

a Bill passed by the House of Representatives; and this Act simply embodies a few of the provisions of the Bill, on which there was no difference of opinion, but which were calculated to meet some practical difficulties that had arisen. The question relating to the Natives will form the subject of a separate communication,

- No 54. "*Registration of Electors Act*."—The law on this subject, previously to the passing of this Act, rested on a Proclamation, dated the 5th March, 1853, issued by Sir George Grey, under the powers conferred upon him by the 5th section of the Constitution Act. Under that Proclamation a number of practical difficulties have from time to time occurred in the Registration of Electors. A still greater evil arose from the facility with which persons not qualified were placed in great numbers on the Electoral Roll. The right of objection which existed has hitherto been looked upon as so invidious as to have been but rarely exercised, and the consequence has been that the Electoral Roll has become thoroughly corrupt. This Act provides for the abolition of the present Roll, and the construction of a new one by the Registration Officer; and subsequent Registration is to be made by a claim in the usual way, verified by a declaration as provided by the 4th section of the Act. Thus, safeguards are prescribed to prevent the names of unqualified persons from being placed on the Roll; and in addition to the right given to every elector to object as before, it is made the duty of the Registration Officer to object to every person whom he deems from any cause not to be entitled to be on the Electoral Roll. The principal part of the provisions of the Act are an adaptation of the English law on the same subject.
- No 55. "*Electoral Districts Act*."—This Act was passed to give to certain districts which had become populous and wealthy since the definition of electoral districts in 1853, separate representation; leaving the question of a general adjustment of the representation of the colony for future consideration.
- No 56. "*Regulation of Elections Act*."—Like the registration of Electors, the law for regulating elections was contained in the proclamation of the 5th March, 1853. Great practical inconvenience and anomalies existed under the Proclamation, and the object of the present Act was to remove these and to place the conduct of elections on a satisfactory basis. Great evils had resulted from personation, and careful provisions are introduced into this Act to put a stop to an evil which had become systematic.
- No 57. "*Corrupt Practices Prevention Act*."—Corrupt practices at elections in some of the electoral districts of New Zealand have become so prevalent that it is absolutely necessary that a vigorous effort should be made to put a stop to them. This Act is an adaptation of the English Act on the same subject.
- No 58. "*Elections Petitions Act*."—No provision before the passing of this Act had been made for the trial of election petitions, beyond section xlv. of the Constitution Act of 1853, and some imperfect provisions in the proclamation of the 5th of March 1853 already referred to. The present law regulating the trial of election petitions in the House of Commons is not suited to the circumstances of New Zealand,—it is far too complicated. The principle adopted in the present measure is, with some modification, that which was in force under the Act known as "Granville's Act," which was superseded by the xi. & xii. Vic. : c. 98.
- No 59. "*Provincial Elections Act*."—All the preceding Acts on the subject of elections, have reference only to the House of Representatives. The object of the present Act is to adopt the provisions of most of these Acts to the election of Superintendents and Members of Provincial Councils. The Electoral Roll for the House of Representatives is adopted for the election of Superintendents and Members of Provincial Councils. Those elections are to be conducted in the manner provided by the "*Regulation of Elections Act, 1858*," and the "*Corrupt Practices Act, 1858*" is made applicable to provincial elections. The essential difference made between the elections for the General Assembly, and for the Provinces, is in the trial of controverted elections; much as the English law has been modified to suit the circumstances of the former, it is still not at all suitable to the latter. After much deliberation it has been considered best to put controverted Provincial elections upon the same footing as Municipal elections in England; and this is done by the 9th and 10th sections of the Act.
- No 60. "*Provincial Lawsuits Act*."—Was passed to enable Superintendents to sue and be sued. Great inconvenience has been felt from the want of such a power.
- No 61. "*Lunatics Ordinance Amendment Act*."—This Act makes further provision than previously existed for the safe custody of persons suffering under mental derangement.
- No 62. "*Bankers' Drafts Act*."—Removes doubts as to the manner in which cross written Drafts on bankers shall be payable.
- No 63. "*Appropriation Act, No. 1*."—By this Act the usual provision is made for the Public Service to the 30th June, 1858, out of the Ordinary Revenue of the Colony.
- No 64. "*Appropriation Act, No. 2*."—Grants out of the Ordinary Revenue a Supply for the service of the year ending June 30th, 1859, which Supply section xi. extends at the same annual rate for another year, in the event of the next Session of the General Assembly not being held before the 30th June, 1859. The Act also appropriates the sum of £53,641 5s. out of the New Zealand Loan, for the service of the Land Purchase Department.
- No 65. See Memorandum of 29th September.
- No 66. "*Surplus Revenues Act*."—This is a measure of considerable importance to the finance of the Colony.