

question of bringing the two Houses into harmony, which I believed would be the practical upshot if I granted the application of Ministers, could not arise until the Chambers declined to give effect to the result of an appeal to the country, and that had not yet happened.

8. Mr. Ballance undertook to communicate my decision to the Cabinet, and in the afternoon he informed me that he had done so; that they considered an addition of nine to the Legislative Council worse than useless, and that they cannot, therefore, accept it; that they will reintroduce into Parliament the measures that were not passed last session, and if they are not carried they will appeal to the country.

9. Your Lordship will observe that my especial difficulty has been this: that I have not had at my disposal any means of ascertaining the exact amount of nominations that could have been given without altering the balance of parties in the Upper House, and that I had, therefore, no alternative but to take up the position of, and act on the information supplied me by, my predecessor. I felt this so much that I said to Mr. Ballance that, if he cordially concurred in the step, I would send for the leader of the Opposition in the Council, and ask him to tell me frankly if the number required by Ministers would imperil his majority. Mr. Ballance replied that it would make a precedent of an unusual character (which I admitted, remarking that the occasion was an unusual one), and said that the Opposition leader would be bound to give no reply that would please the Government.

10. I have thus, my Lord, done my best to perform my duty adequately in the very difficult position in which I have been placed. I have looked at the matter from a constitutional point of view. Within a fortnight of the date of my taking the oath to preserve the Constitution of the colony I have been called upon to increase, for party purposes, the Upper House to a point which might have given the Government a preponderance in it which they would not otherwise possess before an appeal has been made to the country. If I had given way, it might have tided over the difficulty for the time, but it would have established a precedent, which would most certainly have been followed by the Opposition, whenever its turn of power arrives.

The policy of the Government may be to bring the Legislative Council into disrepute, with a view to its abolition, or it may be only intended to frighten the Council into passing the measures of the Government. I do not believe that the Legislative Council will be abolished easily; but, if abolition does come, I submit to your Lordship that the ending of the Chamber would be preferable to its retention in a condition so manipulated as to possess merely a semblance of independence.

I have, &c.,
GLASGOW.

The Right Hon. the Lord Knutsford, Downing Street, London.

No. 7.

LORD KNUTSFORD to the Earl of GLASGOW.

(Answered by Nos. 8 and 112.)

(Telegram.)

10th August, 1892.

THE figures in your despatch of 22nd June (No. 6) show that the Legislative Council consists of thirty-one members of the Opposition and five Ministerialists.

If twelve were added to the latter, a large Opposition majority would still remain; therefore the proposal of Premier seems to me a reasonable one. The existence of an Upper House largely disproportionate to what appears to be the present political feeling in the colony may be imperilled unless a more even balance of parties is secured. Despatch will be sent by mail.

No. 8.

THE EARL OF GLASGOW to LORD KNUTSFORD.

(Received 11th August, 1892.)

(Telegram.)

11th August, 1892.

FROM information which I have received, I consider that the Legislative Council consists of the Speaker, twelve Ministerialists, and twenty-two members of the Opposition, four of these Councillors being absent from the colony.

THE difference between these figures and the estimate of Premier, as I reported in my despatch of 22nd June (No. 6), is accounted for by disapproval of certain measures which were not brought before the country at election, and which deprive the Government of considerable support in the Council.

REFERENCE from Ministers to the Secretary of State for the Colonies on this subject leaves by post to-day, with my remarks.

No. 9.

THE EARL OF GLASGOW to LORD KNUTSFORD.

(Received 15th September, 1892. Answered by Nos. 10 and 11.)

MY LORD,—

Wellington, 8th August, 1892.

I have the honour to forward herewith a memorandum from my Ministers, dated the 5th August, calling your attention to a difference which has occurred, to my deep regret, between myself and them, regarding appointments to the Legislative Council. I addressed a despatch on the 22nd day of June (No. 6), giving all information on the subject up to date, and I now annex a schedule containing a list of papers bearing on the subject, the papers themselves accompanying this despatch.

2—A. 7A.