



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
(PROVINCE OF NELSON).

PUBLISHED BY AUTHORITY.

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By his Honor's command,

HENRY ADAMS, *Solicitor of the Province.*

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PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

THURSDAY, Nov. 23, 1854.

THE Superintendent opened the Second Session of the Provincial Council, at the Council Chamber, at twelve o'clock at noon, when his Honor delivered the following

ADDRESS.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COUNCIL—

It is with much satisfaction that I am again enabled to resort to your advice and assistance, in the consideration of those measures calculated to maintain for this Province that progressive prosperity which has been for some years its distinguishing feature.

2. Constant and steady as has been the progress of this portion of New Zealand, it will be gratifying to you to learn that all the indications of a rapid advance in the circumstances of a country have, during the past year, been in this Province especially marked. The receipts of the Customs and Crown Lands departments both forcibly illustrate the increased means of the community: the former having amounted to £8,957 6s. 11d., or nearly double that of the preceding year; and the latter to £27,940 0s. 3d.; while the purchase by actual residents of

no less than 98,284 acres of land, during the year, affords unmistakable evidence of an appreciation of the great capabilities of the Province by those best competent to judge of them.

3. While the Province is thus steadily advancing in material wealth, it is also a matter of sincere congratulation that the moral character of the community retains its high standard. The increase of population has led to no corresponding increase in the commission of crime, which, on the contrary, has in this Province become an event of rare occurrence amongst its permanent inhabitants. Although no sitting of the Supreme Court had taken place for two years, the recent session was marked by but two convictions, neither of them for offences of serious magnitude: and if the seamen, committed to prison for desertion, are omitted from the cases tried in the Resident Magistrate's Court, it will be found, on an examination of the Returns, that the convictions for petty offences during the last twelve months were in the proportion of but two per cent. to the population.

4. So eminently favourable a state of public welfare may in a great measure be accounted for by the rapid improvement in the circumstances of the colonists, the absence of any sense of comparative degradation, and the consequent feeling of self-respect enjoyed by each member of the community: and prominently

is it, I believe, attributable to the almost universal possession of land, upwards of one-third of the whole number of Crown Grants already prepared being in favour of separate individuals, comprising more than one-half of the adult male population; while the great majority of those not yet owners of land could, did they so desire it, become so.

5. The consequent interest in the welfare of the Province of so large a proportion of its inhabitants cannot but exercise a permanent influence on the character of its population; it having been well observed that the tenure of land is the most stable link of attachment—the strongest bar against popular license—the most prolific source of peaceful social progress. A numerous and industrious rural population is at once the source and the safeguard of the prosperity of a colony.

6. I am happy to be able to inform you that after repeated requisitions to that effect, the agreement for the purchase from the natives of large blocks of land, well adapted for colonization, will soon be concluded; the Commissioner, Mr. M'Lean, being now about to collect the natives interested in the sale; and the necessary steps will immediately be taken to survey reserves for the use of the natives, when ample provision will be made for the future requirements of themselves and their descendants.

7. While reviewing the sources of permanent success which the Province possesses, I must at the same time advert to the one great drawback to its present progress, arising from the scarcity of labour, available either for Public Works or the operations of private individuals: the presence of this essential element in the prosperity of a community being alone wanting to enable the province to attain to that position which its fertility of soil, valuable minerals, and many other natural advantages, ought to ensure for it, but without which the individual energy of its inhabitants must remain cramped—its collective importance diminished.

8. The funds appropriated in the last Session to the introduction of immigrants have been transmitted to England, to provide passages to Nelson for persons whose friends here have applied to have them sent out under the system of assisted passages. The total number of applications forwarded during the last seven months being 386. An immigration from Melbourne, where a want of employment has for some time been felt, may also be expected. In order efficiently to conduct a system of immigration to Nelson at regular intervals, it is advisable that an Agent should be appointed in England, by whom a selection of immigrants, of the class and character most desirable to introduce, might be effected in a manner which would not otherwise be practicable.

9. By a recent Act of the General Assembly, the very important power of issuing Regulations for the sale and disposal of the waste lands of the Province, subject to the approval of the Governor, has been vested in the Superintendent and Provincial Council. An Act to authorize the Assembly to transfer all its powers on this

subject to the Provincial Council, has also been passed, and reserved for her Majesty's confirmation. The inhabitants of the Province have consequently an opportunity of declaring, through their representatives in the local legislature, in what manner they would desire that the future colonization of the country should be conducted.

10. Regarding the waste lands, principally, if not entirely, as a means for fixing a population in the country, it might be advisable that the "Remission System," which is now being acted upon in the neighbouring colonies, should form a part of any future system of disposing of the public lands of this Province. I have long believed that such a system would work well in the settlement of a new country, and I am prepared to coöperate zealously with you in any endeavour to give effect to such a modification of it as may, after careful consideration, appear most applicable to the circumstances of the Province. Some encouragement to persons to explore for valuable minerals might also be afforded, by permitting the discoverers of such minerals to obtain at a fixed price portions of the land containing them, or by granting to them long leases, with a right of præemption at the end of the term, on the condition of the mines having been worked for a certain period.

11. But as the whole question of the disposal of the waste lands of the Crown is one which—while of the very greatest importance—was not contemplated as coming within the powers of the Provincial Council at the time of its election, the constituencies might reasonably desire to have the means of declaring by whom this power should be exercised. For other reasons, it has also appeared to me most desirable that the number of Members of the Council should be increased. This could be effected either by an enactment giving additional Members to some of the electoral districts, or by one which would re-apportion the whole representation in the Provincial Legislature, and a necessary feature of which would be a fresh election of all the Members of the Council, and of the Superintendent. The latter mode, although involving some delay, would be the most appropriate, as affording to the respective constituencies the fullest opportunity of selecting those to whom would be entrusted powers of the highest order.

12. In conformity with the terms of a resolution adopted by you in the last Session, I have been enabled to make an arrangement whereby Steam communication has been established between Nelson and other parts of the colony; the advantages resulting from which are very generally appreciated. The establishment of a steam vessel between Auckland and Australia has already been attended with so much benefit to that Province, as to demonstrate how desirable it is that this Province should possess a similar communication. On this subject I have conferred with the Superintendent of Wellington, by whose coöperation the former arrangement was mainly effected, and I believe that, should it meet with your approval, a regular communication with Aus-

tralia, by means of steam vessels, may be established.

13. Reports from the Commissioner of Public Works will be laid before you, detailing the nature of the works executed during the past year. When the difficulty of procuring the necessary labour in many of the districts and the high price of materials are considered, it will be satisfactory to you, to learn to what extent the means of communication throughout the Province have been improved.

14. I have received from Captain Drury, of H.M.S. Pandora, suggestions with reference to the placing of buoys and beacons in the Waimea river and French Pass. Tracings of those places, and of the Pelorus, have also been furnished to me by that officer, to whom the Province is thus much indebted for valuable information, which it might otherwise have been difficult to obtain.

15. The question of public Education is one than which none deserves your more attentive consideration, as affecting the future well-being, or the reverse, of the various communities now fast growing up throughout the Province. The universally-admitted necessity of educating those whom it is desired to elevate—the circumstance that the nature of the education supplied to the young will influence alike their character and conduct as members of society, and their capacity to exercise the political privileges conferred upon their fathers, and which, through them, will descend to their children—places upon all who have the power of so materially shaping the future of this colony, for good or for evil, an amount of responsibility which cannot be evaded. With reference to this subject, the copy of a resolution of the Legislative Council has been forwarded to me, with a request that I would obtain and transmit, for the consideration of the General Assembly, such information as might enable it to determine, whether the education of the youth of New Zealand could be extended or improved by the intervention of the State. It will be my duty to request an expression of your opinion on this question, the decision with respect to which chiefly rests with you. And I would suggest that in considering the subject, it should not be forgotten that a large amount of primary instruction is now being supplied by schools, established by various religious denominations and by private societies, the founders of which appear to be solely actuated by a generous zeal for the public good, well deserving the approbation of the Legislature of the Province.

16. By recent despatches I am informed that one-half of the net receipts from the Customs and Crown lands, for the year commencing on the first of July last, is to be retained by the General Government. As the amount which will be thus abstracted from the Revenue of the Provinces is nearly double that of the Expenditure authorized by the General Assembly, it cannot but be regarded as an unwise detention, in the General Treasury chest, of funds which might have been usefully employed on Public Works, and in promoting Immigration; and

the loss of which, for the present, will retard the progress of the respective Provinces whence they are derived. With respect to this subject, it is also to be regretted that no accounts of the sums received and spent by the General Government, whereby the amount due to the Province for the future might have been estimated with certainty, have been furnished for the last twelve months.

17. Notwithstanding this large deduction from the revenue, I am happy to be able to inform you that a very considerable sum will be at your disposal for the current financial year. The actual Revenue during the past year having exceeded that estimated by the sum of £16,023 18s. 10d., while the Expenditure was less than that authorized by £1,928 17s. 9d; the sum of £18,522 19s. 9d. is consequently available towards the Expenditure of the current year, which, when added to the estimated receipts for the same period, will, besides defraying the expenses of the various departments of the Government, furnish a sum of about £25,000 to be appropriated to Public Works and Immigration. A detailed financial statement will be forwarded to you with the Estimates.

18. Amongst the various measures which will be submitted for your consideration will be Bills

- For providing for the Health of Towns,
- For diverting Lines of Road,
- For establishing the Salary of the Superintendent,
- For preventing Injury to Highways and Fences,
- For collecting authentic Statistical Information, &c.,

19. The amount of duties consequent upon the progress of the Province which devolve upon the Superintendent, entails so constant an attendance upon the routine duties of the office, as materially to interfere with that most important function of a Government, the consideration of the measures essential to the future development of the Province, and renders it desirable that a Provincial Secretary should be appointed. A Bill with that object will accordingly be laid before you.

20. The necessity of establishing a Public Hospital will require your attention. On this subject I have received many valuable suggestions, which will be transmitted to you, from medical gentlemen resident in the Province, to whom I am under a great obligation for the trouble they have taken in recording their opinions on a question of much public importance.

21. I would recommend the appointment of a Committee of the Council to investigate and report upon the question of the debt to the New Zealand Company, in so far as it may affect this Province. Such a report will be of great assistance to Mr. Adderley, who has been appointed by the General Assembly for the purpose of conducting an investigation into the character of a debt, with respect to the imposition of which the inhabitants of the Province have

never had an opportunity of expressing their opinion.

22. Gentlemen — As the members of the Legislature of a territory as large as Scotland—comprising large tracts of land well adapted for agricultural and pastoral purposes—containing many magnificent harbours—possessing a climate remarkable, even in this colony, for its healthiness and enjoyability—you may proceed to consider the various measures calculated to

promote its advancement, with a well-founded belief that a wise course of legislation—equally careful of the present and provident for the future—and an active and zealous administration of its government, are alone necessary to ensure to this Province an amount of prosperity unsurpassed in any portion of her Majesty's dominions.

E. W. STAFFORD,
Superintendent.