

MISCELLANEOUS.

Bequests, Application of Money received for Specific Purpose, and Subsidy thereon.

Remit from the Stratford Hospital and Charitable Aid Board: "That in subclause (3) of clause 33 all the words after 'devise' be deleted."

Mr. BELLRINGER (Taranaki) asked what would be done in the case of an amount devoted for a specific purpose—what would be done with the balance of the money left on hand when the specific object had been carried out.

Mr. GALLAWAY (Dunedin) pointed out that subclause (1) of clause 33 laid it down that all bequests were to be applied strictly in the manner directed by the testators. The next subclause said, "Pending such application as aforesaid, all proceeds from any such bequest or devise shall be invested in securities issued by the Government or by any local authority under any Act, or on mortgage of land in New Zealand held in fee-simple, and the interest accruing from year to year in respect of such investments may be applied towards the maintenance of the institution." He thought that was altogether wrong. They surely had no right to propose a clause of that nature. The interest should be applied to the same purpose as the bequest was applied.

Dr. BATCHELOR (Dunedin) said there had been great complaint in this connection under the old Act. As long as people felt that donations went to reduce the rates they were disinclined to give. If, however, the appeal was for some special building, or operating-room, or something of that nature, donations came in freely. They had had this difficulty with regard to the Hospital Saturday Fund, which fund was supposed to be for a certain purpose. When the Hospital Trustees spent the money on ordinary maintenance the feeling was so strong that it was likely to considerably affect the contributions. They should refrain from doing anything that would tend to discourage voluntary contributions in the future. All donations or bequests should be applied to the objects for which they were given.

The CHAIRMAN: I quite agree with Dr. Batchelor in that.

The Hon. Mr. C. M. LUKE (Wellington) pointed out that if money was bequeathed or donated for some specific purpose the Government subsidy was not forthcoming. He thought moneys collected or donated for a specific purpose should carry the Government subsidy, if that specific purpose was approved by the Government.

Mr. GALLAWAY (Dunedin) asked leave to move that subclause (2) of clause 33 be amended so as to provide that the interest accruing be accumulated and applied to augment the bequest, and not applied towards the maintenance of the institution.

Mr. BAGNALL (Auckland) said it would be tying the hands of the Boards to a very great extent if they had money lying idle and could not use it.

Mr. STEVENSON (Dunedin) said that in connection with the Dunedin Hospital they could not spend their money as they would wish. He thought more discretion ought to be left to the Trustees.

Mr. NORRIS (North Canterbury) said his Board was in the fortunate position of being legatee of a very considerable estate. This estate was left to three separate institutions, each of which happened to be under the control of his Board. The income derivable from the real and personal property in that case amounted to £700 a year towards the maintenance of those three institutions. What were they to do with it if it were allowed to accumulate? There was no distinct direction by the testator that it was to be applied in a particular way. It was simply given for the maintenance and benefit of those three institutions.

Mr. GALLAWAY (Dunedin) said what he objected to was the Trustees taking upon themselves to interpret in their own way the bequests of testators.

Mr. J. P. LUKE did not believe in the maintenance of bequests being a charge on the rates.

The CHAIRMAN said he would endeavour to have the Bill altered so that the Government subsidy would be paid on donations or bequests for specific purposes, provided the object was approved by the Government.

Departmental Inquiries and Inspection.

Remit from the North Canterbury Hospital Board: "Clause 77, (1), with the following addition: 'and that copies of any report be forwarded to the respective Boards interested.'"

Mr. PAYLING (Christchurch) said that occasionally Inspectors came to the Hospital when the Chairman did not happen to be present, and if there was anything that did not meet with his approval the Board was not made aware of it until the annual report came down. There was sometimes a tag to the report which would not have been necessary if the Inspector had mentioned the matter to the Chairman or Secretary at the time. His Board therefore asked that these words should be added.

The CHAIRMAN did not think it was necessary to insert the words embodied in the remit. He, as Inspector, if he saw anything not quite as it should be in a hospital, would call attention to it in writing before reporting upon it.

Mr. HARPER (Ashburton) thought it was necessary to make provision for this in the Bill. In the past the Board had been left in ignorance as to where the fault lay until the Inspector's report was presented to Parliament.

Mr. DUNLOP (Christchurch) agreed that it was necessary. The present Inspector-General had stated that he would always communicate with the Board, but Dr. Valentine could not be in office for ever.

The CHAIRMAN: If you wish to have it in the Bill, by all means have it.

Remit agreed to.