

No. 25. The Wellington High Levels Tramway Act.—Giving the necessary powers to the City Corporation of Wellington for the construction of a high-level trainway.

No. 26.—The Wairoa Harbour Board Empowering and Loan Act.—Empowering the Harbour Board to construct harbour-works at the port of Wairoa, and for that purpose to borrow £5,000, with provision for the security.

Private Acts.

No. 1. The Stratford Electric Lighting Act.—Empowering a company to do all works necessary in order to supply electrical energy, for public and private purposes, within a radius of three miles from the post-office, in the Borough of Stratford.

No. 2. The McLean Motor-car Act.—Empowering the promoters, or any licensee under the Act, to use motor-cars, with power to the Governor in Council to regulate such use, the issue of licenses, and otherwise.

Public Act, reserved for Her Majesty's Approval.

The Divorce Act.—This Act has been reserved by the Governor for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon, pursuant to the Royal Instructions now in force. It provides (*inter alia*) that a petition for dissolution of marriage may be presented by husband or wife on the grounds that the respondent (1) has been guilty of adultery; or (2) has for five years and upwards, without just cause, deserted the petitioner; or (3) has for four years and upwards been an habitual drunkard, and, if a husband, has either habitually left his wife without means of support, or habitually been guilty of cruelty towards her, or, if a wife, has habitually neglected her domestic duties and rendered herself unfit to discharge them; or (4) has been convicted and sentenced to imprisonment for seven years or upwards for attempting to take the life of the petitioner. No covenant or agreement between the parties is a bar to the petition. If a decree is obtained against the husband, the Court may order him to make weekly or monthly payments to the wife. If the respondent opposes the petition, the Court may grant the same relief to the respondent as it might grant to the petitioner. Security may be required for alimony in case of a judicial separation. Fraudulent deeds may be set aside, and sale of property to defeat petitioner may be restrained. Non-compliance with decree for restitution of conjugal rights is declared to be desertion without reasonable cause, and the enforcement of the decree by attachment is abolished. Husband may not claim damages from co-respondent in respect of adultery committed more than three years before the filing of the petition. Suits may be heard in Chambers, and publication of the proceedings may be forbidden. A wife who has obtained a decree of judicial separation is to be deemed a *feme sole* for the purposes of "The Married Women's Property Protection Act, 1880." The Act also makes other amendments of the existing law.

No. 25.

(No. 77.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 14th December, 1898.

With reference to your circular despatches, dated the 2nd September and the 14th September, 1898, relative to the establishment of a provisional *modus vivendi* between Her Majesty's colonies and Belgium, I have the honour to inform you that this Government does not desire that the provisions of this treaty should be extended to it.

The Right Hon. J. Chamberlain,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, &c.,
RANFURLY.

No. 26.

(No. 80.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 20th December, 1898.

With reference to your despatch (New Zealand—No. 63), dated the 5th October, 1898, relative to "The Shipping and Seamen's Act Amendment Act, 1896," I have the honour to inform you that my Ministers propose to consolidate the New Zealand shipping laws, and that when this is done the remarks and suggestions of the solicitor to the Board of Trade will receive careful consideration.

The Right Hon. J. Chamberlain,
Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, &c.,
RANFURLY.

No. 27.

(No. 82.)

SIR,— Government House, Wellington, 21st December, 1898.

In reply to your circular despatch, dated the 20th August, 1898, regarding bounties paid on the export of agricultural produce from British colo-