, Mr. Speaker, come from that city, I think it especially fitting that I should present it to you, as a symbol of added authority, if any additional authority were needed in this House."

"When it is wielded with authority it cannot help but inspire awe in the honorable members," said William E. N. Sinclair, "since the gavel itself comes from Kingston."

only completed Mr. Ferguson's face for his painting.

In view of the fact that he could not have the Premier himself for further sittings, he took, so it is reported, the next best step, and asked the Ferguson household for specimens of the clothes Mr. Ferguson was most accustomed to wear. The garments arrived at the studio, directed there, it is said, by Mrs. Ferguson's patient hand. Mr. Forbes used them for the completion of the portrait; and that is why the picture which now hangs in the Premiers' gallery at the Buildings—in the most prominent position of all—depicts Mr. Ferguson with a grey waistcoat—"the kind he never wore."

If there is any explanation forthcoming, it will have to come, one would imagine, from Mrs. Ferguson.