

A hundred years ago, when the people of New Zealand gained for themselves the right of responsible self-government, it would have required a prophetic imagination to have foreseen the possibility of the present occasion. But in these hundred years New Zealand has grown to be a sovereign and mature State, while the ocean surrounding these bountiful islands has become a main highway in a world which has itself been transformed. I welcome the ease with which, in these times, it is possible to travel from one part of the Commonwealth to another. It will always be my endeavour to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by our age to enter with ever closer sympathy and understanding into the problems and aspirations of my Government and people in New Zealand.

Though the world is making such rapid technical progress it has not—unhappily—been able to keep pace in the study and practice of the arts of peace. Nevertheless I am confident that, with that openness of mind to be expected from a new country, my Government and people in New Zealand will continue to contribute worthily towards the lessening of international tensions and the preservation of concord amongst the nations.

In the firm partnership of European and Maori peoples, for which New Zealand is justly renowned, you have set a high example. I have been deeply moved by the fervent expressions of loyalty and enthusiasm conveyed to me by the Maori people, for whom I cherish the highest respect and affection; and I am proud to see how my subjects of both races in this country are moving forward in unity together, each determined to make their full contribution to the progress and advancement of New Zealand.

I am also proud of the way in which my Government and people of New Zealand are discharging their trust in promoting the well-being of the peoples of the Pacific islands under their administration. I regret that it was not possible for me on this journey to visit these Island Territories; but their people know that I have the closest interest in their welfare and they are assured of my wholehearted affection.

New Zealand, through her steady progress in matters of social welfare and in the development of her agricultural and other industries, has won international esteem. It is my earnest hope and expectation that this progress will continue, and bring increased benefits and prosperity to her people.

My Ministers have deemed it advisable to introduce at this session of Parliament a Bill to amend the Judicature Act. This amendment, by providing for an alteration in the constitution of the two divisions of the Court of Appeal, will make for greater efficiency in the despatch of Court business. The passage of this measure at the present session of Parliament will enable it to be brought into effect in time for the first sittings of the Court of Appeal in the current year.

I wish to express most sincerely my warm appreciation of the arrangements which my Ministers have made for me to travel extensively and to meet my subjects in this country.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God will rest upon your counsels.