

1891.  
NEW ZEALAND.

## FURTHER DESPATCHES

FROM THE GOVERNOR OF NEW ZEALAND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

*Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.*

No. 1.

(No. 3.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 23rd January, 1891.

I have the honour to inform your Lordship that, acting on the advice of my Ministers, I have summoned the following gentlemen to the Legislative Council of New Zealand—viz., Mr. John Blair Whyte, Auckland; Mr. Francis John Davies Ormond, Hawke's Bay; Mr. Charles John Johnston, Wellington; Mr. Charles Christopher Bowen, Canterbury; and Messrs. James Fulton and William Downie Stewart, Otago.

No fresh appointments have been made to this body since the year 1887—in fact, since the present Ministry have been in office. On the other hand, several deaths and resignations have taken place, reducing the number of Councillors from forty-eight, at which it stood on the 8th of October, 1887, to thirty-nine to-day, and of these it may safely be said that, from extreme age, absence from the colony, and other reasons, the effective strength barely exceeds thirty.

My Ministers have repeatedly expressed their desire to effect a reform in the Council, to reduce the period of service to seven years instead of life, and to limit the numbers to one-half of those in the House of Representatives. At the same time they considered it to be essential that the whole of the Assembly should be able, willing, and efficient for the performance of their duties.

In 1887 they introduced a Bill with this object, but it was discharged before it reached the second reading.

Last session a Bill embodying the principles declared to be those entertained by the Government was introduced by a private member into the Legislative Council, was amended by the Attorney-General to meet the views of the Government, and cordially supported by the Government in the Council, but was rejected by that body; and, in the face of that opinion, my Ministers concluded that it would be futile themselves to submit to Parliament a measure on similar lines.

My Ministers refrained from offering me any advice as to strengthening the Council before the expiration of the Parliament and the general election.

The result of that election has been, as I apprised your Lordship in my Despatch No. 62, of the 18th December, 1890, to make a great change in the *personnel* of the House of Representatives, and, in the uncertainty as to the political views of the new members, I have, as I have already informed your Lordship, summoned Parliament to meet at the earliest convenient date.

I had before me the statement of Ministers that it was necessary to summon Parliament in order that they might ascertain the feelings of confidence towards them entertained by the new representatives of the people, and I therefore