

Enclosures.

MEMORANDUM for His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 1st December, 1896.

THE Premier has the honour to forward, for transmission to the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, a synopsis, prepared by the Law Officers, of the Acts passed at the third session of the Twelfth Parliament of New Zealand.

R. J. SEDDON.

SYNOPSIS of the ACTS passed by the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of NEW ZEALAND in the Session of Parliament held in the Year 1896.

Public General Acts.

No. 1. The Imprest Supply Act.—This Act authorises advances of, in all, £341,000 out of the Public Account and the other accounts mentioned therein for the service of the year ending the 31st March, 1897, the moneys to be charged in manner expressed in the Appropriation Acts passed in the session.

No. 2. The Representation Act Amendment Act.—This Act provides for two permanent Commissioners, one for the North Island and one for the Middle Island (including Stewart Island), to be appointed by the Governor, in lieu of the Commission appointed under the Act of 1887, for the purpose of periodically dividing the colony into electoral districts.

No. 3. The Imprest Supply Act (No. 2).—This Act authorises further advances of, in all, £329,500 out of the Public Account and the other accounts mentioned therein, for the same purpose and to be charged in the same manner as in the case of the former Imprest Supply Act.

No. 4. The Imprest Supply Act (No. 3).—This Act authorises further advances of, in all, £237,000 out of the same accounts, for the same purpose, and to be charged in the same manner as in the case of the last previous Imprest Supply Act.

No. 5. Rating on Unimproved Value.—This Act provides for the exemption of improvements from rating in every district the ratepayers whereof have by vote adopted the Act. Special provision is made to prevent the security of loans secured on rates being prejudicially affected.

No. 6. The Gold Duties Act Amendment Act.—This Act amends the previous Act by requiring every person who makes the prescribed declaration of the quantity of gold purchased by him to send a copy thereof to the Clerk of the Council of each county or borough named therein.

No. 7. Criminal Code Act Amendment Act.—This Act raises the age of consent from fifteen years to sixteen, and amends in other respects the existing law as to offences against females, and otherwise.

No. 8. Railways Compensation Adjustment Act.—This Act provides for the payment of compensation for certain land taken for railway purposes.

No. 9. Municipal Corporations Act Amendment Act.—This Act provides that ratepayers on the defaulters' list for arrears of rates may vote by paying the arrears and costs at any time before the poll is taken.

No. 10. Imprest Supply Act (No. 4).—This Act authorises further advances of, in all, £236,000 out of the same accounts, for the same purpose, and to be charged in the same manner as in the case of the last-preceding Imprest Supply Act.

No. 11. Female Law Practitioners Act.—This Act opens the profession of the law to women.

No. 12. Public Morgues Act.—This Act requires the local authority of every city or borough containing not less than one thousand inhabitants to provide a suitable building for the purposes of a public morgue.

No. 13. Aid to Public Works and Land Settlement Act.—This Act authorises the raising of, in all, one million pounds for the various public purposes specified therein.

No. 14. Imprest Supply Act (No. 5).—This Act authorises further advances of, in all, £300,000 out of the accounts and funds mentioned therein, for the same purpose and to be charged in the same manner as in the case of the last-preceding Imprest Supply Act.

No. 15. Married Persons Summary Separation Act.—This Act gives a Stipendiary Magistrate jurisdiction to grant an order operating in the same manner as a decree of judicial separation. Application for the order may be made by either husband or wife on the grounds of conviction for assault and fine of five pounds or upwards therefor, or imprisonment for more than two months, or of desertion or persistent cruelty, or neglect to maintain.

No. 16. Photographic Copyright Act.—This Act extends the protection of copyright law to certain photographs without registration. The period of protection is five years from the date of the first taking of the photograph.

No. 17. Public Revenues Acts Amendment Act.—This Act makes various technical amendments of the existing law, and extends the time for the making-up of the quarterly and yearly abstracts of the Public Account. It also makes further provision for the recovery of moneys illegally expended or applied by local authorities, and for the audit of certain local bodies' accounts.

No. 18. Abattoirs and Slaughterhouses Amendment Act.—This Act amends the existing law by making it a sufficient defence to proceedings for permitting drainage to flow from any slaughterhouse or abattoir into any stream running through the Borough of Green Island that the stream is not thereby polluted. It also permits *bond fide* farmers to slaughter cattle in certain quantities and under certain conditions.

No. 19. Chinese Immigrants Act Amendment Act.—This Act raises the poll-tax from £10 to £100, and the ship's tonnage per single Chinese from 100 to 200 tons. The Asiatic Restriction Act of this session contains similar provisions as regards Asiatics; but this measure having been reserved for the Royal assent, the Act relating to Chinese was deemed necessary.