

Amendment moved by Mr. O'Neill—That all the words of the question be omitted, with a view to insert the following, in lieu thereof,—that the payment of Members shall be on the same scale, and in the same manner as last session.

Question—that the words proposed to be omitted do stand part of the question—put and negatived.

Whereupon Amendment put and passed.

The Speaker and Members adjourned to the Chamber of the Legislative Council to meet His Excellency the Governor.

His Excellency having arrived at the Council Chamber, proceeded to an elevated seat near the Speaker's Chair.

His Excellency declared his assent, in Her Majesty's name, to the following Bills.

1. Naturalization Bill.
2. Land Claimant's Ordinance Amendment Bill.
3. English Acts Bill.
4. Appropriation Bill.

His Excellency then read the following address:—

*Honorable Gentlemen of the Legislative Council, and Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,—*

I consider myself fortunate in having arrived in New Zealand at a time when the General Assembly is in Session, as it affords me an opportunity of stating the views I entertain on certain subjects.

Before entering on other matter, I desire to announce my intention to continue the policy hitherto adopted towards the Aborigines, in maintaining inviolate their right to their land, and securing to them an impartial administration of justice.

The communication, which I took the earliest opportunity of laying before the two Houses, will have satisfied you that it is the desire of her Majesty's Government that this Colony shall enjoy the fullest measure of self-government which is consistent with its allegiance to the British Crown. Nor are these sentiments confined to any particular party in the Imperial Parliament, but are shared in by those who differ on most other subjects.

Animated by the same feeling, I am prepared to carry out in its integrity the principle of Ministerial Responsibility, being convinced that any other arrangement would be ineffective to preserve that harmony between the Legislative and Executive branches of the Government, which is so essential to the successful conduct of public affairs.

Entertaining these views, it will be my object to secure, as early as possible, the introduction of this form of Government, which has been so earnestly solicited by the popularly constituted legislature of this Colony. Indeed, the public interest demands that the present state of transition should be allowed to continue no longer than circumstances require.

As soon as the necessary arrangements have been made, I shall be prepared to give my confidence to those gentlemen who possess that of the Legislature, and whenever changes may become necessary, I shall permit neither private interests nor private friendships to influence my public conduct.

*Gentlemen of the House of Representatives,—*

I have much pleasure in thanking you for the liberal provision you have made for the public service, and you may rest assured that the supplies voted shall be expended with the utmost economy consistent with efficiency.

*Gentlemen of the Assembly,—*

Under the peculiar circumstances of the present Session, legislation has not been of an important character.

Questions of great public interest have not been dealt with; these have been rightly deferred until they can be considered by a Legislature more fully attended, and assisted in their deliberations by a responsible Ministry.

All the Bills which have been passed by the Assembly I had much pleasure in assenting to on behalf of Her Majesty, and I trust these measures will be found to effect beneficial changes in the Law.

In the position in which I now am, it would be impossible to deal satisfactorily with many subjects of importance, I shall therefore defer all such matters, not requiring immediate attention, until the contemplated change in the Government shall have taken place.

In the exercise of the power conferred upon me by the Constitution Act, it is my intention to dissolve this Assembly without delay.

In the absence of any measures on the part of the General Assembly, determining otherwise, the next Session will be convened and held in Auckland, as soon as it may be convenient to the Members from the distant Provinces to leave their private affairs.