

mittees should be elected by the members of the Board—not necessarily that they should be members of the Board, but that the Board should be allowed to nominate the members of committees who had not a seat on the District Board. He would like to see that carried particularly, because, as he mentioned in his opening address, he thought some modification of the Elberfeld system might be adopted in New Zealand. There were many men who did not wish to face the hurly-burly of elections to local authorities who nevertheless would be admirable men to sit on committees of our hospitals and charitable institutions. There was growing up in this colony every day a larger leisured class—retired business men and Civil servants—who he believed would be very glad to undertake the duties of administering a system such as the Elberfeld system. Under that system in Germany the districts were put under the control of a person who occupied a very responsible and honourable position in the eyes of the public. He thought, if the committees were elected by the Board in that way—not necessarily of their own members, but also to consist of persons outside who were likely to take a particular interest in charitable-aid work—it would tend very much towards efficient and economical administration of charitable aid. He would like to hear the opinion of the Conference on this subject.

Mr. CHEPMELL said it was proposed in the Bill that the Governor should divide the district into subdistricts, and each of those subdistricts was to have a committee elected for them. Many members of the Conference objected to the division of districts into subdistricts; but there would be no objection to the Board being allowed to appoint committees for management of branch hospitals. What they objected to was the compulsory division of the district into subdistricts without really any object. If he was in order, he would move that that provision in the Bill be struck out.

The CHAIRMAN said they could consider that point when they were discussing the Bill. He wanted a general expression of the opinion of the Conference on the subject of committees. With respect to the boundaries of the districts, he proposed to confer with the members affected.

Mr. NORRIS (Christchurch) moved, in lieu of the provision in the Bill with respect to committees, "That any Board may appoint standing or select committees of its own members for the purpose of dealing with the several departmental matters in relation to the management of hospitals or institutions, financial matters, or the distribution of outdoor relief, such committees to report to the Board." His idea was that the Board should appoint its own committees. It had been suggested that the membership of committees might be extended to some persons outside who might be eminently qualified to assist the Board in carrying out the provisions of the Act. What they would have to guard against would be the appointing of committees of what might be termed outsiders, who would get into their hands the distribution of the Board's finance. He thought that ought to be carefully guarded against. What he suggested was that the Board might appoint committees of its own members for the purposes stated. The committees would hold office for a year, and any vacancies that might arise in the course of the year should be filled up by the Board. This question was very much involved with the question of the constitution of the Boards as regarded numbers. He would like to see an increase in the number of members of the Board. What he had in his mind was that the Board should consist of a sufficient number of members to enable it to constitute departmental committees, such as a Hospital Committee, an Old Men's Home Committee, a Finance Committee, &c. If the Board consisted of a larger number of members than was proposed it would have a much wider selection of members. There were remits on the agenda paper providing that the committees should be appointed from the Boards themselves.

Mr. CHEPMELL (Waikato) seconded the motion.

Mr. LOUDON (Dunedin) supported the amendment. The size of the Board would have a great bearing on the question of committees. The question had been raised about the Board getting the assistance or advice of outside persons. The Municipal Corporations Act had a provision which would govern that exactly; and he thought if such a clause were imported into this Bill it would meet the position. He would certainly support the proposal, and he believed it would work well.

Mr. WEBB (Northern Wairoa) thought the Board should be enabled to appoint persons other than its own members. He moved that the words "of its own members" be left out.

Mr. McMAHON (Nelson) seconded the amendment.

Mr. NORRIS said he was quite prepared to accept Mr. Loudon's suggestion with reference to including in the Bill the clause in the Municipal Corporations Act that he had alluded to.

Mr. TAPPER (Dunedin) asked, if the motion was passed, how the Government was to be sure they would be represented on the committees? Then there was the case of the voluntary contributors, who were people who took a great interest in the institution—how would they be represented on the committees?

Mr. CHEPMELL (Waikato) said the proposal was not to appoint committees with power to act. It was not even compulsory on the Board to appoint committees. It simply gave the Board power to appoint committees for certain purposes, and the committees were to report to the Board: they were not to have any power of administration.

Mr. J. P. LUKE (Wellington) said they would have to be careful that they did not open the doors to the Board or the committees too wide. The Government should be represented on the Board. The Government contributed half the money. As long as half the money came from the Consolidated Fund he maintained that the people as a whole had a right to be represented on the Board.

Mr. HORRELL (Christchurch) said he quite approved of the proposal that the Board should have power to elect its committees. He took it that Boards having charge of institutions at a distance would appoint committees of men residing in fairly close proximity to the institution.

It was agreed to strike out the words "of its own members."

Mr. R. C. KIRK (Wellington): Is it intended that the committees shall consist simply of members of the Board?

The CHAIRMAN: They are to be not necessarily members of the Board.