

trusted it would be adopted. It might be said that some other mode of election would be less cumbersome. What better means of electing members could be adopted than the parliamentary representation area? It might be that some people would say that the functions of the local authorities should not be co-terminous with the parliamentary electorates. He had considered this question thoroughly, and the more he thought of it the more he thought the franchise for hospital and charitable aid should be on the most popular basis they could put it. Under this system they would get a very good selection of men—men who would give their heart and sympathy to this particular work. He thought they would all agree with him that the present method was cumbersome; that it did not give satisfaction, nor did it bring about the most efficient administration and work. In Wellington, for instance, in view of the increased amount of the Government contribution, they were distinctly entitled to some representation on the Board. There was no doubt that the bringing-in of the Public Health Act had brought about an increase in the cost of administration. Then there was the open-air cure in the treatment of consumption. He gave every credit to the Department for the work it had done in certain directions.

Mr. BELLINGER (New Plymouth) moved as an amendment, "That the present representation be the representation under the new Act."

Mr. TAPLEY (Dunedin) had much pleasure in seconding the amendment. He did not think there was any necessity for any change in the mode of election. In his opinion the present mode of election was much better than that proposed, and he thought it should remain.

Mr. MOORE (Wellington) thought the present method of election was entirely unsatisfactory. This was particularly the case in respect to the election of the Hospital Board of Trustees for the City of Wellington. He considered that the motion moved by Mr. Luke was the proper one, and was the only one that should be countenanced in a democratic country.

Mr. WEBB (Northern Wairoa) said the cost of the elections would come out of the Charitable Aid Fund, and it would mean so much less for the sick and needy.

Mr. HORRELL (North Canterbury) supported the motion.

Mr. MAXTON (Wairarapa) thought members would find that the majority would support the present system, which was much simpler than the parliamentary system. He would support the amendment in favour of retaining the present system.

Mr. TAPPER (Dunedin) said he would support the amendment, with a slight alteration. He thought that if they introduced politics into charitable aid they would make a mistake, and it would mean much additional cost. The present system had stood the test for twenty-three years. Would they get as good a class of men under the proposed system as those who attended the Conference? He did not think so. The slight alteration he wished to make was this: to add the words "and that the names of those who wish to be elected should be published over a week or a fortnight before the election."

Mr. GALLAWAY (Dunedin) said he intended to vote against both the amendment and the motion. He quite agreed with Mr. Tapper that it would be a great mistake to introduce politics into charity. He did not think it really mattered from that point of view whether the franchise was universal or whether it was not. It seemed to him that there was an equitable basis upon which the representation should stand in matters of this sort—in the meantime, at any rate. It did not follow that because a man was a first-class man on a local body he would be a first-class man on a Charitable Aid Board.

Mr. PAYLING (Christchurch) said he would support the amendment. If they adopted the parliamentary franchise they would not get so good a class of men on Charitable Aid Boards as they had now.

Mr. PEARCE (Patea) would support the amendment. He was entirely against voting under the parliamentary franchise. In his address the Minister had alluded to the increased cost of charitable aid. If they were to reduce the expenditure, they should adhere to the present system.

Mr. EATON (Wairarapa) thought that those who had the raising of the funds should have the spending of them. If they had men sitting on the Boards representing the ratepayers, they would naturally guard the ratepayers' money.

Mr. MARX (Hawera) said that under the present system it did not necessarily follow that members of local bodies were elected to the Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards. As to the parliamentary franchise and districts, he might point out that there was not a single hospital within the newly created electorate of Egmont. His colleague and himself both supported the amendment.

Mr. DAVISON (Ashburton) said that if the proposed change were carried out it would mean very great expense to the local bodies. He had been asked to oppose such an alteration.

Mr. RITCHIE (Wanganui) said he would support the amendment. He was satisfied that the mode of election at present in vogue was the best. He was perfectly satisfied, from his experience, that they would get a very undesirable class of people elected under the proposed idea.

The Hon. Mr. C. M. LUKE, M.L.C., thought the Conference should devise some basis that would give more representation to the contributories. He hoped there would be a further amendment: that local bodies would be represented in proportion to the funds they contributed, and that the Government would be represented on the Board.

Mr. COOPER (Christchurch) said he would like to strike the happy medium. He thought they would get good Boards under the municipal franchise. The question of cost was not worthy of consideration. Women could do excellent work on Charitable Aid Boards.

Mr. MANHIRE (Christchurch) said he did not see why the cost of the elections should be large. There was no reason why the elections for the Charitable Aid Boards and the elections for other local bodies should not take place on the same day. He would move later on an amendment to the effect that the members of the Board be elected from those entitled to elect other local authorities in the district.