We also submit for the consideration of the Government whether the limit of one month fixed by section 196 for commencing a prosecution should not be extended to two or three, at all events where the girl is under twelve years of age.

(*b.*) The existing provisions for substituting one place of trial for another are based on the assumption (which no longer holds) that the jurisdiction of the Judges is limited to specified districts. We suggest that these provisions be dropped, and the Court of commitment be made the Court of trial, with power to that Court to change it on cause shown.

(*c.*) The existing mode of proving a previous conviction is often needlessly cumbersome and expensive, as it involves a fresh trial before a fresh jury. We suggest that the proof be left to the Judge (as it is merely a matter of producing the record and proving the identity), with provision that any question of disputed identity shall be determined by a jury. This would dispense with the necessity of a second trial, except where the identity of the prisoner is disputed.

8. Rules of Court.—Under the existing law rules of Court are made in various ways. We suggest that a uniform system be adopted by legislation.

9. New Zealand Loan Acts.—Under the existing practice, each Loan Act contains all the machinery provisions relating to the loan. It would, we think, be an advantage if these were comprised in a standing Act, which would apply to every loan hereafter authorised to be raised. The authorising Act would thus be confined to a single clause, specifying the amount authorised.

10. "The Rating Act, 1894."—As the result of judgments of the Court of Appeal it would appear that the decision of the Assessment Court is final on the question of value only, and not on the questions whether the property is rateable or the objector is liable as occupier. This view is consonant with reason and convenience, for the latter questions may turn on fine points of law with which the Assessment Court is not as competent to deal as is the Supreme Court. The Act, however, is not quite clear on the point, and we suggest that it be made clear by amendment.

11. "The Supreme Court Practice and Procedure Acts Amendment Act, 1893."—Under this Act the Registrar is empowered to exercise the jurisdiction of a Judge in Chambers. The powers which a Judge may exercise in Chambers as if he were in Court are, however, expressly excepted. The Act has generally been construed as empowering the Registrar to grant administrations, and many have been granted accordingly. It is however questionable whether this power is not one of those excepted from the Act, for by the Administration Act the jurisdiction to grant administrations is conferred upon the Court, and it may therefore be argued that when the Judge exercises it in Chambers he does so "as if he were in Court." As in numerous instances estates have been distributed under administrations granted by Registrars, we suggest that a Bill be introduced to validate what has been done and to determine the practice for the future.

Our work is progressing as fast as circumstances permit; but at best our progress is slow, for, apart from the magnitude of the task in itself, its important and responsible nature necessitates our closest personal attention, both collectively and individually. In the case of each consolidating statute, it is first collated by our Secretary, Mr. Jolliffe, then perused separately by each member of the Commission, and finally settled by the Commission as a whole. All this involves much time and trouble, but we are hopeful that our completed work will be satisfactory to Your Excellency when we have the honour to submit it to you in the form of a consolidated statute-book.

As witness our hands, at Wellington, this 21st day of July, 1904.

ROBERT STOUT,
FRED. FITCHETT,
W. S. REID,
} Commissioners.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,425 copies), £1 6s. 6d.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1904.

Price 3d.]