a rule for his own conduct, which his Minister will not be permitted to disturb with his advice. No Minister ought to be asked to be responsible for an act he does not approve of and cannot control.

Mr. Earle, in concluding his remarks on proposition No. 1, respectfully reminds the Governor of the opinion of Sir Erskine May on the question of the pledge demanded by the reigning Sovereign in 1807 from Earl Grenville: "No constitutional writer," Sir Erskine May declares, "would now be found to defend the pledge itself or to maintain that the Ministers who accepted office in consequence of the refusal of that pledge had not taken upon themselves the same responsibility as if they had advised it." (May, "Constitutional History of England," 1912 edition, page 79.) So that not only is the demand of a pledge unconstitutional, but any Minister who accepts office in consequence of a former Minister having declined to give a pledge is in the same position as if he had advised the imposition of it.

As to (2): The power of dissolution is, as the Governor is fully conscious, a very delicate instrument of Government, only to be exercised in cases of necessity. The reported precedents relating to it are numerous, and, as might be expected, the great majority of them are authorities for circumstances in which the power should not be put into operation.

Two of the cases in which the power should not be exercised are—

(*a.*) Where there is another alternative—that is to say, where it is possible for the Governor to secure a Ministry who can carry on the Government with the confidence of a majority of the Legislative Assembly; and

(*b.*) Where there is no important political question upon which contending parties are directly at issue.

Authorities for case (*a*) are the memorandum addressed by the Governor-General of Canada to Mr. Brown-Dorion (cited in Todd on "Parliamentary Government in the Colonies," at pages 768–769). The Governor-General, in declining to grant Mr. Brown-Dorion a dissolution, stated as a reason for the course he adopted that "he is by no means satisfied that every alternative has been exhausted, or that it would be impossible for him to secure a Ministry who would close the business of the session and carry on the administration of the Government during the recess with the confidence of a majority of the Legislative Assembly"; and also in the memorandum dated the 15th November, 1877, of His Excellency the Governor of New Zealand to the Hon. Sir George Grey, where His Excellency, in declining Sir George a dissolution, stated the principle which guided him, as follows: "The only desire of the Governor is to secure a Government, no matter how constituted, which can command the confidence of a majority of the representatives of the people of New Zealand."

Case (*b*) is supported by both the same authorities, as well as many others (*e.g.*, Hearn, "Government of England," page 164).

Todd states the rule thus: "It is not a legitimate use of the prerogative of dissolution to resort to it when there is no important political question upon which contending parties are directly at issue."

In the case now before the Governor, both of the above-mentioned circumstances are present. Mr. Earle commands a majority of the House of Assembly, and he has given the Governor his assurance that he can carry on the Government.

Further, there is no important political question upon which the two parties in the House of Assembly are at this juncture directly at issue.

The general policies of the two parties differ widely, but there is no particular question now at issue between them; but, on the contrary, both parties entirely agree that before any satisfactory appeal to the country can be made it is necessary that Parliament should give consideration to the electoral system.

The foregoing remarks are reasons why a dissolution was not warranted at any period since the censure motion, but the case against a dissolution, however, is now very much stronger.

The Governor has declined to accept his late Minister's advice, and must therefore have been of opinion that a dissolution would be unwarranted, for the conventions of Responsible Government require that, if a dissolution is warranted by the circumstances, the request for it by the Minister of the day should be granted.

Mr. Earle respectfully submits to the Governor that he should not be called into office only to have a proceeding forced on him which he thinks improper, and therefore cannot advise. To place Mr. Earle in such a position is, he respectfully submits, tantamount to asking him to accept the responsibility of advice tendered by a former Minister who no longer enjoys the confidence of Parliament, and which Mr. Earle cannot endorse.

Mr. Earle has felt it his duty to submit the above remarks to the Governor, and he most respectfully requests the Governor's consideration of them.

Premier's Office, 7th April, 1914. JOHN EARLE, Premier.

No. 3.

The GOVERNOR to Mr. EARLE.

The Hon. the Premier. Government House, Hobart, Tasmania.

THE Governor begs to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Earle's memorandum which he received yesterday.

His Excellency thoroughly accepts the doctrine of Ministerial responsibility, though he differs from the application of it as set out by Mr. Earle. The Governor desires to point out that he gave Mr. Earle and his colleagues in the Ministry the fullest opportunity of considering the conditions he laid down. These conditions were accepted by Mr. Earle, and subsequently by his