

Sidesteps Amendments To Compensation Act

Overriding several suggestions and one amendment introduced by the C.C.F. Opposition, the Legislature yesterday passed the revised Workmen's Compensation Act through committee stage and reported it for third reading.

An amendment was turned down which would have removed the two-year stipulation on exposure to silica dust to claim compensation for silica poisoning.

Another amendment was refused which concerned the seven-day period which must elapse before claiming compensation for inability to work. It was proposed to make no stipulated time.

Labor Minister Charles Daley said the Government would not entertain such an amendment since such a change would require expenditure of a great deal of money. There must be some time in which an injury preventing a person from working could be established.

"Human beings are much more important than money," said Mrs. Rae Luckock (C.C.F., Bracondale). "This means a lot to the working-man."

It was contended by C. H. Millard (C.C.F., York West) that the admission by the Minister that the change would cost a considerable sum of money indicated that numerous persons would be able to make application under the proposed rule.

Also passed in committee stage were the Government bills providing for two-platoon systems in all established fire stations in municipalities of more than 10,000 population; changes in the Fire Marshal's regulations, giving him wider powers; a change in the Municipal Act providing for Provincial policing of municipalities where requested, and amalgamation of regulations concerning registration of guests in hotels.

The Apprenticeship Act went through committee with an amendment suggested by J. B. Salsberg (L. P., Toronto-St. Andrew) that application for designation of apprentice groups be received from 20 instead of 25 per cent of employees.

PROTEST FAILS TO HALT MOVE IN OPTOMETRY

Over the protest of ex-Premier Mitchell F. Hepburn, who charged that the Government was fulfilling a campaign promise by bringing in legislation not in the public interest, the Legislature last night gave second reading to an Optometry Act amendment.

Mr. Hepburn read a letter which, he said, was signed by George Drew last July 29, shortly before the general election, promising legislation to the optometrists, and asking that they support the Progressive Conservative Party in the forthcoming election. The letter referred to the "intolerable treatment" accorded the profession by the former Liberal Government.

Larger Board Personnel.

The amendment, standing in the name of Dana Porter (P.C., Toronto-St. George) increases the board of examiners in optometry from three to five members, defines "disgraceful conduct" on the part of members and regulates the advertising of spectacles and eye glasses and the prices and terms of purchase contained in such advertisements.

Mr. Hepburn claimed that the bill was an attempt to restore a racket in optometry, and that there was no clamor from the public for this kind of legislation. The Government of which he was the head put an end to abuses in 1937, and as a result of legislation brought the price of the best glasses to within reach of the average person.

"It is very easy to argue about the dangers of giving special privilege to any group," said Premier Drew.

Risks Also Possible.

"It is also easy to go to the other extreme and permit risks to people's eyesight. I believe the more a special skill is given opportunity to develop the more likely the public will benefit. The Government is in a position to ensure control, and I prefer to believe that those who are in the profession of optometry are desirous of gaining the long-range benefits by establishing sound practice."