

APPENDIX.

PROPOSED ALTERATIONS AND AMENDMENTS OF THE STANDING ORDERS OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Proposed new Standing Orders, to follow No. 25:—

25A. If at any time both the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees shall be absent, the House, upon being informed of the fact by the Clerk at the table, may call upon any Member to take the Chair of the House as Acting-Speaker during the absence of the Speaker.

25B. When, in pursuance of either of the two last-preceding Orders, the Deputy-Speaker or an Acting-Speaker performs the duties and exercises the authority of Speaker, every act done and proceeding taken in or by the House shall be as valid and effectual as if the Speaker himself had been in the chair.

NOTE.—25A. There is at present no provision for the possible contingency of the absence at one time of both the Speaker and the Chairman of Committees. The Speaker submits that the contingency should be provided for.

25B. There is provision to this effect in the Standing Orders of the Legislative Council, and it would be well to make the like provision in the case of the House while the Standing Orders are under review.

To omit Standing Order No. 29 and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

29. Mr. Speaker reports that the House had this day attended the Governor (or had been in the Council Chamber at the desire of the Commissioners for opening Parliament), and that His Excellency was pleased to make a Speech to both Houses of Parliament (or that the Commissioners had made a Speech to both Houses of Parliament), of which Mr. Speaker says he had, for greater accuracy, obtained a copy, which he *lays upon the Table* of the House.

To omit Standing Orders 30, 31, and 32, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

30. The said Speech having been laid upon the Table, Notice of Motion for an Address to the Governor is given.

31. The Address to His Excellency conveys the thanks of the House for His Excellency's most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament at the opening of the session, and is moved in the form in which it is proposed to be presented to His Excellency, but is not necessarily a reply to His Excellency's Speech, paragraph by paragraph, and the House agrees to the same with or without amendment.

NOTE.—Alterations in procedure in relation to the Governor's Speech and the Address in Reply:—

(29.) The only change is the proposed substitution of the words in italics—viz., *lays upon the Table* of for the words READS TO, which occur in the present Standing Order, the object being to avoid the waste of time consequent upon a formality the necessity for which has long ceased to exist.

(30.) The change herein is merely such as to bring it into conformity with the amended form of No. 29.

(31.) *New Standing Order in lieu of present Orders Nos. 31 and 32:* This proposes to do away with the present formality of a Committee to prepare an Address (which has been already prepared), and admits of the Address itself being greatly shortened.

A similar proposal will be found among the amendments of which notice was given by Sir H. A. Atkinson in May, 1888, but which never came on for discussion.

To omit Standing Order No. 51 and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

51. *Upon days on which Government business has precedence*, no Order of the Day or Notice of Motion shall be called on after half after Twelve o'clock at night.

NOTE.—The present 12.30 rule has latterly led to great loss of time on private members' nights, on which only is it made use of for "talking-out" purposes. The words in italics represent the proposed alteration of the existing Standing Order.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 69:—

69A. Private Members' Motions and Bills shall take precedence of all Government Orders, and Orders in charge of members of the Government, on Wednesdays and Thursdays; unless the House shall, under Standing Order No. 400, agree to the suspension of this Order, and direct that certain specified business, or that Government business generally, shall take precedence on any particular Wednesday or Thursday, or on all Wednesdays or Thursdays, or both, as the case may be.

NOTE.—This is at present the practice of the House, but it is not sufficiently specifically defined in Standing Order No. 69 (except as to precedence of Government business on Tuesdays and Fridays), and it would be well to make the rule as explicit as possible.

To omit Standing Order 71, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

71. The House proceeds each day with *business in the following order*: 1. Private business; 2. Public Petitions; 3. Giving Notices of Motion; 4. Motions for Leave of Absence; 5. Presentation of Papers; 6. Reports of Select Committees; 7. Questions; 8. Unopposed Motions for Returns; 9. Leave to introduce Bills; 10. Orders of the Day and Notices of Motion, in the order in which they are set down in the Order Paper.

To omit Standing Order 72, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

72. Notice of any Question to Ministers or other Members shall be given, in writing only, to the Clerk of the House or the Clerk-Assistant, so that at least one clear day shall intervene between the day on which such notice is given and the day upon which the answer is desired; and no Question shall be put without notice, except Questions relating to the course and arrangement of public business, or to a matter of immediate urgency,