

The loan of £5,000,000 placed in London at a minimum price of £96 and at a rate of interest of 6 per cent. was fully subscribed, and became almost immediately saleable at a premium. In comparison with loans recently offered by other self-governing parts of the Empire, the price and rate of interest and the prompt advance of selling-price afford gratifying proof of the stability of New Zealand's credit on the London market. The presence of my Prime Minister in England enabled him to afford valuable advice and assistance in his conferences with the financial experts who were consulted in the determination of the terms of issue.

A new tariff has been prepared and will be submitted for your scrutiny and revision. The preparation has engaged the attention of my Minister of Customs and of a number of experts who have been consulted.

You will appreciate that the presentment of a tariff prohibits any intimation at this stage of the session of the proposals of my Ministers with regard to alterations in the methods or subjects of taxation.

You will also be asked to give consideration to certain amendments of the Land and Income Tax Act.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

A Bill for the establishment of certain main arterial highways, and making provision for the finance of construction and maintenance of such highways, will be submitted to you. My Ministers consider this subject to be one of special importance, and trust that you will find it possible to establish on a firm and lasting basis a system under which the definition of, and the expenditure upon, such roads may be placed under specially competent control.

You will be asked to repeal the present Mortgages Extension Act of 1919, and its amendment made during the short session of this year, applying the principle of extension to deposits, and to substitute an Act providing for the gradual repayment of the principal sums, on condition of the punctual payment of interest at a rate fairly representing the amount which the borrower in either case would be required to pay if he raised the money to discharge his obligations.

A Bill will be submitted amending the law of libel in certain respects: amongst others, by providing for privilege for fair reports of the proceedings of local authorities and public meetings, and enabling the Press in the absence of malice to print such matter without liability.

A Bill consolidating the land laws has also been prepared for your consideration. Such an Act has long been desired, but the labour involved in its special consolidation has hitherto prevented it being undertaken. An opportunity is thus afforded for considerable amendments of the existing law, and several such amendments have been incorporated in the consolidation, for which your approval is asked. Doubtless other amendments may be proposed, and my Ministers earnestly trust that the time at your disposal will enable you to complete the task.

A Forestry Act, making provision for the establishment of forestry on a scientific and practical basis in New Zealand, has also been prepared and is ready for your consideration.

Several other measures, which it is unnecessary to specify at this stage, are also in print: among them a Bill to enable the adoption of the Imperial Act which provides for the enforcement in any part of the Empire of maintenance orders in favour of wives and others issued by a Court having jurisdiction in the Dominion or colony where the order is made.

Under the direction of the Compiler of Statutes a compilation of the law relating to Companies has been drafted, and will be laid upon the tables of both Houses. The English Companies Act of 1908 was passed in the same year as the last compilation of the New Zealand Companies Acts, and it has been found desirable to incorporate some of the provisions of the English Act which do not appear in the New Zealand Act. Care has been taken to preserve the New Zealand law relating to private companies in its present form. My Ministers propose that the Companies Act should not be proceeded with beyond its first