

1892.
NEW ZEALAND.

STANDING ORDERS COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE).

Brought up on Thursday, the 28th day of July, 1892, and ordered to be printed.

THE Standing Orders Committee have the honour to report that it is in their opinion expedient, with a view to facilitating the despatch of the business of the House, that the various amendments of the Standing Orders set out in detail as an appendix to this report should be made.

Some of these amendments are directed to the discontinuance of obsolete forms of procedure, others to reconciling the text of the Standing Orders with what has become the accepted practice of the House, others to remedying abuses which have grown up, and, generally, all of them to the economizing of the time of Parliament.

Explanatory footnotes are added to the proposals following, which will enable honourable members readily to apprehend the reasons for those proposals respectively.

In presenting these suggestions the present Committee desire to call attention to the fact that a report presented last session (second session of 1891) was never dealt with, and that although, in 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, 1885, 1886, 1887, and 1888, the Committees of those years submitted proposals in the same direction, time has never been found to take them into consideration.

They therefore respectfully submit that, in view of the repeated recommendations made over so long a series of years, it is highly desirable that the matter of the amendment of the Standing Orders should be taken up by the Government, with a view to the determination of the House thereupon being obtained.

The Committee also desire to point out that the terms of Standing Order No. 401, as at present framed, operate to prevent any reform whatever, however desirable; and they are of opinion that a Bill should be passed declaring that any Standing Order may be amended or repealed, and any new Standing Order adopted, upon motion, of which notice extending over at least four sitting days shall have been given, provided that it shall be necessary that such proposal shall, if a division be demanded, be voted for by a number equal to an absolute majority of the whole number of members then in attendance on Parliament.

28th July, 1892.

WM. J. STEWARD,
Chairman.

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,

upon the permission of Mr. Speaker, given either forthwith or, if he think fit, after notice thereof has been submitted to him in writing.

To omit Standing Order 73, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

73. Questions and the replies thereto are not to contain argument, nor are any facts to be stated beyond what are necessary to elucidate such Questions and replies.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 76:—

76A. If, in contravention of the preceding Order, any Member shall give more than one Notice at one and the same time, all such Notices, except the one first given, shall be placed at the foot of the list of Notices for the day for which they are given.

NOTE.—It sometimes happens that the rule laid down in Standing Order No. 76 is broken, it not being always possible at Notice-time to detect the fact that a member is reading more Notices than one. The proposed new Order will provide for the contingency.

To amend Standing Order No. 92 so that it shall read as follows:—

92. A Question may be superseded: (1) By the adjournment of the House, either on the Motion of a Member "That this House do now adjourn," or on notice being taken, and it appearing, that a quorum is not present; (2) by a Motion "That the Orders of the Day be now read," which Motion, however, is restricted to days on which Motions have precedence of Orders of the Day; (3) by the Previous Question carried in the negative form; and (4) by Amendment.

And to insert the following new Standing Orders, to follow No. 92:—

92A. The Previous Question, either in the Affirmative or Negative, viz., "That the Question be now put," or "That the Question be not now put," may be moved upon any Question before the House, whether an Original Question or a proposed Amendment thereof, or upon both in succession. If the Previous Question in the Affirmative be carried, then the Amendment or Original Question, as the case may be, is to be put forthwith without any amendment or debate. If the Previous Question in the Negative be carried, then the Original Question (and the proposed Amendment thereof if any) drops, and can only be revived upon notice given for a future day. If the Previous Question moved in either form be negatived, then the debate will proceed upon the Question before the House; or the Previous Question in the alternative form may be proposed without any Motion or other procedure necessarily intervening. If the Previous Question in both forms be successively moved and lost, it cannot be moved again in either form upon the same Question until a future day.

92B. The Previous Question in the negative form cannot be moved upon a Motion of supersession or postponement, i.e., upon a Motion for the adjournment of the House (unless a substantive Motion), for the Adjournment of the Debate, or for the reading of the Orders of the Day, or upon a Motion for any stage of a Bill, for consideration of the Report of any Committee, or for the postponement of any proceeding.

92c. When the Previous Question is moved, he Speaker or Chairman, if it shall appear to

him that the subject has been adequately discussed, shall call upon Members supporting that motion to rise in their places, and, if ten or more Members shall so rise, then the Motion for the Previous Question shall be forthwith put without any amendment, debate, or adjournment, and unless ten or more Members shall so rise the motion for the Previous Question shall not be put.

NOTE A.—The House of Commons has recently adopted the negative form of the Previous Question, because it is generally moved with the object of preventing the Original Question from being put. This obviates the anomaly of the mover and seconder of a Motion, "That the Question be now put," being appointed as tellers against that Motion. But it has the disadvantage that, if the Previous Question in the negative be lost, then the Original Question has to be put without the House having affirmed that it should be so put. Obviously the better course would be to provide, as suggested, that the Previous Question may be proposed either in the Affirmative or in the Negative, every possible contingency being provided for in the proposed new Standing Order.

NOTE B.—It will be observed also that the above Standing Orders would enable ten or more Members, with the concurrence of the Speaker or Chairman, to require the sense of the House to be taken at any time as to whether the Original Question should or should not be forthwith put to the vote.

To amend Standing Order No. 94 by omitting the words "and also the Previous Question."

NOTE.—This is an alteration consequential upon the adoption of Nos. 92A, 92B, and 92c.

To adopt the following new Standing Orders, to follow No. 94:—

94A. No Motion for the adjournment of the House shall be made before the Questions have been disposed of.

94B. When brought forward as a substantive Motion at an interval in the proceedings, the adjournment of the House can only be moved either—

- (1) For the purpose of terminating the sitting, in which case the Motion may prescribe the time to which the adjournment is to be made, or
- (2) For the purpose of discussing a definite matter, in which case the discussion must be kept closely to the definite point raised:

Provided that when the Adjournment of the House is moved immediately after the Questions have been disposed of and before any other business has been entered upon, the subject-matter of any Question which has been put at that sitting, or of any reply which has been given thereto, may be debated upon such Motion for the Adjournment.

94c. When the adjournment of the House is moved during a proceeding, with a view to supersede the Question then before the House, the debate must be confined to the Question of adjournment.

94d. No Member who shall have moved or seconded a Motion for the Adjournment of the Debate or of the House, or for the Previous Question or Orders of the Day, during any debate shall be entitled to move or second any similar Motion during the same debate.

94e. If Mr. Speaker shall be of opinion that a Motion for the adjournment of a Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or (when the House is in Committee) if the Chairman is of opinion that a Motion that the Chairman do report progress or do leave the Chair, is an abuse of the Rules of the House, the

Speaker or Chairman (as the case may be) may require ten members to rise in their places to support the Motion, and failing ten Members so rising such motion shall not be put.

NOTE.—In nearly all Legislatures during recent years it has been found that the privilege of moving the adjournment of the House has been availed of to an extent which seriously impedes business, and new rules have been adopted by the House of Commons dealing with this subject. The foregoing suggestions, without going nearly so far as the new rules referred to, will, it is submitted, while preserving the privilege, prevent its abuse. *Similar provisions were included in the proposals of Sir H. A. Atkinson in May, 1888.*

Proposed addition to Standing Order No. 95:—

11. By the Previous Question being moved; provided that the Previous Question may not be moved while a Member is addressing the House, unless such Member shall have been speaking for an hour or more than an hour

To adopt the following new Standing Order, to follow No. 99:—

99A. When after the doors have been locked for a Division upon a Motion for the adjournment of a Debate, or of the House during any Debate, or that the Chairman of a Committee do report progress or do leave the Chair, the decision of Mr. Speaker or the Chairman that the "Ayes" or "Noes" have it is challenged, Mr. Speaker or the Chairman may call upon the members challenging it to rise in their places, and, if they be less than seven in a House of twenty members or upwards, he may forthwith declare the determination of the House or of the Committee. The names of such challenging members shall be recorded if required.

NOTE.—This is a modification of No. 4 of the New Rules of the House of Commons (1882), and is intended to avoid the loss of time consequent upon the taking of unnecessary Divisions.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 127:—

127A. The right to quote or comment upon speeches of the same debate includes that of quoting from the *Hansard* report of such speeches, but not from advance slips, unless such slips shall have been supplied to Members generally.

NOTE.—The above is in accordance with the ruling of the Chair, and it would be as well that it should have a place among the Standing Orders.

To amend Standing Order No. 165 so as to read as follows:—

165. No motion for the Previous Question in the negative form can be made in Committee.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 138:—

138A. Whenever any Member shall have been named by the Speaker, or by the Chairman of a Committee of the whole House, immediately after the commission of the offence of disregarding the authority of the Chair, or of abusing the Rules of the House by persistently and wilfully obstructing the business of the House, or otherwise, then, if the offence has been committed by such Member in the House, the Speaker shall forthwith put the Question, on a Motion being made, no Amendment, Adjournment, or Debate being allowed, "That such Member be suspended from the

service of the House;" and, if the offence has been committed in a Committee of the whole House, the Chairman shall, on a Motion being made, put the same Question in a similar way, and if the Motion is carried shall forthwith suspend the proceedings of the Committee and report the circumstance to the House; and the Speaker shall thereupon put the same Question, without Amendment, Adjournment, or Debate, as if the offence had been committed in the House itself. If any Member be suspended under this Order, his suspension on the first occasion shall continue for not exceeding one week, on the second occasion for not exceeding a fortnight, and on the third, or any subsequent occasion, for not exceeding a month: Provided always that suspension from the service of the House shall not exempt the Member so suspended from serving on any Committee for the consideration of a Private Bill to which he may have been appointed before his suspension: Provided also that not more than one Member shall be named at the same time, unless several Members, present together, have jointly disregarded the authority of the Chair: Provided always that nothing in this Resolution shall be taken to deprive the House of the power of proceeding against any Member according to ancient usages.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 166:—

166A. In Committee of the whole House, when more Members than one rise to address the Committee, the Chairman shall give precedence to a Member (if such shall have risen) who has not previously spoken to the question before the Committee.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 175:—

175A. When a Motion is made "That the Chairman do report progress" or "do leave the Chair," the debate thereupon shall be confined to the matter of such Motion.

NOTE.—The above is taken from No. 3 of the new rules of the House of Commons.

To amend Standing Order No. 178 by substituting the word nine for the word ten.

NOTE.—This will make the maximum number of a Select Committee nine instead of ten as at present.

To omit Standing Order No. 193 and substitute the following in lieu thereof:—

193. The Chairman of a Select Committee shall have a deliberative as well as a casting vote.

To omit Standing Order No. 288 and substitute the following in lieu thereof:—

288. Every Bill (except as before) is ordered to be prepared and brought in by a member, or members, named by the House.

NOTE.—The words in italics are new, and are necessary to bring the Standing Order into conformity with the practice of the House.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 291:—

291A. All proceedings in the House upon any Bill so referred shall be suspended until the Committee shall have reported thereon.

To omit Standing Orders Nos. 293 and 294.

NOTE.—Corresponds with the proposal of Sir H. A. Atkinson in 1888, and aims at the abolition of an antiquated and cumbrous procedure—namely, that of having to introduce in Committee of the Whole Bills relating to religion or trade.

To omit Standing Order No. 297 and substitute the following in lieu thereof:—

297. A Bill is presented by *the member*, or one of the members, ordered to prepare and bring in the same, and such member is desired by Mr. Speaker to bring it up.

NOTE.—The words in italics are necessary to bring the Standing Order into conformity with the practice of the House; and for the same reason the words “who appears at the bar for that purpose,” occurring in the existing Standing Order, are proposed to be omitted.

To omit Standing Order No. 311 and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

311. In Committee on a Bill, the Preamble stands postponed without question put until after the clauses have been considered *seriatim*.

NOTE.—This proposal corresponds with the procedure of the House of Commons, and is obviously the most convenient course.

To omit Standing Order No. 329 and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

329. After the third reading, and further proceedings thereon, if any, the Title of the Bill is agreed to, or amended and agreed to, and this having been done the Bill has passed.

NOTE.—This, as in the Legislative Council, omits the formal question “That this Bill do pass.”

To omit Standing Order No. 331 and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

331. On days on which Private Members’ business has precedence, Private Members’ Bills coming back with amendments from the Legislative Council shall take precedence of Bills standing for the third reading, Bills for third reading of Bills for report, Bills for report of Bills for Committal, Bills for Committal of Bills for further consideration in Committee, and Bills for further consideration in Committee of Bills for second reading. When committed together Bills for further consideration in Committee shall take precedence in Committee of Bills for the first time committed.

NOTE.—This somewhat extends the classification under the existing order of corresponding number, which was introduced a few years ago with great advantage to the despatch of business. A somewhat similar proposal was included in Sir H. A. Atkinson’s resolutions of 1888.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 331:—

331A. Private Members’ dropped Orders shall be set down upon the Order Paper next after the Orders upon Private Members’ Bills set down for the day, and shall be arranged in the following order of sequence: viz., (1) Bills for committal; (2) Bills for further consideration in Committee; (3) Second readings.

NOTE.—The object of the foregoing is, it will be seen, to extend the rule contained in 331 to dropped Orders, and thus give precedence to Bills the principle of which has been already affirmed by the House.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 337:—

337A. In case of the absence or illness of the Clerk of Parliaments the Clerk of the House of Representatives shall perform his duties during such absence or illness.

NOTE.—Recommended by Standing Orders Committee in Report of 9th December, 1887.

To omit Standing Order No. 339 and substitute the following in lieu thereof:—

339. Amendments made by the Council in

Public Bills are ordered to be considered on a future day, unless the House shall order them to be considered forthwith. They are then agreed to, or agreed to with amendments, or disagreed to, or the further consideration thereof is put off for three or six months.

NOTE.—The proposed new Standing Order differs from the old Order by omitting the words “twice read and,” the alteration being in conformity with the practice of the House.

To substitute the following for Standing Order No. 350:—

350. Local Bills are those which, not being Private Bills, affect only one locality or certain specified localities, that is to say, a particular borough or boroughs, county or counties, district or districts, or other part or parts of the colony: Provided that when a Bill applies to or deals with all matters *ejusdem generis* throughout the colony (*e.g.*, all harbours) it shall be and be deemed to be a Public Bill.

NOTE.—The rulings from the Chair have hitherto been that a Bill ceases to be a Local Bill if it deal with more than one locality; and it is suggested that the foregoing specific provision is necessary.

To amend Standing Order No. 351 by inserting the words shown in italics:—

351. No Local Bill shall be read a second time unless notice shall have been given of the said Bill in the locality or localities to which the Bill refers; such notice shall state explicitly the object which such Bill is intended to effect, and shall have been published once at least in each of three successive weeks before the second reading in some newspaper or newspapers *published in the locality and each of the localities to which the Bill relates, or, if there be no such newspaper, then in a newspaper or newspapers circulating in such locality or localities.*

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 352:—

352A. If there be more Resident Magistrates’ Courthouses than one situated within the district in which the Bill is to have operation, then the Bill is to be deposited at that one of such Courthouses which is nearest to the centre of such district.

To omit Standing Orders 356 and 357, and insert the following in lieu thereof:—

356. There shall be appointed at the commencement of every session a Committee on Local Bills, consisting of ten members, to which all Local Bills shall stand referred after they have been read a first time. If the Standing Orders on Local Bills have been complied with, the Committee may report to the House on the merits of the Bill, and if, in their opinion, the Bill should be allowed to proceed, may make such amendments (if necessary) as they may think desirable. Every member in charge of a Local Bill shall, *ipso facto*, be a member of the Committee while his Bill is under consideration, whether he be nominated of the Committee or not. The procedure in such Committee shall be the same as in a Select Committee, unless the House shall otherwise order: Provided that strangers shall be admitted, except when the Committee shall order them to withdraw. Provided also that any notice of amendment relating to any Bill which may be committed to the said Committee, given by any member in the

House, shall stand referred to such Committee, and such member shall be entitled to be heard by such Committee in support thereof.

356A. The Committee on Local Bills shall have power to confer or sit as a Joint Committee with any similar Committee appointed by the Legislative Council.

357. All Bills which have been committed to the Committee on Local Bills, when reported to the House, shall, if the Committee report that the Bill should be allowed to proceed, be set down for second reading on a future day, not being earlier than two clear days after the presentation of the report of the Committee, but may not be read a second time until after they shall have been reprinted showing any amendments therein; and Local Bills that have been read a second time shall be set down for third reading on a future day, unless the House shall order that they be read a third time forthwith, or that they be committed to a Committee of the Whole.

357A. Unopposed Local Bills shall be placed at the head of the list of Local Bills on the Order Paper, and Bills shall be treated as unopposed against which no notice of opposition has been lodged with the Clerk of the House by Five of the clock on the day preceding that fixed for the consideration of the Bill; and if no such notice be given, then no debate shall be permitted at that stage of the Bill.

NOTE.—356, 356A, 357, 357A. These proposals, relating to Local Bills, are almost identical with those of Sir H. A. Atkinson in 1888, and, it is believed, contain some very desirable improvements upon the present procedure.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 359 :—

359A. In the event of a Local Bill introduced in any session, and in regard to which the Local Bills Committee shall have reported that the Standing Orders have been complied with, failing to be finally dealt with during such session, then such Bill may be reintroduced during the next succeeding session, and the notices, advertisements, and deposits issued, published, and made in compliance with the Standing Orders relating to Local Bills prior to or during the first-mentioned session shall be good and effectual in respect of such Bill, as if they had been issued, published, and made immediately before or during such succeeding session: Provided, however, that if it be intended to reintroduce such Bill during the next succeeding session a notice of such intention shall be advertised in not less than two issues of some newspaper published in the district within which such Bill is to have operation, or, if there be no such newspaper, then in some newspaper circulating therein.

Proposed new Standing Orders, to follow No. 359A :—

359B. Any Bill for consolidating or codifying the law, or any branch thereof, may be referred, after it shall have been read a second time, to a Committee—to be called the Law Revision Committee—consisting of not less than fifteen nor more than twenty Members, to consider and report upon the same.

359C. It shall be the duty of such Committee to see that, in respect of such provisions

of the Bill as purport merely to re-enact and consolidate the existing law, the true intent, meaning, and effect thereof is not in any way changed, altered, or varied; but the Committee shall have power to suggest such amendments, alterations, or additions as it shall think fit; and, on reporting the Bill to the House, shall attach a copy thereof reprinted in such manner as to show in italics or other distinguishing type every new or altered provision.

359D. When the Committee shall have reported that the Bill effects no change upon the existing law, it may be read a third time without having been first committed to a Committee of the whole House, and when the Committee shall have reported that any part or parts of the Bill contain any alteration of or addition to the existing law, then only such part or parts shall be considered in Committee of the Whole, unless the House shall have ordered any further part or parts of the Bill, or the whole Bill, to be so considered.

Proposed addition to Standing Order No. 385 :—

... except in relation to Imprest Supply and Appropriation Bills, when the Report may be ordered to be received and considered forthwith.

NOTE.—This proposal will render it unnecessary to suspend Standing Orders for the purpose.

To omit Standing Order No. 387.

NOTE.—Because in conflict with No. 379.

Proposed new Standing Order, to follow No. 395 :—

395A. An order to clear the galleries includes the Ladies' Galleries.

To amend Standing Order No. 400 by substituting for the last three lines thereof the words shown in italics :—

400. Any Standing Order or Orders of the House may be suspended on Motion made with or without notice. *Provided that notice extending over two clear days, and specifying the hour at which such Motion will be made, shall always be given when practicable; and that a Motion to suspend without notice shall not be entertained unless there be two-thirds of the whole number of Members present at the time such Motion is made; and provided further that when such suspension is to extend over more than one sitting or in relation to more than one specified matter the presence of two-thirds of the Members shall, in all cases, be necessary.*

To amend Standing Order No. 401 by substituting for the last four lines thereof the words shown in italics.

401. No proposal for altering or annulling any Standing Order or adopting any new Standing Order shall be entertained *unless when notice extending over at least four sitting-days shall have been given; and if a division be demanded it shall be necessary that such proposal shall be voted for by a number equal to an absolute majority of the whole number of Members then in attendance on Parliament.*

NOTE.—The above is intended to lay down a definite and precise rule upon a matter upon which somewhat contradictory rulings have been given.