



THE
NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
(PROVINCE OF NELSON).

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EUGENE J. O'CONNOR, Provincial Secretary.

VOL. XXIV.

NELSON, THURSDAY, MAY 20, 1875.

No. 13.

PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

TUESDAY, MAY 18th.

The following statement on Financial and other matters was made to the Provincial Council by the Provincial Secretary and Treasurer (Mr O'Connor) on May 18, 1875, on motion in Council that the Council resolve itself into Committee for the consideration of the Estimates. He said—SIR,

In rising to move the motion standing in my name, I have much pleasure in being able to congratulate this Council and the country on the very improved state of this Province since last year. We have not only to congratulate the City upon its increasing trade, and upon the prosperity that has evidently fallen upon it, but in the country districts also we see evidences of prosperity, in which all those who desire to see Nelson advance, rejoice. The permanence of our quartz reefs we see established, Reefton is a town that, in importance and in buildings, will compare favorably with any other town in the Colony of the same age; though a very few years ago it was nothing more than a desert, and both Westport and the Lyell show distinct signs of advancement. We see general prosperity, diffused in districts, where previously there has been little signs of activity, and a hope for the future which was before unknown. In Collingwood, which was so long neglected, the valuable iron and coal-mines are about to be worked, and in the Takaka district the sawmills are turning out the valuable timber to account. But there is another subject which, from the particular point of view on which I am now addressing the Council, is a matter on which we may congratulate the Province—I refer to the financial position, and I am glad to say that there is great reason indeed for congratulating the people of the Province upon the very great improvement that has taken place in financial matters during the past twelve months.

Financial
position.

It will be remembered with what doleful forebodings the year was opened. I will quote the words of the late Provincial Treasurer, when he addressed the Council upon the motion for going into Committee on the Estimates. He remarked that we were "undoubtedly now in a time of trouble, and the operations of the present year must be pinched to pay for the past." The past is now, I am happy to say paid for, and we enter the future with a clear income. We have to a certain extent put our house in order; we have met our engagements, and come down with an unfettered balance. Besides that, it is no small subject for congratulation that Provincial institutions are at last assuming that position which they ought, along since, to have held—that instead of meeting year by year to register the views and wishes of the Superintendent, the Council now meets to express *their* wishes, and to see that those wishes are carried out. Sir, when my predecessor in this office spoke of difficulties to be met he did not exaggerate the position, for certainly the present Executive have found great difficulties in their way. If any unprejudiced person chooses to look back and remembers the position of affairs when we took office, he cannot but say that he is satisfied, and that the work done is satisfactory. When we took office it was generally said and believed that we could not conduct the financial affairs of the Province for three months. But we have done so. We took office with the intention of carrying out a policy which, I said, would end in making any Government unpopular, and which would bring upon us the dislike of many. We expected a hard task. It was necessary that retrenchment should be the order of the day, and that has been our motto—retrenchment. I am proud to say that we are not one whit less popular, I believe, than when we started. The Province has understood the efforts made by the Executive to do their duty to the country. Sir, it was expected that we should meet opposition in all directions, even from those whose duty it was to assist us. It has always

Retrench-
ment.

been my boast that I was a plain speaker, and on this occasion I desire to speak plainly and to be plainly understood. When the present Government took office, they knew they were doing so under a Superintendent to whom they were politically unacceptable. They knew they were taking office to supplant an Executive previously chosen by the Superintendent, to carry out a policy opposed to his own views, and probably with opposition from every Government officer who could oppose us without departing from his ordinary line of duty by showing it. We had to encounter an opposition which was fermented from one end of the Province to the other. Every attempt of ours to advance the interests of the Province was spoken of as an injury. To such an extent was this done that some of the friends of the Executive, in the first instance, felt dejected, and thought they could never succeed. Sir, the determination which bound the present Executive together was a determination to act justly by the Province as a whole, and to resist anything in the shape of opposition to the views of the Council, and above all to carry forward a just and proper re-arrangement in the service. We found that necessary, and we knew that, if it were not done, we should not be in a position financially to meet the views of the Council. I repeat that, owing to the misrepresentations with which we had to contend, a bad feeling was engendered against the Government. We had also to meet in Wellington statements that were calculated to injure the Province—statements which were calculated to injure the Administration, and to forbid the respect of people at a distance. A statement was made by the member for Nelson City (Mr Curtis) who is also our Superintendent, to this effect:—"In his opinion the reductions in the official department of the Nelson Goldfields which had lately taken place, were not consistent with the public good, and were not conducive to the good of the Colony, because he was certain that for every £1 that was saved at least £2 would be lost from the Provincial revenue." Sir, this is a plain statement, and a statement well worthy the consideration of the Council. Certainly, if the Executive were guilty of making statements that would have so injurious an effect the Council should sit in judgment upon them. But, sir, a statement of this kind, coming from the Superintendent—the head of the Executive establishment of the Province—was calculated seriously to injure and impede the actions of the Executive with respect to the Provincial affairs. We challenge proof for this statement. The time is now past when a statement of that kind could be made without proof, but it must now either be supported or fall contradicted to the ground. The reductions that the Government undertook were very carefully and closely examined into. Those matters were entrusted to me and I personally visited every locality where reduction was contemplated, and having made the necessary inquiries, and studied the matter carefully, I consulted with the Executive before coming to any decision. Sir, words of condemnation from people who were guided by personal feelings only, should not weigh with men who have the good of the Province at heart. Our action now stands before the Council, and it is for them to say whether we have done right or wrong; whether we are able to justify our action now, or whether our accusers are able to prove us in the wrong, has to be settled. Sir, you will notice that it is not here a question of Responsible Government or Irresponsible Government, but a question as to whether the Executive have done wrong, which seriously affects the public interests. The exact words of the Superintendent are "they were not consistent with the public good, and were not conducive to the good of the Colony." His Honor explains that the reason why he did not take action in this matter was because in the administration of affairs ordinarily he left matters to the Executive. Sir, he said that! I think he should rather have waited the result of that action before speaking in condemnation of it. Of course, it is well known to members of this Council that, when taking office myself, I had a very great difficulty to deal with, in consequence of a hotly contested election in which I opposed the present Superintendent; I determined to allow no party

Statement of
Mr Curtis
M.H.R.

feeling to disturb the administration of affairs. But from the day on which I took office there was an organization in existence in which both officials and Superintendent were supposed to be the leading men to work against us. Seeing that was the case, I ask the Council to consider the difficulties of our position. We acknowledged the high position in which the Superintendent was placed, we treated him with the respect that was due to his position, and always gave his opinion due weight, and when matters came up for the consideration of the Executive the members took their seats there, not with a view to party spirit, but with a view to hear each other's opinion, in order that the truth might be arrived at. There was one occasion which has been referred to, when the Executive are said to have differed very much from the Superintendent. It was in the matter of the expenditure of the £50,000 advanced to the Province, in that matter the position the Executive took is certainly the one which the Province is bound to uphold. The loan of £50,000 was authorized by the General Assembly to be expended on certain works in this Province. The Executive took estimates of this work; they anticipated that a large number of unemployed people would be at the other end of the road line. It was decided by the Executive that the work should be commenced upon both ends, but the Superintendent desired that it should not be so. He said distinctly that the works should be commenced only on the Nelson side. It was represented to him that this would be a means to an end policy, and that Nelson had no right to expect such unfair advantage, as that the expenditure would be all at Nelson and none in other parts of the country; the present Executive were in office to do justice to all parts of the Province, and besides, for the sake of economy and expedition, it would be better to commence operations on both sides and proceed with the work expeditiously. However, after a display of authority the proposals made in the first instance by the Executive were carried out, and are being carried out now in their integrity, to this extent: that the work has been commenced at both ends, and in order to show the desire of the Executive to be fair (that Nelson and all parts of the Province should receive equal benefit) a decision was made by which part of the money was to be expended on one side, according to the Engineer's estimate, and part on the other. That left no ground for grumbling, and yet I was astonished to hear that an accusation was made against the Executive to the effect that they dealt unjustly with the interests of Nelson. I think, sir, that the capital of a Province such as Nelson may well rest its future prosperity upon the advancement of the Province, not upon the perpetual good or evil which that would make it hateful to the rest; such a policy shall never receive my support, nor I believe, that of any other member of the Executive. While referring to the expenditure of this £50,000, I may inform members of the Council that the Loan Bill that was brought down in the General Assembly last year was not carried, but—thanks to the members of the House of Representatives from the Nelson Province, thanks to the General Assembly, thanks to the General Government—the Province of Nelson was not entirely forgotten. Indeed, I think the Province of Nelson this year has received more consideration than in any previous one from the General Assembly. With the £50,000 loan, for which we have unfortunately to pay 5 per cent. interest and 1 per cent. sinking fund, we have also had £8000 voted for expenditure on road works in the Province. Recommendations for the expenditure of this money were sent in by the Provincial Government, who recommended that £1000 should be spent on a road in the Takaka Valley. This was intended to assist the settlers and the Road Board in that locality, to make a road that would open out the Valley and enable land proprietors to bring their timber to the market, I am glad to say that that road is rapidly approaching completion, and the benefits that will be derived from it will be great. The expenditure of £2000 was also recommended on a road to connect Keston with the main road through the Grey Valley. This

Relations
of Super-
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and Exe-
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Differ-
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opinion.

£8,000
voted for
roads.

expenditure was much required, and after frequently urging the matter, the General Government have agreed to commence the work, and complete it before winter. The recommendation was also made that £1,000 should be given to supplement the provincial vote for the erection of the Nile bridge at Charleston, and that £1,000 should be given to supplement the provincial vote to connect Boatman's and Larry's with the main road at Inangahua Valley. Also £1000 for roads in the Collingwood and Anatori districts, and £700 was recommended to be spent in connecting Amuri with Ahaura. The latter work has recently been commenced. Hon. members who do not know this district may be informed that for several years past money has been on the estimates of this Council for the purpose of making a road to connect Amuri with Ahaura, but the amount was so small that it was thought useless even to make a good track. This track will be a great benefit to gold diggers and settlers. On visiting the district a few days ago, I was struck with the enormous waste of capital that was going on there. Cattle drovers, when driving, lost so large a percentage of their stock, that I believe in one year the property lost would pay for the road. Another recommendation was that the sum of £1400 should be spent on a road to connect Karamea with the settled districts. This amount would not be sufficient to make a good road between Nelson and Karamea, but with the supplementary sum proposed from another source, it was thought the amount would be sufficient, in the meantime, to make a good cattle track, which could afterwards be improved. The Province received last year from the General Assembly the sum of £5000, which comes by the way of extra capitation allowance, and will be paid to the Province in twelve monthly instalments. There has also been the sum of £8000 devoted to the service of this Province in the establishment of special settlements, but I regret to say that these special settlements have been limited to immigrants almost exclusively. Before giving details of the expenditure of this money, which has taken place under the management of the Provincial Executive, I will say that the Executive have not been remiss in desiring to point out to the General Government the advisability of not limiting the occupation of the land to new arrivals. In practice it was found they were not the best fitted persons to become settlers, and representations were made to the General Government to allow an infusion of old settlers amongst them. A letter addressed to the General Government runs as follows:

"Superintendent's Office,
Nelson, 19th February, 1875.

"Sir,—I have the honor, in accordance with the request which I understand that you have conveyed to me through the Provincial Secretary, to inform you that the Provincial Government are forwarding to the special settlement at the Karamea, in addition to lately-arrived immigrants, a few families of experienced settlers, whose example and advice will, it is confidently expected, be of great service to persons totally unacquainted with the country, and to whom the best means of making their land productive, and of forming homes for their families are necessarily unknown.

"It is also the wish of the Provincial Government, both as regards the Karamea and any other special settlement that may be determined upon, to afford to existing settlers the same advantages as are offered to recent arrivals in the colony, and I shall be glad to learn from you, officially, that this course meets with your approval, as regards the application of the funds contributed by the Colonial Government for the formation of these settlements.

"I beg to enclose to you, herewith, for your information, copies of the existing regulations for these special settlements, and also a copy of the *Colonist* newspaper of the 19th January, 1875, containing a report upon the Karamea Settlement, by the special reporter of that paper.—I have, &c.,

"OSWALD CURTIS,
"Superintendent."

"The Hon, the Minister for Immigration,
Wellington."

The reply to this communication was in these terms:—

"Immigration Office, Wellington,
"1st March, 1875.

Reply of
Minister.

"Sir,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, No. 187, of the 18th ultimo, in which you inform me that in accordance with an understanding arrived at by me with the Provincial Secretary, the Provincial Government are forwarding to the special settlement at Karamea, in addition to the lately arrived immigrants, a few families of experienced settlers, whose example and advice will be of great service to persons wholly unacquainted with the country, and also communicating to me the wish of the Provincial Government, both as regards the Karamea and other settlements, to afford existing settlers the same advantages as are offered to recent arrivals, and requesting me to inform you officially whether this course meets with my approval. As expressed to Mr O'Connor in the interview referred to above, I am quite in accord with your Honor as to the desirability, for the benefit of the immigrants themselves, of locating a few families of experienced settlers in the special settlement, and I accordingly have given authority for the necessary expenditure for the purpose, which I consider a fair charge against the vote for location of immigrants; but I trust to your Honor to locate no more old settlers than are necessary for the purpose, and I shall be glad to hear from time to time how many are so located. The application of any portion of this money for affording early settlers the same advantages as are offered to recent arrivals is a very different matter, and cannot be entertained under the existing Appropriation Act and under the Acts in force relating to immigration. It may or may not be desirable as a matter of policy, but the Government have to carry out the existing law, and I feel sure that upon consideration you will agree with me that this absolutely precludes my consenting to the proposals of the Provincial Government. I have to thank your Honor for the copies of the Regulations for special settlements, and for the copy of the *Colonist* containing a report upon the settlement.—I have, &c.,

"H. A. ATKINSON.

"His Honor the Superintendent."

I need scarcely say that this communication gave no satisfaction, because I am clearly of opinion that it is one of the most difficult tasks in existence to make a successful settlement of new arrivals—particularly the class of new arrivals we have been favored with. It is very easy for those who have been engaged in bush life to imagine the case of an immigrant with a large family, and penniless, placed in a dense bush and asked to become a settler. The position is one which is calculated to strike despondency into the heart of any but the most courageous, and it has had that effect. They see the great trees at Karamea, and their helpless families around them, and they see no hope in the future. Still many of them now, I am glad to say, are getting on well, and I believe they will form a highly successful pioneer settlement in that part of the country. The difficulties of forming a special settlement at Karamea were very great, but the inducements to choose that place were also very great. It will be remembered that many years ago, a large land sale took place there, and about 1500 acres of land were sold. Ever since that sale this land has remained perfectly idle, and, although there are many proprietors, not one of them has gone to the Karamea to improve his property and live upon it. That fact alone shows there was a great difficulty in establishing a settlement there. Several years ago a great rush of gold diggers took place to the Karamea. They remained there for a considerable time, and although they got a quantity of gold they were compelled to leave the place in consequence of the difficulty of getting provisions. The two incidents I have mentioned show that the land was good enough to tempt purchasers, and gold-diggers to go there if they could only have got the necessary supplies. The Government thought, and I believe wisely, that this was a place specially suitable for a special settlement, because, unless under such an arrangement as would throw at once a number of persons into the Karamea, it would be impossible to form one. There

The limit
put.

Karamea.

Difficulties to forming Special Settlement there.

Good land

Gold.

Nile bridge.

Amuri and Ahaura road.

Karamea and Nelson road.

Special Settlement.

Claim for old Colonists.

was a large quantity of land in the neighbourhood, the climate was all that could be desired, and the Government thought that it was just the kind of place for a new settlement, and that even if it cost a great deal of money the Province would be well repaid. Up to the present time, I am happy to say, it has not cost a great deal of money, and there is a prospect of even the small amount that has been paid being amply returned to the Province by the land sales. Since the first settlement of the Karamea about 4,000 acres of land have been taken up by the settlers themselves, and about 1,000 acres by persons outside the settlement. There are yet many thousands of acres which I believe will be taken up in the course of the next twelve months. (Hear, hear) Now, if that takes place, I believe the Province must see there is a great advantage to result from the establishment because it will be self-supporting, and even if we have to pay interest and sinking fund for the money, the returns from the settlement itself will always, under proper management, furnish that, and the Province will derive increased revenue from the extra population drawn to the spot. My hopes and the hopes of the Government in the matter were very much raised by the fact that gold had been discovered there in considerable quantities, and we can see that the time will come when immigrants will easily find employment, either from other men who are settled there or by digging for gold. Therefore I think there is not the slightest doubt that, so far as the settlement is concerned, it will with care flourish, and yet prove to be a credit to the Province of Nelson. At any rate I am not a little proud of the fact that the present Government have had the opportunity of breaking in upon the waste and desolation that existed from the Mokihani to Cape Farewell. The number of men sent to the Karamea from Nelson and Westport was 98, of those, very shortly after their arrival 18 left, and I think it is right that the Province should know under what circumstances they did leave. When the first shipment took place to the Karamea, I was absent from Nelson on duty, and the selection of those immigrants was left to the Immigration Officer in Nelson. The Immigration Officer perhaps acted more from a desire to rid the depot of immigrants than with a view to the future, despatched a number of persons whom I found to be utterly unfit for the life of a colonist. I found it would be more economical to get rid of them, as they were neither able to work or to make themselves useful in any way, therefore, partly by persuasion, I got eighteen of the worst to leave, and am sorry to say there are two or three yet remaining who should have accompanied them. The number of women and children now at the Karamea is about 150. The population is nearly 300, and the amount of land occupied by special settlement is about 4000 acres, and the total cost of the settlement up to the present time is £3,748 8s. 4d. With the whole of that sum of course the settlers are not chargeable, from it has to be deducted the cost of the subsidy given to the steamer that took them there, the cost of certain Government buildings, the cost of boats and their equipments, and also the cattle necessary for the settlement. By-and-by these outlays will be re-productive, and in the meantime, having the immigration fund to draw upon, the ordinary revenue is saved. The anxiety and care of the Government with regard to the settlement was great, and every steamer that went away was accompanied by a member of the Executive in order to watch carefully the progress of the place and see that nothing went wrong. On the first occasion I visited the place and remained there a considerable time. I went in consequence of the old survey lines having become obliterated, and the manager finding it impossible to fix the exact place on which it had been determined to locate the immigrants. I remained with a surveyor whom I had brought from Westport, and my expressed determination not to leave the place until I had seen the immigrants settled on their land, gave confidence. Both the Provincial Solicitor and Mr Rout have visited the place, and we have consulted fully with the Superintendent on the subject, I am certain

now that beyond certain irregularities that have occurred and that could not have been prevented, there is nothing to complain of. The settlement on the whole is a success. When it was first started a great many evils were fore-told of it. It was constantly rung in the ears of the people of the Colony that it was an entire failure, and I was ashamed to hear people from other Provinces saying that nothing would flourish here, not even a special settlement. With regard to the expenditure of a sum of money borrowed for harbor works, I regret that it is not in my power to tell the Council of any advance we have made in constructing these works, as, unfortunately, the means of going on with them have not been placed in our hands as yet, although all preliminaries have been settled. The Government were alive to the importance of getting, at the earliest possible moment, plans and specifications prepared of the proposed works, and for that purpose the Provincial Engineer was instructed some time since to consult with an engineer at Westport and to supply the plans necessary for the dry dock and wharf for Nelson harbor. I see there is a question on the Notice paper with regard to these plans, and I have the correspondence ready. The information I have to give is simply this: Mr Evans who was engineer at Westport was requested to assist Mr Dotson in furnishing plans for a dry dock at an estimated cost of £27,000. He said the sum was too small, but that he would try to bring forward something that would be within the means of the Provincial Government. I told him it was necessary not to exceed that sum, because we could not draw on the Provincial revenue outside the loan. After long delay he sent plans and specifications to the Provincial Government for a wharf and dry dock to cost over £80,000—which plans I may state I had seen at his office previously, being then informed they were prepared for similar works at Auckland—when the Government considered them it was decided that they were nothing at all like what were required for this Province. Notwithstanding this, he expects to be paid for these plans according to his own estimated cost. All I have to say in regard to this matter is, that if an engineer is to charge according to his estimated cost he is very foolish not to make the cost as large as possible. However, I think Mr Evans is not likely to be paid a high price for the work he has not done for the Province. Under the Payment to Provinces Act, the General Government were recommended to distribute the sum of £2650 13s. 1d. accruing to the Province of Nelson amongst the several Road Boards, in the following proportions:—

	£	s.	d.
Waimea	250	0	0
Motueka Valley	300	0	0
Motueka	50	0	0
Pangotatara	75	0	0
Riwaka	100	0	0
Sartorius North	75	0	0
Moutere	200	0	0
Takaka	300	0	0
Charleston	150	0	0
Hampden	200	0	0
Inangahua	400	0	0
Amuri	100	0	0
Lyell	250	0	0
Ahaura	400	0	0
Buller	300	0	0
Cobden	208	19	1
Collingwood	300	0	0

There are a number of Boards which have failed to comply with the Act, and as a natural consequence they will not be able to claim any portion of this money. It will be the duty of the Government to make other arrangements for the redistribution of this amount, in order to make it available as soon as possible. With regard to the Local Revenues Boards I may remark that on the Goldfields they gave a considerable amount of trouble to the Government during last year. The Executive found themselves in this position: that while the roads and bridges were by law placed in charge of the Board's, the Boards would not really take charge

Land taken into settlement.

Future employment. Settlement must flourish.

Incidents connected with Karamea.

Cost.

Constant supervision.

Evil forebodings. A slur on the Province.

Nelson Harbor Works.

Distribution among Road Boards under Payment to Provinces Act.

Boards not in compliance with Act.

Local Revenues Board.

of them. In order to meet the difficulty and to discharge their duty as faithfully as possible to the Council and the Province, the Government proposed to the Boards:—

"1st. That the services of Mr Dobson, Provincial Engineer and Chief Surveyor, as Consulting Surveyor for the current year (under Section 32 of the Local Revenues Act), be offered to the several Boards free of charge to them.

"2nd. Upon the Board accepting the above offer and appointing Mr Dobson Consulting Surveyor, the Government will provide them with sufficient funds during the current year, within the amounts available for each district, to carry out such maintenance contracts as Mr Dobson, as Consulting Surveyor, may approve.

"3rd. That as a condition of the above each Board should undertake to provide during the current year, their own Overseer and Secretary out of rates.

"4th. That in the event of the maintenance contracts not absorbing the whole amount available in any district the balance will be handed over to the Board in such district, as soon as the Provincial revenue will admit."

Main roads generally in good repair.

This proposition seems to have been received with disfavor by many of the Boards, and consequently in a great many cases it was not acted upon. The Government called for tenders for the maintenance of the main roads and those roads which are not now actually looked after by the Boards, are under the direct charge of the Government Overseer, and in good repair. With regard to the road works constructed in the Province, there is a certainty of a main road being made through the Province in a few months, and I hope before long to see a coach running from Nelson to Westport and Grey-mouth. We will also be enabled to have a track to connect Karamea with Nelson, whereby both places will be benefitted, and a new line opened from Nelson to the back country. I regret that it has not been in the power of the Government to have had certain works constructed that were provided for in the Estimates. One of them is a road from Totara to Granville.

Main trunk roads, Nelson to Westport and Grey, Nelson and Karamea.

Instructions were given months ago to have that line laid out, but unfortunately the press of work was such that the Surveyor was unable to do it. I hope however that the funds will soon be available for it. Another of these works is a road to connect the Amuri cattle-producing districts with the Goldfields. Several times during the last year animal food rose to almost famine prices on the Goldfields, and it will be liable to do so until the road I have mentioned is made. The railway works now in course of construction in the Province show some symptoms of advancement, and I hope that in a short time the line will be open to Fox Hill. I regret that the General Government have not shown more activity in having a re-survey made of the line to connect the Fox-hill terminus with the Goldfields. I am sorry also that the Government were inclined to countenance a proposal to make a railway by Top House through the Wairau Gorge to the Amuri. I know that it would be next to impossible to make a railway there, it was intended to place a telegraph line in that direction but the General Manager of the Telegraph Department pronounced it impossible. Lately in passing through that place, it occurred to me that if the Government Engineers would visit that part of the country they would not think of such a thing. Still a road might be very properly constructed there [An hon. member: What about the Brunner mine?]

Works not commenced.

Railway works.

Brunner Mine.

I have heard remarks made about the Brunner mine by the Superintendent and I am bound to endorse them. (Hear, hear.) I know they were strictly correct, and I know also that a more cruel injury was never inflicted on any Province nor upon the Colony than the construction of that line. On one side of the Grey river there is a mine where the dip is so great as to render it unworkable, while on the other coal can be got out at a minimum cost. Notwithstanding the Government have persisted in constructing the line on the wrong side at an enormous cost, while an easier and cheaper line could have been made on the other. The construction of the line as at present has been the means of ruining a town, and will be the means of placing the Brunner coal out of the market. On visiting the place a few days ago it struck me that

An injury

it would be necessary to have the coal carried by horses from the mine to the railway on the other side, and on consulting with the manager of the mine that I found this would add one-fifth to the cost of the coal. Considering the obstacles thus created I ask any reasonable person whether it is at all possible that the Brunner mine can compete with other mines not having such difficulties to overcome. I believe, with the Superintendent, that the time will come when recourse must be had to a line on this side of the river. As far as engineering bungles go I am glad to say that the line at Mount Rochfort is comparatively free. But although the railway there is getting on with a fair amount of progress nothing has been done by the persons in possession of the coal country to prepare for delivering coal when the railway reaches them. Now, sir, I propose to deal with a question which has been plainly stated to this Council, in which I am not prepared to acquiesce. I refer to the statement that the revenue of the Province has fallen off. On the contrary I find the revenue has increased. In the year 1874 there were a number of items put down to revenue which have since been excluded. Now, I shall ask hon. members to exclude those items and take the ordinary revenue as it stands, and compare it item by item with the revenue that has been received this year by the Provincial Government. I think they will find on doing so, that the balance is in favor of this year. In 1874, under the head "Capitation Allowance," £13,068 was received; now it is received from the Colony. Therefore we can strike it out; it has very little connection with the revenue properly derivable from the Province. Under the same heading there is also an advance of £5,000, which may also be struck out. Under the heading "Brunner Coalmine," there appeared last year an item of £5,640. It is well known that the line has since been handed over to a proprietary, therefore it would not be correct to retain it. I shall now read a statement showing the amount of revenue received in 1874 and 1875:—

Extra cost imposed ruinous to Brunner Mine.

Mount Rochfort Line.

Statement that Revenue has fallen off contradicted.

Proof of increase.

Ordinary Revenue received by Provincial Treasurer for the years 1874 and 1875:—

	1875.			1874.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Goldfields revenue ...	7,000	11	10	6,319	12	3
Harbors ...	933	15	2	832	9	9
Wharves ...	1,084	3	4	850	0	0
Education rate ...	3,480	9	0	1,629	14	0
Scab Act ...	1,216	5	7	1,809	13	3
Liquor licenses ...	2,187	12	0	1,808	0	0
Auctioneers' licenses	221	10	0	125	0	0
Interest and sinking fund						
—Marlborough account	478	19	0			
Miscellaneous ...	3,132	10	10	3,054	10	2
Miners' rights, &c....	8,755	15	2	9,950	5	5
Gold duty ...	8,065	13	9	8,710	19	10
Land sales, &c. ...	13,011	18	4	10,759	12	1
Totals ...	£49,619	4	0	£45,849	16	9
		45,849	16	9		

Ordinary revenue 1874 and 1874 compared.

Balance in favor 1875, £3,769 7 3

Last year's revenue was £45,849, and this year we have £49,619, leaving a balance in favor of this year of £3,769. Now, in the face of such a statement can it be said that the revenue is falling off! Certainly, by anticipation, we have been deprived of a considerable amount of land revenue, because I maintain that the survey department, the expenditure on which is so large, should have done more work, and there should now be a greater quantity of land available for settlement or sold. The reason of this may be that the land was offered for sale at so high a price that nobody would buy it. £2 per acre was asked for land at Cobden of ordinary quality, while good land could be bought on the deferred payment system at two shillings per acre per annum for fourteen years, the total price thus paid being twenty-eight shillings per acre. Again, at Waimangaroa, land intersected by water-races was surveyed for sale; if it had been sold, compensation should have been paid to the owners of the water-races. Neither of the sources from which the late Provincial Treasurer expected to receive

Balance in favor of present year.

Why land sales not greater.

to Blind Bay. A trade has sprung up between Golden Bay and Nelson, and it is supposed that it will increase; therefore the steam service will be more than self-supporting. With regard to our general expenditure, I would call the attention of the Council to the fact that all the items enumerated—including a large miscellaneous expenditure for interest, &c.—amount to £45,517. The balance of the revenue (£28,000) we propose to devote to public works and purposes. If I do not dwell upon any of the items of "Public Works," it is only because I do not think they require explanation, as some have been previously on the Estimates, and others will no doubt be easily understood. I shall now ask hon. members to look back and compare the Estimates of expenditure this year with those brought down twelve months ago by the irresponsible Government which preceded us. But I would at the same time ask them to consider that the operations of the present Executive cannot yet be properly judged. When they took office they were fettered, and a large portion of the year's revenue was spent. In fact the principal portion of their time and energies had to be devoted to disentangling the accounts and making them clear. Of course it will be easily understood that when accounts under the eye of the Government in the town of Nelson were in such a state of confusion as the Education and Water-rate accounts, those at a distance would be still worse, especially as they were under the management of an Executive who never visited the country districts. Under the head of "Justice," we propose an expenditure of £8,942, as against £12,279 of last year. Under the head of "Education" we cannot make any reduction, and I believe we shall have to exceed the expenditure of former years. Neither will there be any decrease in the Hospital nor Survey charges. With regard to the latter, it will be necessary to increase the department, because a better system of surveys must be instituted. Under the head "Harbors," we propose an expenditure of £1,895, as against £2,289 of last year. We purpose to add largely to the Public Works, and to ask for a considerable increase. We must economise as much as possible the money placed in our hands for expenditure on Public Works, but if the charges be increased by interest, and such deductions, we must expect to have less to spend on Public Works. Still I believe that the revenue of the Province, and the amount available for Public Works will this year be increased very materially. I believe that the system under which the lands of the Province will be laid out by an efficient survey establishment, and divided into sections for sale will induce people to purchase the land and settle upon it. There must be a proper classification of the land, and it must be put properly into the market. The result of last years land sales is instructive. I find upon making an analysis that out of £6317, the total amount of our land sales for last year, no less than £2905, was obtained from the sale of town lands in Westport alone, while from other portions of the Goldfields £2747 was received.

I believe with proper management the total receipts would be greatly increased. There is a large extent of country available for settlement. By judicious expenditure on survey and main roads this land will be opened for settlement and the Province will thus double its population. To effect this we strive for retrenchment in departmental expenditure, but it is useless for any Government to endeavor to economise unless thoroughly supported by the Council and the public voice. We have by reductions already saved £4000, which, together with £3769 of increased revenue, gives over £7700 additional for public works and purposes. If the Government see their way to effect further retrenchments without impairing the efficiency of the service they will do so, but this is not the time for reducing salaries. We have many valuable officers in the service, and their salaries bear favorable comparison with salaries paid in the neighboring Provinces excepting the Survey Department, and as a consequence many of our best officers have been attracted elsewhere. In conclusion I have to apologise to the Council for any shortcomings that may appear in this Statement. I have not enjoyed sufficient leisure to have given it the amount of care and preparation necessary for my own satisfaction; still the truth which I hope I have made plain, that the Province is prosperous and progressing will, I know, condone for the want of detail in minor matters. Nothing could be so fatal to the welfare of the Province as the wide spread belief that notwithstanding the expenditure to develop our resources we are in a decaying condition. I am glad to say such is not the case. This Province, on the contrary, is a generous Province, and any small expenditure upon it (if judicious) is amply repaid, in every part of its symptoms of growing prosperity are visible. I have the fullest faith in the bright future of this Province, and if the Council will only adopt a proper policy with regard to the expenditure of public monies, it will raise itself high in the estimation of the Colony, and the example will be followed elsewhere. The question of responsible or irresponsible Government is one which very little affects the administration of the affairs of the Province, it rests with the men and not with the system. The Council have introduced a system of Responsible Government by which the power of administration virtually rests with them, and I desire to see them uphold it. At the same time there is an evil. It is a system by which in a small Council petty grievances will be hawked about by members and brought in judgment against the Executive or individual members, instead of taking into consideration the whole tenor of their actions. I have heard that an attempt, specially directed at one member of the present Executive. We are as one, and have acted together and divided the work amongst ourselves, each one discharging his duty to the best of his ability. If there is any credit we share it alike, or, on the contrary, any mistakes, all are equally ready to take the blame. We hope that our efforts to discharge our duty have met with the approval of this Council and the Province. (Applause.)

Estimates of irresponsible and responsible Executive compared

Justice.

Increase of revenue anticipated.

System of dealing with Waste Lands.

Total Land Sales.

Total saving by reduction

Salaries not reduced.

The Province prosperous and progressing.

Question as to form of government secondary.