

With regard to the returns which you enclose in the despatch under acknowledgment, I would observe that I had to arrive at my conclusions on the materials then in my possession. In one of the memoranda from your Government it was stated that some of the vital points of policy in their measures were defeated by large majorities in the Legislative Council, and that an inspection of the division lists of the preceding session showed that the Government could, as a rule, only rely on the support of five members. The returns now sent do not show to what extent the divisions referred to therein proceeded upon party lines, and I do not feel able to draw the inference from them that your Ministry would, with the help of the twelve appointments, have necessarily commanded a majority for party purposes in the Legislative Council. Indeed, it appears that in Committee on the Land Bill, the Bill to which Mr. Ballance especially referred as rendering it necessary to strengthen his position in the Legislative Council, the Government were only able to muster, at the most, six supporters, and at times only two, three, and four.

As the matter has now been disposed of by the appointment of the additional members reported in your Despatch No. 57, of the 2nd December, 1892, I have only to add that I have received with great satisfaction the assurance that you do not feel that your personal position has been in any way detrimentally affected by the fact that my decision has been against your view, and I fully recognise the difficulties which you felt in regard to the question, and your desire to represent the whole matter to me in the fullest light.

I am, &c.,

RIPON.

Governor the Right Hon. the Earl of Glasgow, G.C.M.G., &c.

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