

MESSAGE No. 24.

The Officer administering the Government, considers it his duty to apprise the House of Representatives, that in consequence of the resignation of their seats in the Executive Council, by Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Weld, Mr. Sewell, and Mr. Bartley, he is preparing a Message to the House, which will fully explain to them his views and wishes, with regard to the relations of the Executive towards the two Houses of the Legislature, during his temporary administration of the Government. He has a confident hope, that the Message in question will be ready for delivery on the day after tomorrow, not later than two o'clock in the afternoon.

R. H. WYNYARD,

Officer administering the Government.

Government House, Auckland, 3rd August, 1854.

MESSAGE No. 25.

The Officer Administering the Government, with reference to the resignation of their seats in the Executive Council by Mr. Fitzgerald, Mr. Weld, Mr. Sewell, and Mr. Bartley, and in compliance with the promise made by his Message of the day before yesterday, proceeds to explain to the House of Representatives, as fully as the time will allow, his views and wishes with regard to the relations of the Executive towards the two Houses of the Legislature during his accidental and temporary administration of the Government.

He trusts that the House not less conscious than himself of the grave importance of the present crisis in the affairs of the colony, will give to the whole subject the same calm and deliberate consideration as he has himself bestowed upon it.

He begs of the House to revert to the position in which he was placed when His Excellency the Governor departed from the colony.

The very title of the office which then devolved upon him, shows that the only duties which it was absolutely incumbent on him to perform, were those of administering the Government for a brief period; that is, only for the purpose of maintaining the ordinary routine of public business until he should be relieved by the arrival of a regularly appointed Governor, not owing his authority to the accident of his being the Senior Officer in command of the troops, but obtaining it from the deliberate confidence of her Majesty.

But the Officer administering the Government did not confine himself within the safe and easy limits of attending only to established routine. Impressed with a belief that the colony both needed and desired legislation without delay by the General Assembly, he took upon himself, contrary to general usage as respects the functions of mere administrators of colonial governments, to convene the Parliament of the colony. For having spontaneously incurred this unusual responsibility, the House of Representatives saw fit, to convey to him an expression of their thanks in the following words:—"Entirely appreciating the difficulty of your Excellency's position, and the responsibility of initiating a course of policy during your temporary administration of the Government, we desire to record our deep and lasting sense of the great benefit which your Excellency has conferred on the colony by convening the General Assembly at the earliest possible period after it became your duty to assume the Government of New Zealand."

This was said in answer to the speech by the head of the Government whereby the session was opened; and it therefore indicates, by the complimentary allusion to the initiation of a policy by him, that Ministerial Responsibility was not at that moment in the contemplation of the House. Presently afterwards, however, and very suddenly, that question became so prominent as to exclude every other subject from the consideration of the House. This question involves principles which, when viewed as practically applicable to this Colony, were entirely new to the Officer administering the Government, as, down to a time not long preceding the convention of the Assembly, those principles had been to the thoughts of the colonists, with the exception of a very few of the most active political minds. When, however, that question was brought before him in a practical form, and by means of proceedings in the House which could not but command his most serious attention, he examined it with care; and, becoming satisfied that a concession of the principle was both desirable in itself on general grounds, and necessary in