

Clause 358. The Local Government Board should have the power to state, if necessary, what is provincial and what is county responsibility in connection with drainage and water-supply.

Clause 381. It should be provided that the county by-laws must not conflict with those of the provinces.

Clause 382. Hawkers' and pedlars' licenses should, in my opinion, be universal, and the same price anywhere in New Zealand.

#### CONCLUSION.

In bringing my remarks to a conclusion I desire chiefly to sketch what may be regarded as the salient points of the proposals which are placed before you.

They are as follows :—

(1.) To endeavour to secure economy in the local government of the Dominion by abolishing superfluous and unnecessary bodies, and combining their functions with those of larger bodies whose usefulness and necessity are undoubted.

(2.) To create a larger class of governing body, which will stand between the minor governing bodies of the Dominion and the Parliament, and upon which can be placed responsibilities and duties which are now necessarily undertaken by the General Government, which bodies will deal with subjects of special interest to the provinces over which they are placed.

(3.) To endeavour to remove the unfortunate difference of interest that has grown up between the cities and leading towns and their back country, and to unite the natural groupings of the Dominion into consolidated bodies, whose interests will be practically the same.

(4.) To provide a means by which the varying interests of the Dominion may be provided for by local self-government of a more advanced type than we have at present.

(5.) To endeavour to amalgamate under one body the services of Education, Harbour, and Hospital and Charitable Aid Boards, thus securing a larger field of public life and the consolidation of local services under one experienced body, with one administrative head, and one staff.

(6.) To secure, if possible, some measure of control over borrowings of local authorities, in order that extravagances and luxuries may not be undertaken which will place unnecessary burdens upon the populations of the future.

(7.) To endeavour to ascertain whether any means can be devised by which undeveloped portions of the country may be assisted to a greater degree than hitherto in the matter of roads, bridges, &c., by placing the system of subsidies and Government grants upon a sounder and more scientific footing than at present.

(8.) To endeavour to create a sense of responsibility with regard to local government, its cost, burdens, &c., upon the part of the people of the Dominion.

I will only add that this Bill is not intended as the last word on local government: it is a basis for discussion of the whole question. I trust that that discussion will be not on matters of detail, but on general principles. Finally, I hope that no attempt will be made to consider this question from the standpoint of political party, but that we shall unite in seeking to find a method of local government worthy of this Conference, and, above all, worthy of the great country which has been committed to our trusteeship.

(For tabulated information presented to Conference *vide* Appendix.)