

The Legislative Council... The members were present, except... The subject has long occupied a large share of the attention both of the colonists and of Her Majesty's Government...

Legislative Council.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 6TH, 1850.

Present, His Excellency the Governor, the Secretary to Government, Attorney-General, Auditor-General, Collector of Customs, the Hon. Sir Andrew Stokenstrom, the Hon. Mr. Fairbairn, the Hon. Mr. Broad, and the Hon. Mr. Reitz.

The Governor opened the proceedings by reading the following Minute:—
HONORABLE MEMBERS.—You are aware that one of the principal objects for which you have been now called together is to pass an Ordinance or Ordinances, which are to form the basis of a new Constitution for the government of the colony, founded upon liberal principles of popular representation.

This subject has long occupied a large share of the attention both of the colonists and of Her Majesty's Government, and was particularly urged upon the consideration both of my immediate predecessor and myself, when we respectively assumed the government.

Having been directed by the Secretary of State to report upon the fitness of the Colony to receive a representative Constitution, I called upon the principal officers of the Executive Government, and the judges of the Supreme Court, to furnish me with their views of the matter, and in reply to this reference I received a series of minutes and memoranda, which, together with my own observations thereon, were transmitted to the Secretary of State in my despatch No. 100, of the 29th July, 1849.

These despatches, with the minutes and memoranda above referred to, were, by my directions, sent upon the table of this Council, on the 10th July, 1849.

I have since received two despatches from Sir George Grey on the same subject, one (No. 410, of the 31st January, 1850) enclosing a report of the Committee of Privy Council for Plantations and Trade, laying down the general principles of the new Constitution which Her Majesty's Government were prepared to grant to the colony; the other (No. 408, of the 29th May, 1850) enclosing the Queen's Letters Patent, founded upon the above report, and empowering this Council to pass an Ordinance or Ordinances for constituting a Parliament for the Colony.

These despatches and their enclosures I now lay upon your table.

The duty which this Council is thus required to undertake is a most important one. It falls to be so throughout the empire, and I am persuaded that it is unnecessary to comment to you on your most earnest care and deliberation.

The Letters Patent to which I have already alluded, ordain that Parliament shall consist of the Governor, six elected Legislative Council members, over which the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court is ex officio to preside, and six elected Legislative Assembly members. The outline thus presented, it is left for the present Council to fill up, subject to the approval of Her Majesty in Privy Council.

The following, then, appear to be the principal points to which your attention should be directed.

1. The qualification of electors of the Representative Assembly.

2. The qualification of members of the Council.

3. The qualification of members of the Assembly.

4. The manner in which the members of each Chamber shall respectively be returned.

5. The duration of the existence of the Council and the Assembly.

6. The manner in which the Governor may dissolve the Council and the Assembly.

7. The manner in which the Governor may appoint and remove members of the Council and the Assembly.

8. The manner in which the Governor may appoint and remove members of the Executive Council.

9. The manner in which the Governor may appoint and remove members of the Judicial Council.

10. The manner in which the Governor may appoint and remove members of the Legislative Council.

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