



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
(PROVINCE OF NELSON).

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By His Honour's command,
ALFRED DOMETT, Provincial Secretary.

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NELSON, TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 1859.

No. 7.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, APRIL 12, 1859.

The Sixth Session of the Provincial Council was opened at the Council Chamber this day, at one o'clock, upon which occasion his Honour the Superintendent delivered the following Speech:—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF
THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL—

1. It having again become my duty to call you together for the purpose of devoting your attention to the public business of this province, it is with much pleasure that I find myself again enabled to congratulate you on its still increasing prosperity.

2. The absence of a single criminal case at the last half-yearly sitting of the Supreme Court again places the province in its usually high moral position, while its material progress is evidenced by its increasing revenue, both ordinary and territorial.

3. The estimate of the revenue for the past year, which I had the honour of laying before you during the last session, has, I am happy to inform you, been exceeded to the extent of nearly £8,000. This includes a refund by the General Government of £2,892 8s. 4d.; and the total increase over the previous year, quite irrespective of any sums raised under the Debenture Act, is upwards of £11,000. A

comparative statement of the amount of imports and exports for the year ending the 31st December last, gives the former at £150,498 13s. 5d., and the latter at £83,372 16s. 11d., at the port of Nelson alone; and as a large portion of wool is annually exported from the Wairau, by way of Wellington, while nearly the whole of the produce of the Amuri district is shipped at Canterbury, and considerable quantities of gold leave the province by coasting vessels and other means (of the value of which it is impossible at present to obtain a correct estimate), there can be little or no doubt that the value of the whole exported produce of the province has not been less, during the past year, than £123,000. From a return received this day from the Collector of Customs, it appears that the value of exports, for the quarter ending 31st March alone, amounted to nearly £50,000. To this gratifying state of things I have the pleasure to add that the heavy burden of £4,000 a-year, imposed by the General Assembly on this province as its portion of the New Zealand Company's debt, was re-considered in its last session, and it having been ably and satisfactorily shown that the arbitrary distribution of this debt had been based on an erroneous estimate of the respective capabilities of the several provinces concerned to bear the burden of it, and on an assumption that this province contained 18,000,000 of acres, the fact being that

only about half that quantity is to be found, a reduction has been effected on our portion of the debt to the extent of £1,700 a year.

4. I have also the pleasure of announcing to you that on its having been shown to the General Government that a deposit of £10,000 for the purchase of land within this province had been improperly received in, and treated as revenue belonging to, the year 1856, that sum has been placed to the credit of the province; and although in the readjustment of the accounts between the general revenue and that of the various provinces made by the General Government, in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution Act, nearly the whole sum has been absorbed in the liquidation of the debt of this province to the general revenue, incurred under the system of distribution actually carried out in previous years, yet the credit for the sum thus given to the province turned the balance in its favour, and obviated the necessity of providing a corresponding amount out of its present or future revenues.

5. Deeply impressed as I have always been with the conviction that the welfare of this, as of any new country, depends in a most important degree upon the general facilities it affords for communication and settlement by the existence of good roads, I have had much pleasure in applying to that purpose the funds voted for it last year; and I trust that by a judicious and liberal appropriation of our now flourishing revenues to this object, we may within another year or two see our province, throughout its whole length and breadth, traversed by a system of good and safe bridle roads, which will tend greatly to develop its unoccupied districts, and to increase our means of intercourse with the neighbouring province to the south of us. Our present knowledge of this part of the Middle Island seems to point out three great lines of road, which it should be our earnest endeavour to open and render practicable. The first should be the great line to Canterbury, down the Eastern Coast of the island, running from Nelson by the Pelorus, Wairau, Awatere, and the Kaikoras. Of this perhaps the most difficult part has been completed by the formation of a good bridle road towards the Pelorus Valley, over the Maungatapu, as far as the Heringa River, while the track has been cleared of bush the whole way to the Wairau. The expense of forming this latter portion of the road, although large, will not, I believe, be beyond the sum originally contemplated; but that which has been done will be comparatively useless if it be not continued; and looking at the benefits its completion will bestow on the occupants of the Pelorus and Kaituna districts, and the opportunities it will afford for the further settlement of those and

the neighbouring valleys, as well as the advantage to travellers to and from Nelson and Wairau, by the shortening of the distance between these places, I do not doubt that you will have little hesitation in voting the funds necessary for the completion of this portion of the road. But I hope you will also provide for the permanent improvement of the whole line to the Hurunui, particularly the worst part near the Kaikoras; and also (which is indispensable if the road is to be made really useful) for the establishment of ferries over the Clarence, Pelorus, and any other rivers where they may be requisite. Arrangements have already been made for these improvements, and only await your sanction of the expenditure they involve, to be immediately carried into execution.

6. The second great line which should be rendered easily practicable, is the central road to the South by the Wairau Gorge and Hanmer Plain. I have the satisfaction to state that the greatest of the difficulties attending this route, namely, at the Wairau Gorge, have already been in a great measure removed, and I trust before the winter will have been completely so. This route, it is probable, will in future, should the coast-road be properly opened, be used chiefly if not wholly as a summer road to the South; but as it is considerably shorter than the coast-road, equal exertions should be used to render it thoroughly available.

7. The third great central line, which I trust may be opened, will be one to connect the valuable districts in the Western half of our province with Nelson. A gentleman accustomed to exploration has been engaged to undertake the investigation of this route: should he be successful, of which I entertain great hopes, it will be in your power, by devoting a part of the revenue to the improvement of this route, to render accessible to the enterprise and energy of our settlers, some very valuable and even extensive agricultural and pastoral districts, to which hitherto very little attention has been paid.

8. With respect to the roads in particular districts, although much has been done during the past year with the aid of the funds raised under the Debenture Act, chiefly under the supervision of the various Local Road Boards, this of course forms but a small portion compared with what remains to be done, and which can only be effected in a series of years.

9. The most prominent of these districts is that containing the gold-fields. Although a considerable diminution in the numbers of the population there has occurred since their first discovery, the decrease in the number of actual diggers does not, I believe, bear any considerable proportion to that of others who have left,

and who visited the diggings apparently without any fixed object in view. Those now engaged are reported to be profitably employed, and but little doubt exists that for many years to come that district will continue to give employment to a large number of persons at a rate of wages considerably above the average derived from any other industrial pursuit in this province, and that the produce of this district will continue to form, if not our first, certainly our second, staple export. With these views, formed after several personal inspections of the district, I have not hesitated to expend on the public works an amount considerably in excess of that placed at my disposal for that purpose by the Council.

10. While upon the subject of the gold-fields, I may observe, that an application was made to me to lease, for twenty-one years, a block of four square miles of the auriferous land of the Collingwood district; but as the existing land regulations did not warrant me in acceding to the request of the applicant, and as this Council had devoted much time and attention to the consideration of the best mode of dealing with that description of land, but for want of the necessary powers had not been able to embody its views into a law, but had expressed its desire that the General Assembly should receive its resolutions as an expression of its opinion of the requirements of this province on this particular subject, I had no alternative but to decline acceding to the request of the applicant. Other applications have since been made by combined bodies of practical diggers, or leases of blocks varying in size from three to one hundred acres, and I regret that the measures adopted by this Council, and subsequently passed, I believe with little substantial alteration, by the General Assembly, have not yet become law within the province; the bills referring to the subject having been reserved for the signification of her Majesty's pleasure thereon, in consequence of which the General Government have also been, and still are, unable to comply with the requests of the various applicants.

11. Reverting to the subject of the opening up of the country, I have to inform you that very great progress has been made during the past year in the survey of lands for sale or settlement. For sale, about 67,347 acres have been surveyed; and in addition to this there are tracts containing about 300,000 acres, of all of which such general surveys have been executed that sales of them can be effected. About eighty miles of traversing, to connect the different parts of our previous surveys, have been also made, and a surveyor has been for some time engaged in a general outline survey of the western districts of the province, which, with the description to accompany it, will

greatly advance our knowledge of them, and prepare the way for their future settlement.

12. In accordance with the system of immigration which has for some time been adopted in this province, that of advancing the passage money of immigrants on a guarantee for its repayment by their friends resident in this settlement—a system affording the best security for the good character of the immigrants, and for their permanent residence in the province—about 300 souls have been sent for, all that have been applied for up to this time; the first portion of which number may be daily expected to arrive, the vessel they are to come in having left England on the 29th December last.

13. Among the measures which I consider it advisable to submit for your consideration during the present session will be a bill for providing the means to give compensation to those persons who were induced to emigrate to this province under promises made to them through the agents of the New Zealand Company, and which were not fulfilled; the consequence of which was an amount of suffering and distress, which, when viewed even at this distance of time, cannot be contemplated without feelings of sorrow, and for which redress could not be obtained in consequence of the poverty and helplessness of the claimants: had such not been the case, there is no reasonable doubt that the success which attended the claims of both resident and absentee purchasers of land, would have been the same in their cases. In accordance with the wishes of the Council, I instructed the Commissioners appointed under the Compensation Act, 1857, to collect further evidence in reference to the claims submitted to them: this has been done, and a report thereon presented to me, a copy of which will be laid before you. The facts elicited by this second investigation induce me to submit their claims again to your consideration, confidently anticipating that, as their suffering and losses are patent to most members of this Council, you will aid me in doing, even at this distant period, that justice to which their claims entitle them.

14. I have particularly to urge on your consideration the claims of those who were left widows and orphans by the death of their husbands and fathers, in the affray at Wairau in 1843, in their attempt to support the legally constituted authorities.

15. A bill will also be laid before you, having for its object the making of free grants of land, under certain conditions, to naval and military settlers, who have been excluded under the existing regulations in consequence of their having received their discharge previous to the regulations becoming law. As most, if not all, of this class were

persons actively engaged in supporting the authority of the Crown, during the Native war, and were excluded, no doubt by an oversight, from the benefits which others, their companions in arms, have been entitled to and received; I trust you will see with me the justice of making provision for the few cases which exist in this province.

16. A commissioner appointed by the General Government to choose a site for a General Colonial Lunatic Asylum, having recommended a site in this province for that purpose, and the General Government having adopted that recommendation, and undertaken to erect an Asylum thereon as soon as possible, upon the site being placed at their disposal, I thought it advisable to apply the sum voted last year for a Lunatic Asylum to the purchase of the site in question, which has accordingly been done. The advantages of an establishment of this kind being general, and supported by the combined means of the whole colony, being so obviously superior to any to be conferred by a local institution, I trust this arrangement will meet with your sanction.

17. Frequent complaints having been made of the locality of the cemetery at present in use in the town of Nelson, a bill will be submitted to you to enable me to cause the cemetery to be closed, and to purchase land forming a more eligible site in the neighbourhood of the town, which it is to be hoped will be liable to none of the objections which have been raised against the present cemetery.

18. A Select Committee was appointed during your last session to confer with the Executive Government on the subject of the erection of a new Council Chamber and Public Offices. After examining various proposed sites, those bodies have unanimously agreed upon one possessing many advantages, and have also selected a tasteful design for the buildings themselves. The completion of these will necessarily involve a larger outlay than the sum raised under the Debiture Act.

19. The Imperial Government having entered into a contract for the steam mail service of New Zealand, by the terms of which Nelson is made the principal station for the arrival and departure of the steamers employed, for which its central position, the serenity of its climate, the dock-like security of its harbour, and the unrivalled facilities afforded by the

latter for careening vessels, so admirably adapt our port, it behoves us to do everything in our power to complete these advantages by providing a wharf alongside which the steam vessels may lie at all times of tide. Plans and specifications of a new jetty have accordingly been prepared, and tenders for its erection been called for and received, which will be laid before you; and if you agree with me as to the necessity of the undertaking, it can be immediately carried into execution.

These are all the subjects on which it appears to me necessary to offer any remarks; and I have to conclude, gentlemen, with the expression of my confidence that your deliberations will materially contribute to realize for the future of this province even a larger amount of prosperity than it at present enjoys.

J. P. ROBINSON,

Superintendent.

Nelson, 12th April, 1859.

Provincial Secretary's Office,

Nelson, March 30, 1859.

HIS Honour the Superintendent directs it to be notified for general information, that a Writ for the election of a Member of the Provincial Council for the undermentioned district, in the Province of Nelson, having been issued in accordance with the provisions of an Act to grant a Representative Constitution to the Colony of New Zealand, the Returning Officer of the said district has returned the said Writ, with a certificate to the effect that the undermentioned gentleman has been duly elected to serve as a Member of the said Provincial Council for the said district.

For the Waimea West District—

HENRY REDWOOD, senior, Waimea West,
Farmer.

ALFRED DOMETT,

Provincial Secretary.

Provincial Secretary's Office,

Nelson, April 11, 1859.

HIS Honour the Superintendent directs it to be notified that he has been pleased to appoint

JAMES BALFOUR WEMYSS, Esq., J.P.,
a Member of the Executive Council of this Province.

ALFRED DOMETT,

Provincial Secretary.