

Clause 8. I am of the opinion that the powers, duties, and functions of the Board should be clearly and categorically defined.

Clause 17. With regard to the Provincial Councils, I consider that the number of members that may be appointed should be up to thirty, in order to allow for the very large and important provinces that, I trust, may be created under the Bill.

Clause 24. This provides for a general election every second year. I think that all local bodies should be elected on the same day, and for the same period—namely, three years—as that should be quite sufficiently frequent for the public to express its opinion with regard to matters of local government, and also to give continuity of policy and administration.

Clause 44. This provides for the annual meeting of Provincial Councils. I think this should be amended by making the date of meeting the date upon which the financial statement for the previous year, ending 31st March, must be produced.

Clause 79. I think this clause should be amended by requiring that both general and separate rates shall be imposed by special order, and not by resolution. On this point I would like to say that, in order to simplify the cost of collection, all rates that are leviable in any district should be simultaneous—that is, begin and end on the same day.

Clause 98. This should be amended by ordering that the accounts of every province shall be laid before Parliament.

Clause 139. This clause, which provides for the appointment of a Hospital Committee of the Provincial Council, should be amended so as to provide that there shall be at least five members who are not members of the Council, and these should be elected directly by the people on the same day as the general election of the Provincial Council takes place.

Clause 154. This clause, dealing with education, should be amended in exactly the same way as is proposed for the one referring to Hospital Committees—viz., by providing for at least five members to be elected to the Education Committee of the Provincial Council, who should be elected directly by the people on the day of the annual election.

Clause 175. A clear definition is required of the meaning in this clause of “a provincial road” and “a Government road.”

Clause 194. Any dispute occurring between local-governing bodies should be decided by the Local Government Board.

Clause 199. A new subclause should be inserted to provide for the Local Government Board to hand over river-control to the County Council.

Clause 232. Power should be given to the Local Government Board to constitute a new county and alter the boundaries of counties now in existence, in order to secure greater community of interest, and to group counties which desire to be joined, on the receipt of the necessary petition from the people interested. No new county should be allowed to be created unless it has a capital value of at least £200,000 and a population of 2,000, these figures being, of course, the minimum that must be left in the pre-existing county.

Clause 234. I am not in favour of abolishing ridings for election purposes, but will ask the Conference to express an opinion whether it is desirable or not to continue the system of riding accounts. Personally I prefer the county fund and account only.

Clause 238. It would be well if the Conference were to express a clear line with regard to what class of town district should be allowed to continue, which class should be raised to the rank of municipal Corporations, and which should be abolished. I think power should be taken in the Bill by which, in cases where town districts adjoin boroughs or are near thereto, they should be added to the boroughs.

Clause 276. Power should be given to County Councils to have outsiders on committees as proposed for the Provincial Councils, in order that public-spirited persons may have the opportunity of assisting in the work of government in special directions.