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## Proceedings at the House of Assembly

When the House opened yesterday afternoon there was present a larger gathering of the people than usual, attracted no doubt by the announcement that Mr. Hickman's resolutions bearing on "Prohibition" were to be considered, the gathering included some prominent temperance people inside the Bar.

Proceeding opened with the tabling of replies by COLONIAL SECRETARY BENNETT to previous questions of Hon. Members.

MR. STONE presented a petition from various settlements in the district of Trinity referring to the Timber Limits, and the prayer of the petition was strongly supported by DR. LLOYD who commented on a project from the affected areas as having been made last year, and hoped the Government would deal with the matter seriously.

MR. DOWNEY—presented a petition from the inhabitants of Humbermouth and Corner Brook asking for a sum of money to build a road in that locality.

The petitions were received and relegated to their various departments.

On a motion that the House go to committee to consider a resolution bearing on prohibition, HON. C. H. KERRISON suggested that it be deferred to a day next week, so that the resolution could be printed and Hon. Members be prepared to speak upon it.

MR. HICKMAN, the introducer, commented on the importance of the subject, and suggested that it be referred to a select committee.

The "Act respecting the administration of Affairs," passed its third reading and was ordered to be engrossed and sent to Upper House for its concurrence. House then went into Committee of the Whole on Bill "Asking to amend the law relating to the administration of local affairs."

THE PRIME MINISTER said that at a previous session he had proposed to send the bill to a select committee, and had been deterred for another sitting in committee in order to give members more time so as an expression of opinion could be had and the best possible results obtained.

MR. BENT thought that an elective system should be adopted wherever possible and party politics eliminated.

The present system of Local Government Boards was had, but on such a question as this, which was of the utmost importance. We must not be in a hurry, there were many difficulties in the way, and it was almost impossible to do anything this session. He strongly recommended that if a Committee was appointed, it should be as embracing as possible in order to get something of a concrete nature.

MR. MORINE was of the opinion that no further attempt should be made now, but that a select Commission should deal with the matter out of Session. He believed in the elective system for all districts and sections if possible. There was too much concentration of power here in the city of St. John's, and if we had Local Corporations, we would have the best local results.

He instanced the people of Newfoundland as being perfectly competent to run their own local affairs, pointing out their adaptability and fitness in this respect as represented by the P.P.U. Members present. He fully illustrated the great benefits of local municipal Boards by referring to the system in Canada, and scored when he pointed out the fact of Elective Local Board or Municipalities, as being of an educative nature, and the best outlook we have, or antidote to Confederation, of which he was supposed to be strongly in favour. He quoted largely from Canadian statistics to show the benefits derived by the people in the management of their own affairs in towns and villages, winning an excellent speech by stating that the only cure for local management grievances in this Colony was proper incorporation for local affairs, or Municipal Government from Cape Soreman round the country and back again.

MR. MORINE spoke of the difficulties in defining areas, looking for instance, the District of Burlington, which he represented. Burlington, used as a town, consisted of 32 small villages, and there they had two Councils of 5 members each, and one Road Board which were working very satisfactorily. They had elective Road Boards in a few places. However, no provision beyond two years had been made for such, and he questioned the legality of these boards. While the present system exists and allocations are made by the general government, no

better results would be obtained. Mr. Currie was perfectly satisfied either way, to refer it to a select committee now, or defer the matter till next session.

COLONIAL SECRETARY BENNETT thought there seemed to be a great diversity of opinion and belief, and that the evils might be overcome by giving the people power to spend their own money. Mr. Morine had spoken of Canada and the system there, but we could not follow on the same lines, as we were in an entirely different position. He emphasized the great difficulties that exist and will exist. The City will not go back to the old Board of Works condition of affairs, having benefited by the present system of Municipal Government. If the House wished the matter deferred he had no objections.

MR. COAKER, after listening to the preceding speeches, particularly that of the Hon. Member for Bonavista, Mr. Morine, said he felt completely staggered. The speech was a most elaborate one, in which he heartily concurred. We can see, and we know that much can be done, but at the present time it was hard to know just what to do. There is great interest being taken in this question in the outports, particularly the Northern, who all wanted elective boards for their own affairs.

In some places there was a growing desire for hospitals—not Charity Hospitals—but where treatment could be had by those who could pay.

He (Mr. Coaker) thought that it was possible to get a sub-committee at the whole House to all and bring a measure for present conditions, and a larger Commission to deal with the matter for the future, something might be effected.

MR. JENNINGS spoke of the District of Twillingate as being strongly in favor of elective Road Boards, and believed that the Government was desirous of doing their best. He thought that he knew as much about the District and its needs as any, because he had lived there all his life.

MR. GRIMES was in favour of the principles of the measure before them. In all the preceding speeches some very valuable suggestions had been thrown out. In the district of Port de Grave, there were 12 Boards, 10 of which were elective. These were working satisfactorily and the interest

was marked. His (Mr. Grimes) experience of the past year in connection with the Local Boards had been that if you make the people themselves contribute, you educate them on the lines of independence and economy.

DR. LLOYD was the last speaker on the subject. The learned Doctor considered we were rambling a little from the great issues involved in the principle of Local Boards. The present system really was that the local man had the spending of the money that was raised by the general government, and when the latter has a large surplus, of course, the local men look for the big bonus, and some of them get all they can.

He agreed with the Hon. Member for Bonavista on the fostering of municipal management in all our affairs, but our circumstances here were different altogether from that in Canada. Mr. Morine had painted a bright picture of municipal life in Western Canada, but there was the black side to that, which was the system of raising municipal loans.

### ASYLUM COMMISSION REPORT

7 December, 1914.

Sir,—Recently it was brought under the notice of the Commissioners in Lunacy that vermin were found on a number of the patients in the Lunatic Asylum. The Commissioners immediately took the matter up, visited the institution, inspected a number of patients and made enquiries into their condition in this respect, as well as with regard to their clothing. As a result of the inspection and enquiry the Commissioners satisfied themselves that the report was to a certain extent correct and that a number of the male patients were in the condition referred to, but that the matter had been taken in hand by the Superintendent and officials, with the result that on the last report the Commissioners, the patients were pronounced to be clean.

The Commissioners direct me to bring the above facts under the notice of the Government, with the object of procuring improvements to the laundry of the institution, as well as to the supply of hot water for bathing purposes. There is no question in the minds of the Commissioners but that the condition of these patients referred to was due almost entirely to the inability to supply sufficient underclothing to permit the male patients being bathed and changed regularly. The system followed in the institution is to bathe each patient and change his underclothing weekly and also to change one sheet on each bed

Dr. Lloyd also agreed with Mr. Morine that a radical change was necessary, but now was not the time to do it. It would take a Commission at least twelve months to elaborate a Bill. He thought that the Bill now before them might do as a prelude for a more elaborate scheme and suggested that it be referred to a select committee.

MR. COAKER moved that his Logging Bill be referred to a select committee, which was done, the following being the committee:—Messrs. Coaker, Morine, Jennings, Lloyd, Piccott, Hickman and Monlon.

MR. KENT'S Bill for proceedings against the Crown by petition of right, was read a first time.

MR. JENNINGS amended Act regarding saw mills was deferred till Monday.

MR. COAKER gave notice that at next sitting he would move for the appointment of a Commission of five Members of the House to enquire into conditions at the Penitentiary, to report forthwith.

The House adjourned at 6.40 till Monday at 3 p.m.

weekly. On account of the inadequacy of the laundry to wash and the inability of the drying apparatus to dry clothing within anything like a reasonable period, the keepers were unable to bathe and change many of the patients until the second week and sometimes well up in the third week. Delay in bathing in other instances is due to the short supply of hot water. In fact, with such a large number of patients the supply is so small on the male side that two persons have to be bathed in the same water.

The Commissioners respectfully request the Government to take immediate steps to remedy these conditions, by the supply of apparatus of such power to supply sufficient hot water to bathe every patient weekly or oftener when conditions are such as to demand it, should be installed without unnecessary delay. These matters have been referred, and recommendations made to the Government on previous occasions in the reports of the Commissioners, and on one occasion a few years ago Commissioners represented the requirements in an interview with the Right Honourable the Premier.

I have the honour to be, Sir,  
Your obedient servant,  
Secy. Com. in Lunacy,  
Hon. John R. Bennett,  
Colonial Secretary.  
(To be continued)

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