

1899.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE COMMONWEALTH BILL.

MEMORANDUM SETTING OUT THE AMENDMENTS IN THE DRAFT OF THE BILL AGREED TO AT THE CONFERENCE OF PREMIERS IN FEBRUARY, 1899.

Return to an Order of the House of Representatives dated the 4th August, 1899.

Ordered, "That there be laid before this House a Return, in continuation of A.-5, 1898, showing the amendments to the Bill to constitute the Commonwealth of Australia agreed to at a Conference of the Prime Ministers of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, which sat at Melbourne on the 28th, 30th, and 31st of January, and the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd of February, 1899."—(Mr. McNAB.)

MEMORANDUM SETTING OUT THE AMENDMENTS IN THE DRAFT OF A BILL TO CONSTITUTE THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA AGREED TO AT THE CONFERENCE OF PREMIERS IN FEBRUARY, 1899.

THE Premiers of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia in Conference assembled, having fully considered the amendments suggested in the form of resolutions by the Legislative Council and by the Legislative Assembly of New South Wales in the Bill drafted by the Australasian National Convention, 1897-98, unanimously agree as follows:—

1. With regard to the resolutions—

“(a.) Representation in the Senate,”

The Premiers consider that at the joint sitting of the two Houses for the purpose of settling disagreements between the Houses, the decision of an absolute majority of the total number of the members of both Houses should be final;

And it is agreed that clause 57 of the said Bill should be amended so as to read as follows:—

Disagreement between the Houses.

57. If the House of Representatives passes any proposed law, and the Senate rejects or fails to pass it, or passes it with amendments to which the House of Representatives will not agree, and if after an interval of three months the House of Representatives, in the same or the next session, again passes the proposed law with or without any amendments which have been made, suggested, or agreed to by the Senate, and the Senate rejects or fails to pass it, or passes it with amendments to which the House of Representatives will not agree, the Governor-General may dissolve the Senate and the House of Representatives simultaneously. But such dissolution shall not take place within six months before the date of the expiry of the House of Representatives by effluxion of time.

If after such dissolution the House of Representatives again passes the proposed law with or without any amendments which have been made, suggested, or agreed to by the Senate, and the Senate rejects or fails to pass it, or passes it with amendments to which the House of Representatives will not agree, the Governor-General may convene a joint sitting of the members of the Senate and of the House of Representatives.

The members present at the joint sitting may deliberate and shall vote together upon the proposed law as last proposed by the House of Representatives, and upon amendments, if any, which have been made therein by one House and not agreed to by the other, and any such amendments which are affirmed by an absolute majority of the total number of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives three fifths of the members present and voting thereon shall be taken to have been carried, and if the proposed law, with the amendments, if any, so carried is affirmed by an absolute majority of the total number of the members of the Senate and House of Representatives three fifths of the members present and voting thereon, it shall be taken to have been duly passed by both Houses of the Parliament, and shall be presented to the Governor-General for the Queen's assent.