

I am pleased to be able to inform you that, with a view to establishing the fishing industry of the Dominion upon a sound basis, the Government has arranged for the Chief Administrator of the Canadian Fisheries Department to visit New Zealand.

You will be gratified to learn that the system of compulsory military training is firmly established, and that its beneficial effect upon the character and physique of the youth of the Dominion is already apparent. The excellent spirit which pervades the whole Force and the keenness displayed by all ranks augur well for the future.

My Government has invited General Sir Ian Hamilton, Inspector-General of the Oversea Forces, to visit New Zealand. The invitation has been accepted, and this distinguished officer will arrive in the Dominion in April, 1914.

It is a matter for congratulation that employment, especially in the rural districts, can be obtained without difficulty.

It is proposed to submit for your consideration some important amendments to the Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act, which it is hoped will enable the parties to industrial disputes to effect a speedy and reasonable settlement without involving the country in the trade dislocations and industrial losses which strikes and lockouts invariably cause.

A Bill consolidating and amending the Shops and Offices Act will also be introduced.

During the past year a considerable area of land has been purchased in pursuance of the powers contained in the Workers' Dwellings Act. A Bill will be introduced to enable the operations of this useful measure to be more easily applied to country districts. The estimates of expenditure for this year will include a sum sufficient to provide for this work.

A gentleman of high standing in the railway world has been appointed General Manager of Railways, and will take up his duties in September next.

Mr. H. W. Northcroft, N.Z.C., a gentleman well known throughout the Dominion, who served as a Stipendiary Magistrate for many years, has been appointed Resident Commissioner at the Cook Islands.

The important question of the settlement of areas of unused Native land has received the earnest consideration of my Advisers, and a Bill will be laid before you containing provisions which will make for the more expeditious settlement of such lands. A measure dealing with the rating of Native lands will also be submitted to you.

A section of the Royal Commission appointed by His Majesty to inquire into the trade of the Empire visited New Zealand, and every facility was afforded by my Advisers to enable it to gain the fullest information regarding the trade of the Dominion.

Commissions were appointed during the recess to inquire into the subjects of forestry and the working of the Public Trust Office. The reports of these Commissions will be duly placed before you.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The state of the country's finance made it necessary that the Hon. the Minister of Finance should pay a visit to Great Britain during the recess. You will be pleased to hear that his mission was eminently successful, and that, notwithstanding the existence of unfavourable financial conditions in England, he was able to complete arrangements of a highly satisfactory character.

Particulars of the various transactions which the Minister successfully negotiated will be submitted to you for consideration.

The public revenue is steadily increasing, and you will doubtless be gratified to learn that as a result of the increased taxation upon large estates the receipts derived from this source have been considerably augmented, and, more important still, that subdivision and settlement have been encouraged and accelerated.

The estimates for the services of the ensuing year will be laid before you without delay.