

# Guardianship of Quints To Continue 17 Years

## Bill Before Legislature to Make Babies Wards of Crown Through Wel- fare Minister

**O**LIVA DIONNE, as a spectator in the Ontario Legislative Chamber yesterday, witnessed the introduction of a bill which declares that for the next seventeen years his famous quintuplet daughters shall be wards of his Majesty the King, through the Ontario Minister of Public Welfare.

### Permanent Guardians.

The bill, unique in Legislature history, empowers the Cabinet to appoint a permanent Board of Guardians, including the father of the five babies, with complete power over the finances, education and well-being of the children until they reach the age of 18 years, and stipulates that the children shall be reared as Roman Catholics—the faith of their father.

The rights and interests of Dr. Allan Roy Dafeo, who brought the quintuplets into the world at Callander on May 29 last year, are fully protected. He is given special authority whether or not he is named as one of the guardians.

The Government measure deals a death blow to the possibility of exploiting the famous babies. The Minister of Welfare, to whom the guardians shall be responsible, is given full power to prevent interference with, or removal of, the children without his consent. He will have control of the quintuplets' money, holding it in trust until they reach their majority; also power to approve or disapprove any contracts or agreements made in respect to the children.

It is believed that the bill will outlaw the \$1,000,000 suit instituted against Mr. and Mrs. Dionne by the Chicago Worlds Fair management as it stipulates that, while contracts entered into by the old guardians are confirmed, those which did not receive their approval "are null and void and incapable of performance, and may not be sued upon in any court."

The Minister of Welfare is authorized to suspend one or all of the guardians at any time and authorizes the Cabinet to replace any or all of the guardians. The guardians appointed are authorized to act on a majority vote and constitutes them as a continuing body notwithstanding the death of any members. This, it is pointed out, would overcome any legal difficulties which would otherwise ensue.

### Explanatory Note.

The explanatory note attached to the bill reads in part: "At common law the King is the protector of all his subjects and all infants are his wards. At law the father is the natural and lawful guardian of his infant children, but under the public statutes the natural rights of a parent may be taken away if the circumstances warrant. In all matters pertaining to infants, both the existing statutes and the courts consider the welfare of the infants of paramount importance and any natural rights of parents or guardians must give way thereto.

"The public interest and the welfare of the Dionne babies demanded soon after their birth that every effort be made to prevent improper exploitation of the babies, and to this end a special temporary guardianship was created by direct intervention of the Government, which has worked to the advantage and protection of the quintuplets.

"Now that these babies are progressing in health, well-being and age through the constant care and attention which they have received, the opportunities and advantage for exploitation increase, and it is essential to cope with the situation which thus

develops by some special and permanent guardianship control.

"The circumstances require novel treatment, and existing legislation and jurisdiction of the courts is inadequate for the purpose. To ensure that the future welfare of the persons and estates of these internationally famous infants may be safeguarded, special legislation of the character set forth in this bill is deemed requisite. As far as is possible in such a set of circumstances, the natural rights of the parents will be observed and protected, and due consideration will establish that such natural rights can best be protected by the provision of adequate guardianship control, so that the fate of the babies is not permitted by one specious means or another to pass from the hands of the parents."

## Premier No Bicyclist

### Never Said He'd Ride One to Queen's Park

**P**REMIER MITCHELL F. HEPBURN has no intention of riding a bicycle to Queen's Park—never intimated he would, despite what his opponents in the House say—and doubts very much if he could stay right-side up if he did attempt to ride one.

The Premier trusts now that the bicycle talk is ended for good. It cropped up in the Ontario Legislature again yesterday when a bill was introduced requiring all bicycles and tricycles to carry a bell, horn or siren as do motor cars.

"Is that the bicycle the Premier says he is going to use?" asked the Hon. Leopold Macaulay from the Opposition benches.

The Premier grinned and then jumped to his feet.

"I'm going to put the House right about the bicycle talk," he commenced. "Some time ago I was criticizing the past Government for the cost incurred in operating expensive motor cars. I contrasted the splendor of today with the days when Sir James Whitney rode to Queen's Park on a bicycle. I never said I would ride a bicycle to the Buildings and I doubt if I could even ride one."

So the bicycle incident apparently closed, amid laughter.