



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
(PROVINCE OF NELSON).

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By His Honor's command,

ALFRED GREENFIELD, Provincial Secretary, pro tem.

VOL. XIII.

NELSON, WEDNESDAY, MAY 3, 1865.

No. 15.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, MAY 2, 1863.

THE Thirteenth Session of the Provincial Council was opened this day, at One o'clock, when the following Address of the Superintendent was delivered:—

MR. SPEAKER, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE
PROVINCIAL COUNCIL—

I.—The short time that has elapsed since I entered upon the duties of my present office, has but ill prepared me to meet you with that amount of information which the Superintendent of a province should always be prepared to furnish to the Legislature; but the expiration of the financial year, the arrival of the season during which you have expressed your desire to be called together, and the necessity of obtaining your sanction to some public works which existing circumstances render urgently necessary, have not allowed me to defer your meeting to a later period.

II.—The sad accident which has deprived this province of the valuable services of one who for eight years had been at the head of its Government, valued for his judgment and prudence, trusted for

his integrity and disinterested patriotism, and beloved for his urbanity and benevolence, will long be deeply felt by the inhabitants of this province, and must necessarily cast a gloom over this first meeting of your Council since the occurrence of that great provincial loss. Having lost his life in the execution of his duty, you will no doubt take the opportunity this session will afford you to give a practical expression to the gratitude and sympathy of those you represent, by voting a sum of money to erect a suitable cenotaph to his memory, and to assist in the maintenance of those who, besides losing such a beloved and estimable husband and father, have also been thus suddenly deprived of their principal means of support.

III.—As the political views of my predecessor were known to be generally in unison with my own, and as I had, previously formed one of the members of his Executive, it will be readily supposed that I could have no difficulty in working harmoniously with the Executive officers who had acted with him for eight years, and as these gentlemen have consented to accept a renewal of their appointment from me, no change has taken place in the office of Provincial Treasurer, or Provincial Solicitor.

The present Land Commissioner has declined to continue to hold the office of Provincial Secretary, on the ground that its duties are, in his opinion, not compatible with the efficient discharge of those connected with the Land Commissionership. As I do

not at all coincide in that opinion, and cannot recommend you to vote a salary for a Provincial Secretary, in addition to that of the two clerks in the Superintendent's office, a vote that would be justified neither by the state of our provincial revenue, nor the amount of work to be done, I have not made any new appointment, but have requested the Chief Clerk to act as Provincial Secretary *pro tem*. I may say that the gentleman holding that appointment, has no wish to have his office as Chief Clerk changed for one of a political and possibly less continuous character, nor do I think it at all desirable that it should be so, as much inconvenience would probably arise from the resignation or removal of an officer whose experience has made him acquainted with all the details of his department, and at no time would this inconvenience be so seriously felt as at the election of a Superintendent, himself inexperienced in the duties of his office.

IV.—My short experience in the position I now hold has strengthened the opinion I have long entertained, that the officers in the employ of the Provincial Government of this province are both too numerous, and, in many instances, too highly paid for the kind of work required of them; and that this excessive expenditure is very far from increasing the practical efficiency of the public service.

It would be easy to remodel the whole of the provincial establishment, and place it upon a more efficient and economical footing, were we not met by the great difficulty of either reducing the long-received salaries of existing public servants, or removing them, without any fault of their own, from a service which custom may here have taught them to look upon as inalienable during good behaviour, and which may have more or less disqualified them for other occupations.

This difficulty will prevent the very desirable reduction in the expenditure upon the civil service of the province being either so immediate or so complete as it might otherwise have been, and can only be completely met, without inflicting injustice, by a patient, continued, and united effort on the part of the Provincial Executive and Legislature.

I shall enter into some particulars on this subject in a Message I shall transmit to you with the Estimates.

The necessity of entirely discontinuing the increase of expenditure upon salaries and departmental expenses which as hitherto been annually made, and taking every opportunity to diminish it that may be consistent with efficiency or existing engagements, will be best shown by some analysis of the receipts and expenditure of the past financial year. The total revenue received by the Provincial Treasurer during the year amounted to the sum of £44,427 16s., considerably more than half of which, or £24,111 17s., was received from the sale of our rapidly decreasing landed estate. Yet, of this large sum, only £7,274 3s., or less than one-sixth of the whole, was actually spent upon roads and bridges, including all the grants to the various Road Boards. So that the falling off of one-sixth of our total revenue, or little more than two-sevenths of our land sales, would, at the present rate of our expenditure, leave nothing whatever to expend upon roads and bridges.

Although the gross Land Revenue for the year has reached the sum of £26,968 13s., that revenue for the last half-year has only amounted to £6,333 16s. 4d.; and it is evident that we must for the future be very moderate in our expectations of net revenue from this source, as the land which now remains in the hands of the Crown, so far as it is known, is not only less valuable and attractive than the portions

that have been sold, but is generally in comparatively isolated blocks and difficult of access, causing a great additional expense in the survey, and rendering it imperative that a very large outlay should be incurred for roads, before the land can be at all advantageously offered for sale. You will, therefore, I trust, agree with me that the resources of the province can only be fully developed by a far-sighted policy, that will refrain from expending our small land revenue upon officers and salaries, or even in the improvement of the strongly represented districts, but expend it almost exclusively in constructing roads and bridges that will render our unsold territory accessible and valuable. This policy, if steadily persisted in, would cause much of the outlay made in opening the country to be constantly returned to the provincial chest as Land Revenue, and would also develop a natural source of wealth, the great extent of which is daily becoming more apparent.

A very large portion of the land of this province consists of gold-fields that will pay for working, if provisions can be supplied at a moderate cost to the workers, whilst by far the greater portion of the gold producing country is of a character that will not pay for the enormous price to which the necessaries of life are frequently raised by the cost of transit through a roadless and rugged country.

V.—The provincial share of the Customs duties for the year has amounted to £11,094 12s. 3d. The sum received for gold-duty is more than double that received last year, being £2,312 6s. 2d. The gross Customs receipts during the last quarter, including the gold-duty, amounted to the sum of £10,423 12s. 11d., being £6,111 13s. 4d. more than was received during the corresponding quarter of the previous year.

This large increase must of course be partially attributed to the increased Tariff, but principally to the large quantity of duty-paying articles sent to the West Coast, and to the increase of the gold-digging population scattered over various portions of the province.

The total expenditure for the year has been £42,741 8s. 6d. of which £13,425 11s. 5d. has been for departmental expenses, and £6,299 12s. 4d. for education.

VI.—The large population that has been attracted to the south-western borders of our province by the gold discoveries that have been made at Hokitika, has so clearly pointed to the great desirability of immediately opening a road from the mouth of the Grey River, to meet the roads that have been made to the east, to a distance from the capital town of about 111 miles into the interior, that I have not hesitated to anticipate what I felt sure would be your wish, and have engaged parties to commence at both ends of what is likely to prove the most serviceable and by far the cheapest and most readily opened road. The line chosen is to commence at the end of the bridle road now just about completed, to the north end of the Maruia Plains, thence along these plains and over the saddle into a branch of the Grey, following this river to the sea, and keeping on the north bank all the way excepting a portion already made on the south bank, through Mr. Freeth's run (about ten miles), which will be made use of for the present time. From the absence of any survey between the Maruia Plains and the River Grey, the whole distance can only be guessed at; it is, however, estimated to be about sixty-six miles from the plains to the port.

The instructions given to the party sent to the western end of the line are, to commence at the port on the north bank of the Grey, and to cut a

track, eight feet wide, through the bush, of such gradients as may be afterwards improved into a horse-track—but to confine themselves at present to such works only as will make a good walking-track, putting rough foot-bridges over any stream that may require it. By this means a communication will be opened with the least possible delay between the Grey and Maruia and Matakitaiki Districts.

A contract has been entered into to commence a similar track from the eastern end, first doing such work on the Maruia Plains as will enable horses to travel through them, a distance of eighteen miles, and then to construct such works on the walking track beyond the plains, as will enable the contractor to supply his party with provisions, &c., by means of pack-horses. The party at the other end of the line will be supplied by means of canoes, which will avoid the necessity of doing any heavy work on it at first. The Provincial Engineer anticipates that this line will be completed as a foot track at a cost of about £1,000, and if the weather should be at all favorable, within seven weeks from the present time.

Besides the important fact of this line presenting fewer obstacles to the construction of a road than that by the Inangahua and Little Grey Rivers, it has the advantage of leading more directly to a large tract of country known to contain gold in payable quantity, and, unlike the Inangahua road, will be really available for cattle and horses, in consequence of leading through many grassy plains that will supply abundant food for working or travelling cattle or sheep.

VII.—The Hokitika gold-field, although situated within the boundaries of the Canterbury Province, can hardly be considered as a subject of more interest to that Government than to that of the province and port with which it is far more naturally connected. The large population attracted to those gold-fields will undoubtedly exercise a powerful influence upon the progress and necessary internal arrangements of the province you represent; and the probability that the main body of that erratic population may at any time be attracted within our own boundary, will point out to you the desirability of placing the Government in a position that will enable it to meet such an event with the promptitude, although with the very great caution, which in that case would be demanded from it.

No circumstance could have insured a more thorough exploration of our hitherto imperfectly known south-western territory, and whatever may be the course taken by the main body of diggers, it is certain that a very considerable number are finding their way to our own gold-fields, and that we may safely calculate upon an increase of gold export. I therefore think you would be perfectly justified in voting a liberal portion of the small available revenue, to be expended in the removal of some of the many natural obstacles which now render the complete exploration of the north-western portion of this Island so extremely difficult.

VIII.—The limited amount of accommodation, and especially of warehouse-room at the Nelson wharf, has lately been found very inadequate to the requirements of the port, and it will be my duty to ask you to vote a sufficient sum to cover the expense of some rather extensive but very necessary erections, the details of which will be submitted for your approval.

IX.—In consequence of the Marine Board having signified its intention to levy light-dues upon all vessels entering the Port of Nelson, even though the lighthouse continued in the hands, and was main-

tained at the expense of the Nelson Province, the late Superintendent, acting upon the recommendation which concluded the report of a select committee of your Council, which was appointed in Session X. to consider this subject, handed over the lighthouse to be upheld and controlled by that body. The heavy dues that the Board have levied cannot fail to be highly injurious to the trade of the port, and I shall be happy to join you in any representation you may think it desirable to make to the General Government upon this subject.

X.—You will be called upon this session to give effect to the resolution passed by this Council in Session IX., by voting the sum of £2,000 as a contribution towards the erection of a bridge over the Hurunui River, the boundary between this province and Canterbury. The settlers in the Amuri district are, I understand, prepared to add a subscription of another thousand, and the Canterbury Government have received an offer to construct the bridge for the sum of £6,000, the plans of which have been submitted to our Provincial Engineer for approval. Should you vote this sum, the Canterbury Government will, I have no doubt, erect the bridge without delay; and, when you consider the importance of bridging every formidable river on the main line of road between the cities of Nelson and Christchurch, the necessity of connecting a large and valuable portion of this province with its natural and only practically available port, not to mention the negotiations commenced with the Canterbury Government on the faith of the resolution referred to, you will, I am sure, at once recognize the necessity of again voting the required sum.

XI. Much of the time of the Provincial Engineer has recently been occupied in obtaining information on the general question of waterworks and supply, for the purpose of placing himself in a position to propose the best method of supplying the City of Nelson with water, and to make a reliable estimate of the sum for which a good supply of pure water may be carried through the most populous streets of the city and to the shipping at the port. The result of his investigations has been furnished to the Government in a report that will be at once laid on your table, and will be found to contain all necessary information upon this subject, and calculations based upon the most reliable sources.

By that report it will be seen that water equal to the supply of 20 gallons per head to a population of 37,800 individuals could be supplied to the port and principal streets at a cost of £19,496. This estimate includes the laying down of main pipes in that portion of the town south of the Maitai, through the whole of Brook-street, Tasman-street, Bronti-street (as far as Trafalgar-street), Manuka-street, Nile-street, east and west, Shelbourne-street, Selwyn-place, Hardy-street, Gloucester-street, and parts of Vanguard and St. Vincent streets, Bridge-street, Hastings-street, and the full length of the Port road, Alton-street (between Nile and Hardy streets), Collingwood-street, Trafalgar-street north, Waimea-street, and parts of Waimea-road and Ngaitama-street, as far as the College grounds, also a branch nearly encircling the Government Buildings.

It is proposed to take the water from a rocky gorge at a distance of about four miles from the centre of the town, and the estimate includes a sum of £5000 for the construction of reservoirs, a sum that might be considerably reduced if found necessary—indeed, water generally of excellent quality might be supplied previous to their construction, as, Mr. Blackett says, "under ordinary circumstances the water is pure enough to be drawn at once from the dam, being

quite bright and clear before it leaves its rocky bed in the gorge."

As many portions of the Provincial Engineer's plans are capable of curtailment, if considered desirable, I have no doubt of its entire practicability within the sum which this province is authorised to borrow under the "Waterworks Loan Act, 1864."

The possibility of borrowing money under the terms of that Act, and the desirability of attempting to negotiate any New Zealand debentures in the present state of public opinion on all New Zealand securities, are questions upon which I shall require and have sought competent advice, the tenor of which I will communicate to you as soon as received.

XII.—I have received from Mr. Burnett a very full report of the coal-fields of this Province, and as that gentleman writes with a knowledge of the subject and of the various localities in which our known coal-fields are situated (which I do not possess), I feel that I cannot do better than refer you to it for all general information upon that subject. The resolutions which you passed as to the steps to be taken for placing the merits of our Buller Coal-fields before British capitalists with a view to enlist their interest and co-operation in their development, were not carried into effect by the late Superintendent. Much as I regret any delay in carrying out a well considered project for realising this long neglected source of wealth and prosperity, it is perhaps as well that no expense was incurred in sending an agent to London during the late very remarkable tightness of the English money market; and should the private enterprise, now so energetically engaged in endeavors to develop the coal-field believed to exist at Pakawau, prove that a good coal can be found so near to the Port of Nelson, we shall not need the assistance of English capital to bring that coal to the market.

A very few weeks will probably enable those engaged in it to ascertain whether a workable and useful seam of this most important product exists there or not. Should the promoters' efforts be attended with success, the benefit to the province cannot but be obvious to every one. The shaft is situated at little more than a mile and a half from the sea-board, towards which there is an easy decline, and the sea frontage is said to offer great facilities for the erection of an inexpensive pier or jetty for shipping the coal, whilst its easy distance from the Port of Nelson would enable the coal to be brought at all seasons of the year with great ease and rapidity, and sold at a price that would not fail to ensure a large consumption.

Should this coal prove to be unmixed with shale, and otherwise of good quality, neither Governmental nor foreign aid will be required for its development; but should the sanguine expectations of those who are now engaged in finally testing that long doubtful and very important question, be doomed to disappointment, I shall feel much pleasure in promptly carrying into effect the resolution of last session, or any similar recommendations you may make on this subject.

XIII. A new Licensing Bill has been prepared and printed; you will see that it embodies the alterations in the law recommended by the select committee appointed by you last year, and two other important features, which I hope that you will consider it advisable to adopt. Having a very strong conviction that habitual drunkards should be treated as monomaniacs rather than as criminals, and therefore restrained and protected rather than punished, I propose to abolish that portion of the existing law which empowers a magistrate to imprison a person who has been convicted of drunkenness three times within six months, and to give power to the magistrates to send

the name and description of the unfortunate individual to all the license holders, with instructions not to serve him with any intoxicating drink. I also propose that no license holder shall be able to recover any debt incurred for any kind of intoxicating liquor that may have been drunk on his premises.

XIV. The "Hackney Carriage Bill" has been prepared, in accordance with a resolution passed by you last year. I need only remark on it that no new officer need be appointed, or additional expense incurred, for the inspection there recommended as it can easily be combined with the duties of an existing officer.

XV. A Scab Bill is being prepared, which I hope will be found more adapted to the general wants of the various districts in this province than the existing Act has proved to be.

XVI. The large sum which has been spent in charitable aid during the last year, exceeding your vote by £393 7s 10d., with every probability of an annual increase, and the very unsystematic manner in which that fund has hitherto been dispensed and accounted for, together with the conviction that its dispensation is a duty that should never be placed in the hands of an elective Superintendent, even if he could be supposed to have sufficient time on his hands to carefully investigate the merits of the many claims made for relief, has induced me to request the sergeant-major of police to generally superintend the details of what has now become an important and difficult department, and one for which the nature of his police duties, as well as the personal qualifications of the present holder of that office so thoroughly fit him. That gentleman is now engaged in removing such of the poor as require to be permanently supported by public funds to the Taranaki Buildings, where I hope to be able to make such arrangements as will secure pure air, amusement, and comfort, to the aged and infirm, and place some wholesome restraint upon those who may show a necessity for it. This step was rendered specially desirable by the dangerous and dilapidated state of the buildings known as the Old Depot, hitherto occupied by those who were unable to procure a home of their own; the injury which these undrained and uncleanly hovels had inflicted and were likely to inflict upon the health of the town, and the danger of fire in the heart of the city, which the carelessness of their inmates has more than once rendered very apparent.

The yard in which the old Depot stands will also require to be enclosed, and used as a depot for the large number of stores, castings, &c., that will be imported for the Nelson Waterworks, for which purpose it is very conveniently situated.

XVII.—I have received a letter from the Medical Officers of the Hospital, calling my attention to the inadequate accommodation afforded by the building used for a hospital in this province, and suggesting the propriety of making some provision for the number of patients that would probably arrive from the Hokitika Gold-fields, as well as for the increased demand for space that would arise should this province be visited by any epidemic.

In the reports from these gentlemen, which will be forthwith laid before you, you will find that they recommend increased accommodation to be provided on the present hospital site.

Since the receipt of that letter the number of patients has decreased, and there is no doubt the Canterbury Government has made, or will immediately make, arrangements for the reception of their own patients at Hokitika, and I hope also to relieve the hospital of some of its more permanent inmates,

who are able to wait upon themselves, by removing them to the Taranaki Buildings, amongst the other infirm poor. It is therefore not my intention to ask for a vote for enlarging the hospital this session, but should it next year appear that more hospital accommodation should be provided, I think it would be best provided by erecting a new and convenient hospital on more elevated and open ground, a little further removed from the centre of the town, and offering a greater space for exercise, &c. Much of the necessary expense of such an erection could be met by the sale of the building and land now used for a purpose for which the building was never designed or adapted.

XVIII.—The treatment of the lunatics in this province has been improving for many years past, and is now tolerably satisfactory, considering the means at our command, being humane and rational. Nine patients have during the past year left the asylum cured, and two have returned to their friends, so that although ten new cases have been admitted the number at present in the establishment is less by one than at the close of last year. I shall ask you to sanction some small outlay that will tend to relieve the patients from apparent restraint, and furnish them when possible with interesting occupation.

XIX.—Full returns of the census taken in December last will be laid upon your table. By those returns the increase of population since 1861 appears to have been only 1800, but many gold miners travelling and living in tents would necessarily escape enumeration. During the four months which have passed of the present year, 2090 males and 144 females have left the Port of Nelson, and 2151 males and 255 females have arrived, leaving a balance in favor of immigration of 61 males and 111 females.

There has been a considerable decrease in the number of acres sown with wheat and barley, although a large increase in the acreage of oats. The quantity of land laid down in artificial grasses has been increased from 12,156 acres to 22,740 acres.

Horses have increased from 2,355 in 1861, to 3,597 in 1864. Cattle from 11,105 to 15,825.

The absence of progress in agriculture apparent in these statistics is satisfactorily accounted for by facts which show that the industry of our population has been largely directed to mining and pastoral pursuits, our export of gold having in three years increased from £25,278 to £90,049, and wool from £3,801 to £14,768, the number of sheep having also increased from 181,376 to 344,281.

On the important question of education the facts brought to light by the census will probably compare favorably with the returns from the other provinces of this colony, and continue to show a marked and steady improvement in the total result obtained by public and private schools, but do not indicate a growing confidence on the part of the parents in the Government schools, and very clearly show that no adequate results have been obtained by the great increase of public money that has been voted with a view to increase their efficiency.

The number of the population above 15 years of age who cannot read is now reduced to 2.44 per cent.

whilst the proportion of those above 16 years who could not read in 1861 was 4.86 per cent.; the number under the same ages who cannot write has decreased from 11.06 per cent. to 7.80 per cent. Of those under 15 years of age last December 63.72 per cent. could read, and 47.51 per cent. could read and write; whilst of those under the age of 16 in 1861 only 52.80 per cent. could read, and 38.20 per cent. could read and write.

The attendance at the schools supported by the large grants you have so liberally voted for that purpose has not even kept pace with the increase of population, having only increased from 1360 in 1861 to 1450 in 1864, whilst in the city of Nelson the attendance at the female schools supported by Government aid appears to have decreased from 241 in 1861 to 122 in 1864, and nearly five-sevenths of the girls attending school are sent to private schools. You will regret to learn by these figures that whilst in 1861, 1360 children were educated at Government schools supported by a grant including the proportion of land sales of £3,240 17s. 8d., or £2 7s. 7d. each child, in 1864 1450 children were educated by a grant of £5,200 or £3 11s. 8d. each child, this latter grant being exclusive of the proportion of land sales paid to the Central Board, which I believe is now set apart as a permanent endowment fund for educational purposes.

The census return upon this subject will be valued for their admitted impartiality rather than for their absolute reliability, and it may be right to observe that there are strong grounds for believing that there is some exaggeration in the number of children there recorded as attending day schools.

XX.—In thoughtfully reviewing the history of this province since the management of our public provincial interests has been entrusted to its inhabitants, we find great cause for congratulation and thankfulness. If our progress cannot be called rapid, it has been remarkably steady; if we have not participated in the large government expenditure which has added to the apparent, if not to the real, prosperity of some other provinces, we have been free from the alarm and depression which always attends the withdrawal of such extraneous support; and if our natural advancement has not been greatly anticipated by the disbursement of any very extensive loans, we can look with more confidence to a future that will not show such large portions of our revenue annually impounded for interest and sinking fund.

In material progress, as shown by the quality and length of its roads; in the general education of those who have grown up in the province, as seen by the facts collected in the census taken last December; and by the remarkable security to life and property, which is perhaps most strikingly evinced by the general neglect of the common precautions for its protection that are considered necessary in almost every other place,—Nelson occupies a creditable, if not a prominent, position amongst the offshoots of the great Empire to which we are so proud to owe our origin and our allegiance.

ALFRED SAUNDERS.

Superintendent.