

PROCEDURE.

On the motion of Mr. GALLAWAY (Otago) the following were appointed a committee to draw up a scheme of procedure: The Hon. Mr. C. M. Luke, Messrs. J. P. Luke, Cranby, Burns, Bellringer, Payling, Scantlebury, Kettle, and Galloway.

On resuming at 2 p.m., Mr. GALLAWAY (Dunedin) said the committee had arrived at the following conclusions: (1) That the delegates agree amongst themselves who shall record the vote of his Board or institution; (2) that the voting be recorded on the voting-paper; (3) that the following questions be considered *seriatim*—(a) whether hospital and charitable matters be administered by one Board; (b) election of Boards—who to elect; (c) election of Boards—basis of representation; (d) continuity of office; (e) abolition of separate institutions; (f) reduction of subsidies; (g) Government control.

ONE BOARD.

Mr. J. P. LUKE (Wellington) moved, "That, in the opinion of this Conference, the functions of hospitals and charitable aid should be administered by one Board."

Mr. BELLINGER (New Plymouth) seconded.

Mr. VAUGHAN (North Auckland) asked how that would affect those districts where hospital and charitable-aid districts were not coterminous. In some instances the districts overlapped.

The CHAIRMAN replied that under this they would be coterminous.

The Hon. C. M. LUKE, M.L.C., thought this was a question of large policy. Probably in some districts there had been a waste under the existing system, and the purpose of the Bill was to remove the possibility of that waste. He recognised the splendid service the separate institutions had rendered to the Dominion. He was in this position: that he was elected twenty-four years ago as a trustee of the contributors in the City of Wellington, and he had been for the past five years Chairman of the Wellington Hospital Board. He did not think there was any institution in the country that could claim to stand superior to the Wellington Hospital, either in efficiency or in economical administration. He was thoroughly in agreement with the focussing of the two forces of hospital and charitable aid into one, because it would remove the possibility of conflict between the two bodies. While recognising the possibility of the larger districts having some disadvantages, he believed that by means of the subdistricts and the subcommittees provided for in the Bill they would achieve exactly the same results as they were achieving to-day.

Mr. MAXTON (Wairarapa) said that at present the Wellington Charitable Aid Board administered charitable aid practically in the Wairarapa, but with regard to hospitals the Wairarapa was separate. What they wished to maintain was a distinct body in the Wairarapa and Pahiatua. If amalgamation took place they would work in the Wairarapa independent of the city. He hoped that before they finished they would so divide the district that they would come to an amicable understanding as between the city and the country.

Mr. O'BRIEN (Mercury Bay) asked what would be the position of a separate institution under a united Board?

The CHAIRMAN said separate institutions were scheduled under the Act. The Mercury Bay Hospital had an independent income, and did not come on the rates. This amendment would not affect it in the least.

Mr. O'BRIEN said he wanted to know if the Board would have any control over the hospital with which he was connected?

The CHAIRMAN said a combined Board under the Bill could have no control over such an institution.

Mr. GALLAWAY desired to speak in favour of the two functions being combined under the one Board. Since he had taken an interest in these matters it had been made very clear to him that they were at the present moment losing an immense amount of force owing to want of organization. It would be the simplest thing, it seemed to him, to have the functions combined under one Board—a large Board, and strong committees might be appointed from that Board. He thought it would strengthen the hands of the Government very much if it came from a Conference of that sort that they were almost unanimous in asking for one central Board of Control.

Mr. LOUDON (Dunedin) said that in Dunedin they had three Boards—The Charitable Aid Board, the Benevolent Trustees, and the Hospital Trustees. Each of those Boards had a separate staff of officials, and he was quite satisfied that it would be very much in the interests of economy if all those Boards were amalgamated. In dealing with this question, no parochial or town *versus* country spirit should be raised. A great deal had been said about voluntary contributions, but he thought that before long there would be no such thing as voluntary contributions for hospital needs. Public opinion had altered, and it had become an obligation of the State, and the Government had affirmed the principle. He intended to support the motion, and he hoped it would be carried unanimously.

The resolution was carried by sixty-three votes to four.

ELECTION OF BOARDS.

The Conference then proceeded to consider the question, "Election of Boards—who to elect."

Mr. J. P. LUKE (Wellington District Hospital Board) moved the adoption of the following remit from that Board: "That the Board consist of members elected as follows: One or more members to be elected by each parliamentary electorate. That, as long as the Government contribute the same amount of subsidy as at present, they be represented by one or more members on each Board." He anticipated that there would be some opposition to this proposal, but he