

rary provision might have been made for that if it was desirable to postpone the a larger conversion of outstanding loans. The Government, however, determined to raise a loan which would include of £2,207,300, which was the balance of the '78 loan called "the ten-forties" from the fact that they could be redeemed at any time after ten years from the 1st September, 1888, up to the 1st of September, 1918. However this was floated, or rather this was arranged to be floated, and It was arranged that tenders were to be sent invited to be sent in by the 25th October of last year. Now, I wish to revert for a few minutes to something that occurred last session. The honourable member for Dunedin South has this afternoon referred somewhat to the recommendation what the Minister Postmaster-General the other day claimed to be the sanction or recommendation agreement of the Public Accounts Committee of last session to the advance of the sum of some £5,000 to meet the debentures of the New Plymouth Harbour Board which were to come due on the 1st of November last,—about a week after the date when the tenders for the conversion of the loan were to be accepted. It will be necessary to refer somewhat to the New Plymouth Harbour Board. It will be remembered that in the session of 1888 the Premier Colonial Treasurer, from his seat in this House, indicated that it was "a serious matter," and that it was necessary and proper that this House should consider and determine the question whether these should be redeemed relieved in some way, or other in the way of advancing against its future income, because otherwise the Board were would be compelled to stop payment, and that as it was the Board was practically insolvent. He introduced a Bill in that year called "The Harbours Bill"—why not "The New Plymouth Harbour Bill" I do not know. It was intended to assist the New Plymouth Harbour Board by capitalising the perpetual-leaseholds rents in the Provincial District of Taranaki, so as to enable the Board to meet its interest for three or four years: it could not possibly pay for longer cover a longer term. The House unequivocally condemned the whole proposal and said it would have none of it—that it was a dangerous thing to interfere in such matters. Yet, during the recess which followed, the Colonial Treasurer advanced the New Plymouth Harbour Board sufficient to enable them to redeem meet their half-yearly interest in November May, 1889. In the first week of the session of 1889 that year I took occasion to ask the Colonial Treasurer what assistance had been given to the Board and the means by which the money had been provided. The Treasurer stated that they had advanced £690 against rates on Native land and £2,200 against the 25 per cent. of the land revenue. Feeling somewhat doubtful as to the security of the colony in reference to that advance, I pressed the Colonial Treasurer, after he gave an answer to the question on the Order Paper, as to whether he was satisfied and assured of the position of the colony in making that advance. The assurance answer he gave me was this that he was assured the honourable gentleman that there was no doubt whatever as to the security of the Government. He was still further pressed by myself as to whether the Government had taken the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown on the subject, and the Treasurer he answered that they the Government had done so before making the advance. Now, one of two things has occurred: either the Treasurer spoke without being correct, or the Law

to revert refer for a few minutes to something that occurred last session. The honourable member for Dunedin South has this afternoon referred to what the Postmaster-General the other day claimed to be the sanction or agreement of the Public Accounts Committee of last session to the advance of the sum of some nearly £5,000 to meet the debentures of the New Plymouth Harbour Board which were to come due on the 1st November last—about a week after the date when the tenders for the conversion of the loan were to be accepted. It will be necessary to refer somewhat to the New Plymouth Harbour Board. It will be remembered that in the session of 1888 the Colonial Treasurer, from his seat in this House, indicated stated that "it was a serious matter," the future of the Board with reference to its interest payments in London raised a "serious question," and that it was necessary and proper that this House should "consider and determine" the question whether these should the necessities of the Board should not be relieved in some way, in the way of by advancing against its future income, because otherwise the Board would be compelled to stop payment, and that, as it was, the Board was practically insolvent and might involve the colony. He introduced a Bill in that year called "The Harbours Bill—but why not "The New Plymouth Harbour Bill" I do not know. It was intended proposed to assist the New Plymouth Harbour Board by capitalising the perpetual-leasehold rents and deferred-payment land payments in the Provincial District of Taranaki, to which the Board was entitled, so as to enable the Board it to meet its interest for three or four years: if the proceeds could not possibly cover a longer term. The House unequivocally condemned the proposal and said it would have none of it—that it was dangerous to interfere in such a matter. Yet, during the recess which followed, the Colonial Treasurer advanced the New Plymouth Harbour to the Board sufficient money to enable them it to meet their the half-yearly interest due in May, 1889. In the first week of the session of that year I took occasion to ask the Colonial Treasurer what assistance had been given to the Board and the means by which that money had been provided. The Treasurer stated that they he had advanced £690 against rates on Native lands and £2,200 against the 25 per cent. of the land revenue. Feeling somewhat doubtful as to the security of the colony in reference relation to that advance, I pressed the Colonial Treasurer, after he gave an the answer to the question on the Order Paper, as to whether he was satisfied of the position of the colony in making that advance. The assurance answer he gave me was that he was assured as to the security of the Government. He was On being still further pressed as to whether the Government had taken the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown on the subject, and he answered replied that the Government had done so before making the advance. Now, one of two things has occurred: either the Treasurer spoke without being correct, or the Law Officers of the Crown have changed their opinion; for now we are told that the other moneys since advanced under similar circumstances are not likely to be recovered. Reverting now to the point at which I digressed, and dealing with what occurred in the Public Accounts Committee, I am now going to refer to something that is not to be discovered only by hunting up the archives of the colony but to something which was is in print and