

Enclosure.

Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

At the request of the Premier, I beg to submit herewith a synopsis of the Acts passed by the General Assembly in the present session up to and including the 16th instant. I also include a special report on the Governor's Salary and Allowances Bill, which has been reserved by His Excellency for the signification of Her Majesty's pleasure thereon.

Crown Law Offices, 21st August, 1900.

W. S. REID, Solicitor-General.

SYNOPSIS of CERTAIN ACTS passed by the GENERAL ASSEMBLY of NEW ZEALAND, in the SESSION now in PROGRESS, up to and including the 16th day of August, 1900.

Public General Acts.

No. 1. "The Bubonic Plague Prevention Act, 1900," has been passed to make special provision to check the disease known as the bubonic plague, and is intended to operate only in such defined areas as may be declared subject to the Act. It is intended to supplement the ordinary law relating to public health, and confers upon the Governor the powers of the Boards of Health or local authorities within any area subject to the Act. Additional stringent powers are conferred on the Governor, whose acts are to be deemed acts of State and not to be questioned in any Court. The Act is temporary in its operation, and expires on the tenth day after the close of the present session of Parliament.

No. 2. "The Imprest Supply Act, 1900," grants £361,000, £9,000, and £100,000 towards the services of the current financial year.

No. 3. "The Imprest Supply Act, 1900 (No. 2)," also grants £386,000, £9,000, and £125,000 towards the services of the current financial year.

No. 4. "The Lunatics Act Amendment Act, 1900," amends the principal Act of 1882 by appointing the Public Trustee to be committee of estates of persons found lunatic in certain cases, and upon the terms set out in the Act.

No. 5. "The Public Contracts Act, 1900," provides that in all "public contracts" (which expression is defined) contractors shall be deemed to have agreed with their workmen to observe the usual length of the working-day, and to pay the wages or other remuneration usually observed and considered fair for the description of labour in the locality to which such contracts relate. The working-day is not to exceed eight hours, and there is to be no "contracting out" of the benefits of the Act. Penalties are prescribed for breaches of the law.

No. 6. "The Native Interpreters Classification Act, 1900," provides for the classification into first and second grades of Native interpreters, who are employed and licensed for various purposes under the Acts relating to Native lands. Regulations may be made by the Governor for examination of persons applying for licenses, and the Governor is also empowered to reduce interpreters to a lower grade for sufficient causes.

No. 7. "The Weights and Measures Act Amendment Act, 1900," amends the principal Act of 1868 in several particulars.

No. 8. "The Ministers' Salaries and Allowances Amendment Act, 1900," amends the Act of like title passed in 1887, provides for an additional Minister, and makes increased annual appropriations for the salaries of Ministers of the Crown in future. The Act also recognises certain additional Ministerial offices, and otherwise amends the existing law.

No. 9. "The British Investors in New Zealand Government Securities Act, 1900," is to facilitate the investment of trust and other funds in the United Kingdom in New Zealand Government securities. For this purpose the Colonial Treasurer is empowered and directed to pay out of the New Zealand Public Account in London, without further appropriation than the Act, any sum which, by any final judgment, decree, rule, or order of any Court of competent jurisdiction in the United Kingdom is adjudged or declared to be payable by the Government of New Zealand in respect of any New Zealand Government securities, or any sum which may be required in order to enable the Registrar of Stock, to which the Imperial Act intituled "The Colonial Stock Act, 1877," applies, to comply with any judgment, decree, or order with which, under section 20 of that Act, he is required to comply. The warrant of the Colonial Treasurer or Agent General, specifying the sum to be paid, is declared to be sufficient authority to the Audit Office and the Commissioners having the control of the Public Account in London to cause the requisite moneys to be issued out of that account. Section 5 declares that if any Act of the General Assembly of New Zealand is passed which, in the opinion of the Imperial Government, in any way injuriously affects the rights or remedies of the holders of New Zealand Government securities, or alters the terms of the contract under which the securities were created or issued, then that Act may properly be disallowed by Her Majesty.

Local Acts.

No. 1. "The Westport Harbour Board Loan Act, 1900," enables the Westport Harbour Board to borrow an additional sum not exceeding £50,000 for construction of harbour-works, subject to the provisions of previous legislation herein, and to the terms of "The Harbours Act, 1878."

No. 2. "The Greymouth Harbour Board Loan Act, 1900," enables the Greymouth Harbour Board to borrow an additional sum of £50,000 for construction of harbour-works, subject to like provisions as in the last previous Bill in this synopsis.

No. 3. "The Dunedin City and Suburban Tramways Act, 1900," enables the Corporation of the City of Dunedin to purchase or otherwise acquire tramways for the use of the inhabitants, and also to construct such tramways under the provisions of "The Tramways Act, 1894," which is