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GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
(PROVINCE OF NELSON).

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ALFRED GREENFIELD, Provincial Secretary.

VOL. XXI.

NELSON, THURSDAY, MAY 2, 1872.

No. 16.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, APRIL 30, 1872.

THE Twenty-second Session of the Provincial Council of Nelson was opened this day at Twelve o'clock, when the following Address was delivered by his Honor the Superintendent :—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL,—

1. In my address to you at the opening of your last Session I congratulated you upon the passing of the Payments to Provinces Act, which, by providing for a series of years a fixed annual rate per head of the population as the contribution from the Colonial Revenue for local purposes, enabled the Provincial Governments to estimate with accuracy the amount of a leading item of their revenues.

I regret to say that the Act has since been repealed and that the estimate of revenue for the past year, so far as it was founded upon those provisions, has consequently been far from realised.

The Gold Duty has also fallen short of that of the year 1870-71 by £2000, instead of showing an increase to the same extent as I anticipated, and the other sources of goldfields' revenue have produced less by £1000 than the estimated amount, although slightly more than the sum collected during the preceding year.

The receipts of revenue from all sources have been £70,000, and the total expenditure £68,000, the remaining £2000 having been devoted to reduction of the Provincial Overdraft at the Bank of New Zealand from £5500 to £3500.

2. The resolutions you passed in favor of the construction of lines of railroad from the Brunner Mines to Cobden, from Nelson to Foxhill, and from Mount Rochfort to Westport,

were duly forwarded, accompanied by my recommendation, to the Colonial Government, with the suggestion on my part in reference to the last named work that it should be preceded by a scientific examination of the Mount Rochfort coalfield, and by a more complete exploration of the intervening country, in order that the best route to the port should be decided upon.

The Colonial Government had previously, at my request, instructed the Acting Engineer-in-Chief and the Colonial Geologist to examine the country between the Brunner mines and the mouth of the Grey, and had also given directions for a *Parliamentary survey of the line from Nelson to Foxhill*.

The construction of the latter line was subsequently authorised by Act of the General Assembly, and the working survey being now in progress, I have no reason to doubt that the work will shortly be begun.

The Brunner line, with the substitution of Greymouth for Cobden as the terminus, was also authorised to be constructed, subject to the conditions of the fourth part of the Immigration and Public Works Act, 1871; and the preliminaries of an agreement in accordance with those conditions have since been arranged between the Colonial Government and myself, subject to your approval. The draft agreement will be submitted to you, in the hope that you will assent to its execution by me on behalf of the Province, after it has received such modifications in the details as may appear to you to be desirable.

The Colonial Government, in furtherance of my wish for a geological examination of the Mount Rochfort coalfield before determining upon the line of the proposed railway to Westport, dispatched Dr. Hector to the spot, and the work of exploration is still going on under that gentleman's direction. Probably I may be able to furnish you with the conclusions arrived at by Dr. Hector before your present session closes.

3. The resolutions you agreed to, in respect to Water Supply on the Goldfields, were also forwarded by me to the Colonial Government, supported by my recommendation that they should be carried into effect.

In the meantime, the alteration in the law upon this subject, made by the General Assembly, has resulted in inaction. I have, however, recently pressed upon the Government the importance of at once authorising the expenditure of £30,000 in the construction of a water race from Lake Hochstetter to Nelson Creek on the River Grey, and have reason to hope that the application will be complied with. The interest and sinking fund upon this sum will have to be provided from Provincial funds.

4. Your proposed amendments in the Crown Lands Leasing Act have been passed into law, with some restrictions, to which, although they may in some degree impair the usefulness of the measure, it was necessary to submit.

5. A Bill authorising me to raise a loan of £30,000 for Gas and Waterworks for the City of Nelson was assented to by the General Assembly. The terms upon which this loan has hitherto been tendered for have not been such as to justify me in accepting them, but in the meantime I have raised by other means money sufficient to carry out a considerable portion of the proposed extension of the Waterworks. The construction of Gasworks has necessarily been delayed, but I trust to be in a position to commence them very shortly.

6. The erection of Telegraph wires between Nelson and Motueka is now in progress, and the line will probably be open for public use within two months from this date. I have entered into an agreement with the Colonial

Government, the effect of which is to protect the colony from loss by this undertaking, on terms identical with those agreed to in respect to the line from Westport to Cobden, to which I shall request your sanction.

A line of wires is also now in progress from Greymouth to Ahaura and Reefton, the completion of which may also be looked for in a few months.

7. The Highway Boards Empowering Act, 1871, having restored to Provincial Councils the power to legislate upon the important local questions to which it relates, I shall ask your sanction to bring that measure into operation in this province, and bills will be submitted for your consideration providing for the management of Road districts, and for the improvement of towns upon the simple and inexpensive plan which has for so many years been in operation in the City of Nelson, to the general satisfaction of its inhabitants.

These measures can now be made available upon the goldfields equally with the more settled parts of the province, but I do not propose to extend their operation to any district in which a large majority of the inhabitants are engaged in goldmining pursuits, unless I am encouraged to do so by the general wish of the inhabitants themselves.

You will probably remember that an Act for the establishment of Road Boards upon the Goldfields passed by you in the year 1863 was disallowed by His Excellency the Governor, and it is scarcely necessary to say that during the six years which have since elapsed, it has been beyond your power to deal with the question.

8. The Legislature, having enacted in the 2nd part of the Immigration and Public Works Amendment Act 1871, that a sum not exceeding four-elevenths of the share of this Province in the Middle Island Railway fund may be expended upon roads within that part of the South-West Goldfields south of the northern boundary of the Buller Electoral District, and the sum thus available being about £24,000, I recommended that it should be appropriated in the following manner:—£16,000 in roads connecting the Inangahua reefs with the ports of the Buller and Grey; £6000 in roads in the central part of the Buller Valley tending to connect the reefs with the agricultural and pastoral districts, and also with those of the Province of Marlborough, and £1500 in a road from Brighton to Razorback, completing the coast road from Westport to Cobden.

The Colonial Government, I regret to say, determined upon spending the whole sum upon the works first referred to, on grounds which will appear in the correspondence on the subject when placed in your hands.

9. The discovery of auriferous quartz reefs in the Valley of the Inangahua has assumed an importance which it did not present on the occasion of your last meeting. There is no longer room to doubt that these reefs will afford remunerative employment to a large mining population, and the fact that they are situated almost in the heart of the province has a significance to which I need scarcely direct your attention. The surrounding country contains a considerable amount of land available for settlement, and I am sure you will agree with me that every facility should be afforded for its permanent occupation.

The survey of a first block of 5000 acres in the Inangahua Valley into sections of 50 acres each is now nearly completed, and instructions have been given for a similar survey of a second block of the same area.

These sections will be offered for sale by public auction in accordance with the land regulations of 1863.

10. The construction of main lines of road connecting the auriferous districts both with ports from which supplies from beyond seas may be drawn, and with the agricultural and pastoral parts of the country capable to supplying the miner with food at reasonable prices, becomes more than ever a matter of pressing importance.

I shall, therefore, recommend to you, in the proposals for the expenditure of the current year, that such money as shall be available, (after providing for the maintenance of existing means of communication) for new public works, shall be devoted almost exclusively to the furtherance of these views.

The construction of a dray road from the Arnold to the Ahaura, to complete the communication between Greymouth and Reefton, I hope to see accomplished with your concurrence by means of as large a sum as can be spared for the purpose from current revenue, aided by grants of land under the conditions prescribed in the 41st section of the Waste Lands Act of 1863. A bill to empower me to make the necessary contracts, and to grant land in payment will be submitted to you.

Provision will be made in the Estimates for the completion of a road sufficient for the purpose of stock-driving between the Ahaura and the Amuri, so as to connect the Grey and Inangahua Valleys with the stock-producing districts of the Amuri and also of Canterbury.

11. Proposals will be submitted to you, having for their object the formation of a special settlement in the central part of the Buller Valley, combined with the completion of a road available for stock driving between the Owen and the Lyell, connecting the Inangahua reefs with the stock-producing districts in the northern part of the province, and with those of the province of Marlborough.

These proposals will be founded mainly upon the provisions of the 61st and succeeding sections of the Immigration and Public Works Act, 1871, but with the modification that any land set apart for special settlement shall be open to persons already resident in the colony upon the same terms as to newly arrived immigrants.

To effect these objects the assent of the General Assembly will be required, and your sanction will be asked to the preparation of a measure which will enable me to apply the principle of special settlements to the Grey Valley and any other part of the province containing land adapted to the purpose, as well as to the particular locality referred to in the preceding sentences.

12. The late discovery of coal of a like quality with that found at Mount Rochfort and the Grey in the river Ngakawhao is of great interest to the province and to the colony. I have requested the Colonial Government to direct a scientific examination of the locality, but I am not yet in receipt of a reply.

In the meantime two reports by the Harbor-master of Westport upon the capacity of the Ngakawhao as a coaling port will be placed in your hands, from which you will see that any of the local coasting steamers will have no difficulty in taking in coal at the pit's mouth, while, if there should prove to be sufficient inducement for the expenditure, a railway could be made at a very moderate cost from the Ngakawhao to Westport, a distance of about eighteen miles.

13. The rising importance of the Inangahua Valley appears to me to establish a just claim to its formation into a separate electoral district. A bill will therefore be presented to you making provision for the election of a member of the Provincial Council for the Inangahua, including the adjacent parts of the Buller Valley now forming part of the electoral district of the Buller.

14. The customary reports from the Wardens of the gold-fields, from the Provincial Engineer, and from other heads of departments will be laid upon your table without delay.

I now declare this Council open for the dispatch of business.

OSWALD CURTIS,
Superintendent.

Superintendent's Office, Nelson,
May 2, 1872.

THE Superintendent directs it to be notified that a Writ issued for the Election of a Member of the Provincial Council for the Grey District, has been returned with a Certificate to the effect that

FRANK GUINNESS,

of Ahaura, holder of Business License, has been duly elected.

ALFRED GREENFIELD,
Provincial Secretary,