

REPLIES.

Amberley Town Board.—Replying to your wire of yesterday's date, I have the honour, by direction of Amberley Town Board, to enclose herewith a copy of circular being sent out to the various Town Boards in the colony. The circular is extracted from a letter forwarded by the Board to Mr. Meredith, and embodies the objections of this Board to the proposed measure. The words in italics may probably convey the crux of the position of Town Boards generally. "CIRCULAR.—The various Town Boards being so widely scattered through the colony, the only means of joining in a common cause being through the medium of the parliamentary representatives, I am instructed to send you a copy of what has been forwarded to the member for Ashley by the Amberley Town Board, and to bespeak your friendly co-operation: 'At a special meeting held for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the measure the Board unanimously carried a resolution hostile to the proposal, so far as it affects Town Boards, and to protest against the proposal to administer town districts by County Councils. The proposition was sustained by the fact that the Amberley Town Board has successfully and satisfactorily, without any undue financial strain, fulfilled its functions since its origin in 1885; and that the experience of such as were resident prior to that date, while under the local administration of the Kowai Road Board, has not yet been forgotten, *being remembered mainly as an evidence that the methods and instincts of a body elected in agrarian interests cannot be expected to be found in sympathy with the wants and necessities of a populous centre.*'"—A. GREGG, Town Clerk.

Bull's Town Board.—Bull's Town Board earnestly protests against the proposed abolition of Town Boards, believing the affairs of towns under present administration to be more effectively administered than if merged into counties.—THOMAS KING, Chairman.

Clinton Town Board.—Object abolition Town Boards following grounds: 1st, want of local administration; 2nd, no change desired, proposal retrograde movement connection local government, tend retard progress small towns; 3rd, requirements population situated town districts entirely different population country districts, former requiring attention paid drainage, footpaths, lighting, nuisances, &c., which would be neglected under control county; 4th, member representing town district riding would be outvoted by interests of county represented by eight or nine members composing Council; 5th, Town Boards have done good work in the past; 6th, local Committee required administer affairs cemetery and domain.—A. IRVING, Jun., Chairman.

Clyde Town Board.—Clyde Town Board strongly urges Town Boards be retained in Counties Bill. Strong objections town districts being merged in county, such course bound to give rise friction. District desires spend its revenue without interference of the County Council. Why cannot a clause be introduced in new Bill giving power to retain town districts, especially as boroughs cannot now be formed with less than 1,000 population? Neither Clyde Town District nor Wairoa County Council favour idea contemplated in Counties Bill of placing town district under County Council management.—G. PERKINS, Chairman.

Featherston Town Board.—Thanks for telegram re town districts. Our area is over 800 acres, besides 10 acres cemetery, 57 domain, other reserves. Population over 600. Library and Town Hall under control. No desire to extend boundaries or district, existing order of things. Ratepayers already petitioned through Mr. Hornsby against proposed Counties Bill as affecting town districts. Are quite satisfied present system of control under Town Districts Act. Economical and satisfactory for small communities. Confidently leave matter in hands your Committee and member for district.—J. G. COX, Chairman.

Geraldine Town Board.—The Geraldine Town Board strongly protests against the proposed Counties Bill so far as it interferes with its status as a local body, and regards the proposal to abolish Town Boards as a retrograde movement in connection with local government, and thinks the proposed legislation unnecessary and harassing.—J. J. McCASKEY, Chairman.

Halcombe Town Board.—The ratepayers of Halcombe petitioned against abolition of Town Boards and the inclusion of rural districts. The requirements of town are different from rural districts, and there is always friction when small towns are included in a riding of Road Boards or County Councils. The members of this Board, on behalf of the ratepayers, strongly protest against any alteration, as they are of opinion that it will prove cumbersome, and retard the progress of the towns, and will cause a deal of annoyance and dissatisfaction.—JOHN GRAVES, Chairman.

Hampstead Town Board.—Hampstead Town Board opposes being abolished without the consent of the ratepayers. We consider it a retrograde step to reduce the power of local government; also that is most unlikely to be satisfactorily governed by a body who has large powers but not personally interested, most of whom would probably live many miles away, whose interests would not be identical with town districts. If the Act becomes law we think provision should be made for town districts to continue, with power to extend their area, under the M.C. Act, free from County Council in every way.—G. W. ANDREWS, Chairman.

Havelock Town Board.—The Havelock Town Board cannot see from the Bill whether town districts are to be abolished or not, as subsection (9) of clause 3 says, "Existing town districts are hereby declared town districts under the Bill," while subsection (1) of clause 8 says all town districts are to be abolished. Which is right? At the same time, this Board sees no objection to this town district becoming a riding of the county if all existing rights and responsibilities are secured.—W. T. ERSKINE, Clerk.

Helensville Town Board.—Helensville Town Board strenuously opposes abolition town districts or any alteration of Town Districts Act, but strongly recommends clause being made to new Counties Bill prohibiting County Councils having any jurisdiction whatever within town districts, Town Board being of opinion that municipal affairs can be better managed within town districts by the Boards alone than by two governing bodies.—SPINLEY, Chairman.