



THE  
**NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE**  
 EXTRAORDINARY.

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**T**HE First Session of the Seventh Parliament of New Zealand was on Wednesday, the 24th day of September, opened by Commissioners duly appointed; and George Maurice O'Rorke, Esq., having on that day been elected Speaker of the House of Representatives, His Excellency was, at the meeting of the Houses this day, pleased to make the following

S P E E C H.

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

In opening this, the Seventh Parliament of New Zealand, I am sure you will unite with me in an earnest hope that the new Parliament may be distinguished for the enactment of such measures as shall be most conducive towards promoting the happiness and welfare of the people.

We have reached what is, perhaps, as yet the most important epoch in the history of the Colony; and the future will very much depend upon the impress which may be stamped upon it by the action of this Parliament.

It is matter for congratulation that, notwithstanding the severe monetary pressure and commercial gloom which have for some time past prevailed throughout the world, the position of this Colony is thoroughly sound.

In accordance with Constitutional usage, I recently allowed an appeal to the electors of the Colony; and they have availed themselves of this opportunity to make manifest their wishes with regard to measures of great importance, which it was proposed should be enacted as part of the permanent Constitutional Law of the Colony.

The elections having been completed, I have, at the earliest possible period, called you together to avail myself of your advice and assistance in considering these measures, and in carrying on the necessary legislation of the country.

My Responsible Advisers, following up the line of policy which was indicated during the last session of the late Parliament, have prepared measures giving effect to the views which were then made known to the country. Amongst these there will be submitted to you a Bill to amend the Law relating to Electors qualified to vote at the Election of Members of the House of Representatives. In this measure, the broad principle is adopted that every man who pays taxes, and is otherwise affected by legislation, has a right to representation.

A Bill which will also claim your consideration is one which proposes to reduce the longest period for which the House of Representatives can sit from five to three years. This enactment will render each member more directly accountable to his constituents than he at present is, and will secure to the electors the power of returning members so frequently to the House of Representatives that public opinion, which often in young countries takes a new direction from the rapidly varying circumstances of such communities, will be fairly represented in every phase which that opinion may assume.

But these provisions will be of comparatively little value unless the constituencies are so arranged that, in as far as practicable, population in each electoral district respectively shall be duly represented. This right was assured to the people of New Zealand by the British Parliament, in the Act which originally gave them a Representative Constitution. The measure on this subject which is to be submitted to you will substantially secure a return, and an adherence for the future, to that important principle of the Constitution Act.

These three measures are, in the opinion of my Advisers, so equitable in themselves, and so accordant with the spirit of modern times, that, should they become law, there is, the Government believes, every prospect that a feeling of general contentment would be permanently established in the Colony. The power of legislation would then largely rest in the hands of the people of New Zealand; and it is to be hoped that they will always maintain within its limits an equitable system of taxation, a just administration of public lands, and a sound system of local self-government. The alterations which will be produced in the Constitution Act by the proposed measures will be but slight, whilst they are evidently in accord with the popular wish.

A Bill will be submitted for your consideration to suspend Plurality of Voting in cases of elections of local governing bodies, whilst those bodies are subsidized out of the general revenue of the Colony.

Measures will also be submitted to you, which will enable those desiring to occupy small farms or rural allotments to obtain possession of lands much more readily, and at a smaller cost, than they can be obtained under the present system.

#### GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The Estimates will be laid before you, accompanied by Financial Measures calculated, in the opinion of my Government, to promote the interests of the Colony, and to maintain its credit.

A very general desire appears to exist, that consideration should be given to the best means of promoting and encouraging Manufactures and Local Industries in this Colony. With a view to give effect to this desire, you may probably think it advisable to appoint a Select Committee to inquire into and report upon the subject.

The Public Works in progress continue to be vigorously prosecuted, and you will be asked to make provision for the further prosecution of those works which have already been authorized by Parliament.

In pursuance of the intention of the Legislature in the session of 1878, considerable pains have been taken by the Public Works Department to ascertain the best route for connecting by rail the East and West Coasts of the northern portion of the Middle Island; and also the best route from Amberley to Cook's Straits. As these are works of great magnitude and importance, and must involve a very large expenditure of public money, it is deemed prudent, in order to take advantage of every possible means of ascertaining the best routes, that the relative merits of the various lines should be carefully considered. With that view, you will be asked to submit the whole question to full and exhaustive examination and inquiry by a Select Committee.

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

A measure will be laid before you by which lands the property of the Natives, not purchased by the Government for the public, will henceforth be sold in small blocks in the open market, on such terms as may be agreed upon with the proprietors. My Advisers are of opinion that by the adoption of this system, great advantages will be secured to the whole European population of New Zealand, whilst the Natives

will have the satisfaction of receiving the full value of their estates, and will no longer be subjected to those importunities and temptations to induce them to part with their lands which have hitherto proved a fertile source of misunderstanding, and of evil to the two races.

The assurance which I was enabled to give to the members of Parliament at the opening of the last session, in regard to the peaceful and loyal action of the Native people generally, has been borne out by the results.

No further development has taken place of the fanatical movement on the West Coast, and the tribes concerned appear to be quietly awaiting the action of the Parliament and of the ordinary Courts of law.

Steps are being taken for the holding of a full inquiry into the existence and extent of the alleged unfulfilled promises in regard to lands.

Two intertribal disturbances, arising out of disputed claims to land, have occurred, in one instance attended with loss of life. The necessary measures are being taken to vindicate the law.

A Bill will be submitted for your consideration to regulate the immigration of Chinese into the Colony.

A valuable interim report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into the subject of higher education has been received and laid before both Houses. When the final report has been made, no delay shall take place in laying it before you, and in communicating to you the measures which the Government may recommend for adoption on the whole subject, which is one of paramount importance to educational interests in the Colony.

Various other measures will be laid before you during this session. On each of these, I am confident, you will bestow your careful attention, exerting yourselves in all respects to promote the interests of this Colony, the destinies of which Providence has, in so large a measure, intrusted to your charge. In all your efforts to attain this end, you may rely on receiving my ready and earnest co-operation. I sincerely trust that a spirit of wisdom and of sound judgment may animate each branch of the Legislature.

