



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE,
(PROVINCE OF NELSON.)

Published by Authority.

All Notifications which appear in this Gazette, with any Official Signature thereunto annexed, are to be considered as Official Communications made to those Persons to whom they may relate, and are to be obeyed accordingly.

ALFRED GREENFIELD, Provincial Secretary.

VOL. XVI.

NELSON, TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 1868.

No. 19.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, APRIL 21, 1868.

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

MR. SPEAKER, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL—

1. I feel assured that you will join with me in regretting that the contemplated visit of H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh to this colony is indefinitely postponed, and that you will desire, before proceeding to the ordinary business which you have met to consider, to convey to H.R.H. an expression of the abhorrence and detestation with which you, in common with all honest and true men, whatever may be their political opinions, regard the late treacherous and cowardly attempt to take his life.

To the Queen, also, I am confident you will wish to forward an assurance of the sympathy you feel with the pain which her Majesty will suffer from this lamentable occurrence, and of the affectionate loyalty with which she is regarded in this part of her dominions.

2. You will have learned with regret that a breach of the peace has occurred in the neighbourhood of Westport, arising out of the excited state of public feeling caused by the sad event to which the preceding paragraphs refer, and that some serious assaults were committed.

Considerable excitement and some alarm still prevail at Addison's Flat and Westport, but I have too much reliance, both upon the good feeling of the people and the firm and judicious management of Mr. Commissioner Kynnersley, to apprehend any further serious disturbance of the public peace.

Should it unfortunately prove that this view of the matter has been too hopeful, I feel that I may depend upon your support in maintaining peace and good order, and in protecting every man in the exercise of his lawful occupation at whatever cost.

3. The accounts for the financial year, ending on the 31st March, will show that the revenue has considerably exceeded the amount at which I estimated it, the actual receipts having reached the sum of £136,000, about £21,000 above my original estimate of £115,000. The expenditure during the year has, however, amounted to the sum of £145,000, out of your total appropriations of £160,000, leaving a balance to the debit of the province at the Bank of New Zealand of £9,500. The provincial funds stand in this respect substantially in the same position as they did twelve months since on my entering into

office, a considerable portion of the revenue of the year just ended having been expended in anticipation by my predecessor.

The estimates of revenue and expenditure for the current year, which will shortly be submitted to you, will contain provision for the overdraft above referred to, by making the proposed expenditure £10,000 less than the estimated revenue.

I may observe in reference to the yearly accounts about to be presented to you, that they include all expenditure incurred in all parts of the province up to the 31st of March last. The statement for the previous year could not be made up nearly so closely, much expenditure having been made upon the West Coast which, owing to the backward state of the accounts, could not be included in the annual statement. Under the excellent arrangements instituted by the Provincial Treasurer, aided by the appointment of an accountant upon the Gold-fields, every payment whatever to the end of the financial year appears in the accounts, and as no heavy works are now in progress in that district, there are no outstanding contracts, or liabilities of any considerable amount.

In forming an estimate of the receipts of revenue for the new financial year, I have assumed that the increase by which the past year was marked will be maintained.

But I wish you to understand that there is an amount of uncertainty in the present state and prospects of the South-Western Gold-fields, upon the progress and prosperity of which the Provincial revenue so greatly depends, which makes it difficult to arrive at an estimate which can be relied upon.

At this period last year new ground of promising character, and of large extent, had been, or was in course of being, brought under the operation of the miner, and our population was increasing.

Now, although the yield of gold is well maintained, and every district of the Gold-fields is in a satisfactory and prosperous condition, no special attraction exists to justify me in calculating upon any large accession to the number at present engaged upon them, while we are at all times liable to the effects of the counter-attraction of other gold-fields, of which an instance has lately occurred in the diversion of some hundreds of our miners to those of Queensland, although many of them are already, probably, on their way back again.

The divided state of public opinion as to the present apportionment of Revenue between the Colony and the Provinces, and the consequent doubt which exists as to the course the General Assembly may take in reference to it, adds another element of uncertainty to our estimate of revenue, though it is scarcely probable that any change which may be decided upon will be brought into operation so speedily as to affect our calculations for the current financial year.

Under these circumstances, however, I shall consider it prudent to confine both our expenditure and our engagements as closely as possible to the amount of actual receipts into the Treasury from month to month.

4. Bills for the amendment of the "Gold-Fields Licensing Act," the "Country Roads Act," the "Cattle Trespass Act," and the "Cattle Slaughtering Act," and also a bill providing for the inspection of meat, have been prepared and published, in order to give time for the expression of public opinion upon them before they were submitted for your consideration.

Being advised by the Provincial Solicitor, that the provisions of the "Provincial Compulsory Land Taking Act," put it out of the power of Provincial Legislatures to pass any measure for the enforcement

of any system of compulsory drainage of country land, and Mr. Adams's opinion having been confirmed by the Attorney-General, I am unable to take any steps to carry out this highly desirable object.

By the 11th clause of the "Consolidated Loan Act," you are prohibited from passing any Act to guarantee interest, or to grant subsidies extending over future years, for the promotion of public works. I have, therefore, not prepared a measure to guarantee interest on capital employed in coal mining, as I should otherwise have done in accordance with your wish, and my own.

5. As soon as practicable, after the receipt of the Acts of the General Assembly passed during the late session, I took steps for the revision of the Gold-Fields Mining Regulations, by calling upon the miners in each district to appoint representatives to confer with the Warden of their district, so that the nature of the alterations required in each locality might be ascertained. Subsequently, the Wardens met together, and agreed upon a new code of regulations, suited so far as possible to the wants and peculiarities of every part of the gold-fields. They are now in the printer's hands, and will be brought into operation with the least possible delay.

6. In compliance with the wish you expressed by resolution, in Session XVI., Rules for the Regulation of Watermen and Ballast-getters, were prepared and forwarded for the approval of the Governor. The Colonial Government, however, determined upon framing a series of General Harbour Regulations, which should be applicable to the whole colony. The Harbour Masters of the principal ports were consequently summoned to Wellington, and a code of regulations was agreed upon, which will no doubt shortly be made public and put into force.

7. The recommendations contained in the valuable report furnished to me by the Sanitary Commission, together with your resolution that action should be taken on the subject, by the preparation of a measure embodying those recommendations, have received my anxious consideration. I am, however, of opinion that it will be desirable to defer legislation in the matter for at least another year. The large additional expense to the householders of this city which the passing of a measure, such as is suggested by the Commission, must involve, would, I think, be a greater burden than could reasonably be imposed upon them at the same time as the water-rate now in course of collection; and, although with much reluctance, I have come to the conclusion that it is better not to ask you to entertain the subject during the present Session.

8. I congratulate you, and the inhabitants of this city, on the successful completion of the Nelson Water-Works, which were formally opened on the 16th of this month. I am sure that you will agree with me, that your thanks, and those of the public, are due to the Provincial Engineer for the very able manner in which this important work has been designed and carried into execution; and especially for the fact that Mr. Blackett's estimate of its cost was so carefully framed, that it has proved to be fully sufficient to meet every contingency—a circumstance, I believe, to be almost without precedent in reference to a work of this magnitude.

9. A preliminary survey of the line for the proposed Nelson, Cobden, and Westport Railway, has at length been completed, and the full and able report of Mr. Wrigg, the engineer employed upon it, will be laid upon your table. Much delay has, unfortunately, occurred in this matter, owing, in the first place, to the failure of Mr. Ogilvie, the engineer whose services had been retained by the late Acting Superintendent, to carry out his engagement,

and the time occupied in selecting and arranging with a gentleman of repute and experience to take his place; and, secondly, to the extremely unfavourable state of the weather which prevailed during Mr. Wrigg's expedition.

The result confirms us in the conviction that no engineering difficulties stand in the way of the construction of the line, and that no works of more than usual magnitude are required.

Mr. Wrigg's estimate of the cost per mile, agrees also very closely with the rough calculations which had previously been made.

I have requested Mr. Wrigg to remain in Nelson a short time longer than he otherwise would have done, in order to give you the opportunity of obtaining from him any further information, or explanation which you may require.

Mr. Morrison, the agent for this province in London, is now in the colony, and may be expected here about the end of May, when I shall confer fully with him on this important subject, and determine upon the precise measures to be adopted, in order to bring it under the favourable consideration of capitalists in England.

I have the pleasure to inform you that Sir George Grey has expressed much interest in the undertaking, and that he has kindly allowed me to instruct Mr. Morrison to furnish him with the necessary details on Sir George's arrival in England, and has promised to render any assistance in his power to promote its success. I need hardly enlarge upon the value of the co-operation of a gentleman possessing so extensive a knowledge of the Colony, and so great personal influence as the late respected Governor of the colony.

10. The lease of the Brunner Coal-mine, on the Grey River, granted in the early part of 1866 to an association of individuals resident in Ballarat, has been cancelled by the Waste Lands Board, in consequence of the non-fulfilment, during the year ending the 14th of last month, of an essential condition of the lease. The Board had for a long time been greatly dissatisfied with the manner in which this most valuable property had been managed by the lessees; but, as the bare conditions of the lease were complied with during the first year, they had no power to interfere until now.

The Government have made temporary arrangements to continue operations at the mine, so far as the raising of coal is concerned, in order to prevent the great inconvenience to the public, and the serious injury to the property, which would ensue from a stoppage of the supply of fuel to the steamers plying on the West Coast.

I hope that the merits and value of the mine are now sufficiently well known to induce *bonâ fide* capitalists to come forward as lessees, and to carry on the undertaking in a manner to promote the public interest as well as their own.

11. I am glad to be able to inform you that the survey of the projected line of telegraph from Westport to Cobden has been completed, and that a contract has been accepted for the supply and erection of the posts for the whole distance. In the course of three or four months I trust the work will be completed, and telegraphic communication established between the Towns of Westport, Charleston, Brighton, Cobden, and this City.

12. The heavy and repeated floods which have been experienced in all parts of this island, within the past six months, have done considerable damage to our roads and other public works in many districts of the Province, although we have escaped with far less injury than either of our neighbors.

The new wharf at Westport was entirely destroyed when at the point of completion, and much other damage was sustained on the banks of the Buller.

The bridge over the Hurunui, in course of erection, at the joint expense of this Province and that of Canterbury, was also washed away, and the site rendered unserviceable. The Superintendent of Canterbury has applied to me for a further contribution to the cost of this work of £1000, in addition to the £3000 you have already appropriated to it, but as I consider the sum already promised to be a most liberal one, I do not propose to add to it, unless it should be your especial desire that I should do so.

13. The Report of the Provincial Engineer, which will be laid before you, contains, I think, all the further information you will require as to the state and progress of the large number of other public works which have been begun, continued, or completed during the past financial year.

14. It will be in your recollection that your Speaker, when acting Superintendent, requested that the Colonial Marine Engineer might be instructed to examine the Nelson harbor, to report upon its general capabilities, and to advise respecting the erection of a Patent Slip, or the construction of a Dry Dock, for the repair of vessels, in connection with the reclamation of a portion of the Mudflat.

Mr. Balfour's official duties, which are of a highly onerous character, combined with the necessity of fulfilling pre-existing engagements in other parts of the Colony, have caused a long delay in the preparation of this Report, and it has only been a few days in my hands. A copy of it, which will be presented to you, will show you that it is both well considered and valuable—valuable, however, rather with a view to the future than to its application to our present wants and our present means.

The policy of providing some means for the repair of shipping in a harbor so well adapted for the purpose, has, however, been so long before the public, and so generally agreed upon, that I believe you will share in my conviction that as we are in possession of all the information we are likely to get, or indeed that we can require, it is time to take some decisive action.

In the very short time which has elapsed since the receipt of Mr. Balfour's Report, I have not been able to procure and to lay before you, as I should have wished to do, a definite scheme for the construction of a Dock, accompanied by precise estimate of cost.

But I may refer you to the evidence taken by your committees in past sessions, and I think you will be satisfied, as I am, that such a work is essential to the advancement of the Province, and more immediately of the Town of Nelson, and that without waiting for the delayed and perhaps uncertain operation of the "Patent Slip or Dry Dock Act," this long-talked of undertaking should be begun at once, and can be carried out from funds at our command without incurring either debt or liability.

I have therefore requested the Provincial Engineer to prepare rough plans and estimates, and shall propose to you to appropriate the sum of £12,000, now lying in the bank, to the purpose, and to supply what more may be required from the annual provincial revenues.

The £12,000, to which I refer, was appropriated by you towards a reduction of our small Provincial debt of £21,500, but as the debts of the Provinces have, by the Public Debts Act of the last session of the General Assembly, been assumed by the Colony, it is no longer either necessary or desirable to apply it to the purpose for which it was originally laid aside.

Looking to the benefit of the Province as a whole, and particularly to the South West Goldfields, whose trade is mainly carried on by means of small steamers. I am decidedly of opinion, that there is no purpose to which we could devote the sum required for the construction of a Dry Dock with so much general advantage to the community.

14. I commend to your consideration the question of the maintenance and education of the increasing number of destitute and deserted children, for whom the Government is called upon to provide.

The temptations offered by the gold-fields lead to frequent desertion of families already resident in this neighbourhood, and others are left destitute on the gold-fields themselves. At present these children, who number about 20, are placed out in various directions at the expense of the Province, but the arrangement is by no means satisfactory.

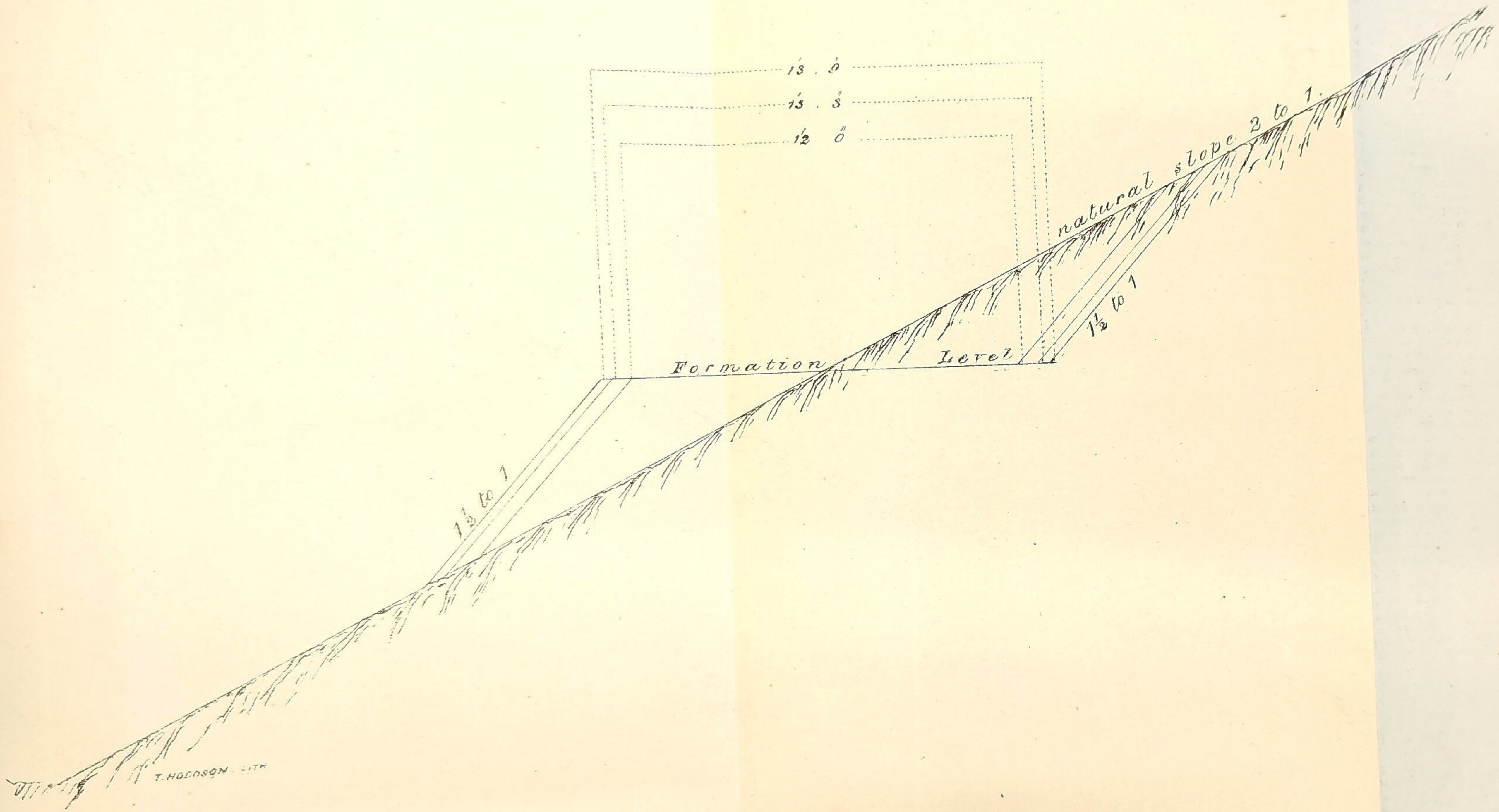
The building now used as a Hospital will be vacant on the completion of the new one, and might be appropriated as a Children's Home, under proper management and supervision; but the expense of such an establishment would necessarily be considerable.

15. Since I last had the honor to address you, Sir George Grey has been relieved from the high position of Governor of New Zealand, and has been succeeded by Sir George Bowen, to whom you will probably be desirous to forward an address of welcome upon his arrival in the Colony as the representative of Her Majesty.

I now declare this Council opened for the despatch of business.

OSWALD CURTIS,
Superintendent.

Fig. 1



2.

