

Supply—Veterans Affairs

temporary after this length of time? Why is there such a large number of them in that category?

Mr. Gregg: Apart from a comparatively small group who work in the office, the remainder comprise those who serve in the thirty odd hospitals across the country, doctors and nurses under term employment. Only a few are permanent civil servants; the great number of them are temporary employees, orderlies, drivers, kitchen help and so on.

Mr. Harkness: Do I understand that these people are going to remain temporary employees, or the great majority of them, most of your doctors, nurses, kitchen orderlies, cooks, drivers and so forth?

Mr. Gregg: As I said a short time ago the doctors are, in the main, on a part-time basis. The nursing sisters are what we call term appointments. They are appointed for a period of time which may be renewed. I think it is fair to state that a large proportion of the non-professional assistance in a hospital will remain temporary, but I think some positions may become permanent.

Mr. Harkness: What is the reason for that? If a person is there as a cook, and there are cooks on the permanent list, what is the idea behind keeping these people on a temporary basis?

Mr. Gregg: Mr. Chairman, the whole hospital organization, as my hon. friend well knows, because it applies to what he said last night about construction, is only about four years old. Most of the construction and development programs for hospitals started after the war. I think the reason why so many are temporary, that is the serving staff, the cooks and so on, is that the superintendent has not yet made up his mind whether he would like to have the person as a permanent employee. He would like to try some out a little bit longer.

Mr. Harkness: The general effect of the estimates being in this form, and all of these people not being permanent, is that 90 per cent of the people employed all come under one item. The other employees are listed. We find there are 49 hospital nurses grade 3; 87 cleaners and helpers; so many hospital cooks grades 5, 4, 3 and 2; but 90 per cent of the employees in this particular branch are found in one item, and one does not know what they are. You have no idea what the break-down is or anything else. It does not seem to me that it makes for the best provision for examining estimates when they are in that form.

Mr. Fulton: Will the minister tell me what was spent in "travelling expenses, patients and escorts," last year.

[Mr. Harkness.]

Mr. Gregg: \$336,000.

Mr. Fulton: What is the meaning of the item, "loss of wages, patients and escorts?"

Mr. Gregg: As far as the pensioner patient is concerned, if he were employed and called in for examination, he is recouped for the loss of wages on the day or days that he might be in.

Mr. Harkness: This item of medical education research, \$300,000, is, I know, a new item. What is the purpose of that? What sort of medical education is going to be carried on? What kind of research?

Mr. Gregg: I wonder if my hon. friend would permit me to bring in a statement on that matter later. I should be glad to do so.

Mr. Harkness: Very well.

Mr. Fulton: I have one other question. What is the amount that was spent last year for light and power?

Mr. Gregg: The total for all our institutions was \$284,000.

Mr. Harkness: There is another item here, "Less:-Amount recoverable for treatment of patients not the responsibility of the departments, etc." I wonder if the minister would tell us how much was received. Last year it was estimated that \$1,500,000 would be secured. I should like the minister to tell us just how much they actually received under that item, and what proportion of this money it is estimated will come from veterans who are able to pay and who are taken into veterans hospitals for treatment on a paying basis; also where the rest of it comes from.

Mr. Gregg: The amount recovered last year was \$2,568,000 instead of \$1,500,000.

Mr. Harkness: A million more than you estimated?

Mr. Gregg: Yes. As was pointed out last year on my estimates, most of this money comes from other government departments, mainly the Department of National Defence and the R.C.M.P. Very few, unless it is a case of emergency, in the past year have come from individual veterans. During this year of course there will be the revenue from the 12-D class.

Mr. Harkness: What about this matter of the amount? Is there any amount in there which it is estimated you are going to recover from veterans who are in hospitals on a paying basis?

Mr. Gregg: No. The amount we have estimated here, \$2,450,000, is the amount we anticipate from the comparable sources of revenue last year. There may be some adjustment in that in the supplementary