



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE.

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THE Second Session of the Fifth Parliament of New Zealand was this day prorogued by the Governor, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following

S P E E C H.

HONOURABLE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

In bringing to a close this Session of Parliament, I have to thank you for the care and attention which you have devoted to the public business.

I am glad that you have been able to pass so many large and important measures calculated to promote the social welfare, the commerce, and the good government of the Colony.

By the Public Health Act you have greatly strengthened the hands of the Government, by enabling it to take the needful precautions to prevent the introduction and spread of infectious diseases; while you have, in the Municipal Corporations Waterworks Act, passed a measure calculated beneficially to promote the health and comfort of the inhabitants of large towns.

The Drawbacks Act will afford considerable relief to the mercantile community, and remove an obstacle to the increase of that commerce with the islands of the South Pacific which this Colony, from its geographical position, ought to be able to command.

I congratulate you on having passed the Public Trustee Act. Although somewhat novel in its features, it will supply a great public requirement, and will, I trust, prove of advantage to the Colony. Its initiation will, during the recess, engage the careful attention of my Ministry.

The Public Works Amendment Act, in which you make further provision for carrying out the beneficent policy of colonization, shows that you are determined to promote to the utmost of your ability the progress of the Colony. The provision you have made for the benefit of the West Coast of the Middle Island is a proof that you fully recognize the wants of that important district.

The Railways Act makes provision for carrying out the works previously determined upon by Parliament; and although the additional cost now sanctioned appears considerable, it is explained by its including the expense of the engineering and departmental work not before included, and the purchase of land, together with the extra cost of iron and the estimated addition arising from the increased price of labour. It is especially gratifying to notice that when all these amounts are added together, the average cost of the railways will be only about £5,090 a mile, or £90 more than was originally estimated when the Public Works and Immigration

proposals were first submitted to Parliament. The 764 miles of railway which you have authorized at this rate must largely develop the resources of the country. It will now be the duty, as it will, I believe, be the aim of my Ministers, to construct these works with all the speed that the state of the labour market and other considerations will prudently permit. The Tramways Act is an important supplementary measure to your railway legislation, and will, while opening up the country, at the same time provide the railways with a network of feeders to their traffic.

I regret that the measure introduced by my Government with a view to providing greater security to life assurers has not passed into law. I hope, however, that eventually this or some similar measure may receive the sanction of Parliament.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

I thank you for the Supplies you have granted for the Public Service, which shall be administered with all due care and economy.

I am pleased to notice the increased attention which is being devoted to administrative and financial questions. By the Public Revenues Act you have provided a much more efficient system of control over public moneys than previously existed, and I have little doubt that the measure will prove extremely beneficial. During the recess it is the intention of my Ministry to investigate the condition of the Civil Service, in order to decide to what extent administrative and economical reforms are practicable.

HONORABLE LEGISLATIVE COUNCILLORS, AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The abundance of employment which exists, and the readiness with which recently introduced immigrants have been absorbed by the labour market, prove the wisdom of Parliament in recommencing active measures of colonization.

It will be the earnest endeavour of my Government to continue to carry out the conciliatory policy towards the Natives which has been so successful during the last few years. I have felt great pleasure in summoning, in Her Majesty's name, to the Legislative Council two Maori chiefs—Mokena Kohere of the East Coast, and Wiremu Tako Ngatata of the West Coast.

In bidding you farewell, I desire to congratulate you on the general and growing prosperity of the Colony. The official statistics recently published by the Imperial Government show that New Zealand, although only thirty-two years have elapsed since the beginning of colonization here, is already fourth in rank and importance on the long list of British Colonies. In its public revenue, in its trade (including imports and exports), and in the other elements of material progress, it is now surpassed only by the Dominion of Canada, by Victoria, and by New South Wales. It may be confidently expected that, through the blessing of Providence on the energy and industry of its population in developing the vast and varied natural resources of this country, New Zealand will soon rise to a still higher place among the Provinces of the Empire.