

disposing of a few matters of great and urgent importance, than of carrying into immediate effect a comprehensive policy suited to the exigencies of the colony. Accordingly, in deciding upon the measures which it is my intention to recommend to your adoption, I have had more regard to the means of obtaining for you at a future time, powers which the Constitution Act withholds from the General Assembly, than to accomplishing at this moment many objects which might have been pursued with propriety during an ordinary session, when the members had not been fatigued by long previous labours, and were not disturbed by a natural anxiety to return as soon as possible to their homes. At the same time, it appears to me that there is matter for congratulation in the circumstance that the labours of the past Session have operated beneficially in maturing the opinions of the Legislature upon many subjects of importance, and therefore contributing valuable facilities towards the work of legislation at the present time.

In compliance with engagements into which I consider myself to have entered with both Houses of the Legislature and with the Colony, I have endeavoured, by appointments to my Executive Council, to give to all the Provinces an effectual voice and influence in both the Legislative and Executive proceedings of the Government, and although the extent to which I have been able to accomplish this object, is not yet satisfactory to me, especially with regard to the Legislative Council, I am in hopes of being able, ere long, to complete the work in a manner altogether unobjectionable.

In compliance with the same engagement, I now proceed to lay before you my views of what the wants and best interests of the Colony demand, this shall, as far as possible, be done in the practical form of measures suggested for your adoption, and the statements of my own intentions with regard to the exercise of powers exclusively vested in the Crown.

With regard to Legislative measures, I consider it expedient to divide these into three classes: First, such as are of great importance and urgency with regard to time; secondly, such as, though perhaps of equal importance, might be postponed if you should be indisposed to devote sufficient time for their enactment: and thirdly, measures of less consequence, not involving any political principles, and concerning which it may be presumed that no material difference of opinion exists, either in the Legislative Council or in the House of Representatives.

As belonging to the first class, I propose laying before you a Bill for the establishment of complete Ministerial Responsibility. This measure is required from me, in pursuance of the engagement before alluded to. It would of course be reserved for Her Majesty's assent. I also consider it extremely desirable that a Bill, subject likewise to her Majesty's assent, should be passed without delay, for empowering the General Assembly to transfer to the Provincial Legislatures its own powers with regard to the Waste Lands of the Crown.

Under this class I am also of opinion that the Colony will be gratified, and materially served, if you should pass a Bill, likewise to be reserved for her Majesty's assent, for empowering the General Assembly to alter the composition of the Legislative Council in such manner as to bestow upon that body, the popular, yet conservative character of an elected Senate.

Under the second class, it seems to me very desirable to pass measures for the following purposes:—

Firstly,—For equalizing the representation of the people in the House of Representatives, so as to give full effect to the following provision of the Constitution Act:—"And in determining the number and extent of such electoral districts, and the number of members to be elected for each district, regard shall be had to the number of electors within the same, so that the number of members to be assigned to any one district, may bear to the whole number of the members of the House of Representatives, as nearly as may be, the same proportion as the number of electors within such district, shall bear to the whole number of electors in New Zealand."

Secondly,—For empowering the Provincial Superintendents and Councils to legislate under certain restrictions, with respect to the issue of bills, notes, or other paper currency.

Thirdly,—For empowering the Provincial Superintendents and Councils to establish and manage Provincial Post Offices.

Fourthly,—The same with regard to Provincial Beacons and Light Houses.

Fifthly,—For empowering Superintendents to dissolve Provincial Councils.

These measures would necessarily be reserved for Her Majesty's assent.

Sixthly,—For preventing holders of office under the General Government from sitting as members in the House of Representatives, excepting always members of the Executive Council.

Under the third class, I propose laying before you a bill for providing Secondary Punishment; a Marriage bill; a Nelson Trust Fund bill; a Land Claimant's Estate bill; a bill for establishing limited liabilities in industrious undertakings, and especially with regard to institutions and societies of a benevolent character. Under this class, provided both Houses