



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE
EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

WELLINGTON, FRIDAY, MAY 19, 1882.

THE First Session of the Eighth Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by the Governor, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following
SPEECH.

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

It is with much pleasure that I have recourse to your advice and assistance, on the occasion of the opening of the Eighth Parliament of New Zealand.

I forwarded to the Queen an expression, which I feel sure will have your hearty concurrence, of the deep-felt thankfulness with which all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in New Zealand heard of her recent preservation from danger, and of their earnest prayer that she may be long spared to reign over a loyal and united empire.

The measures adopted by the last Parliament, to extend the franchise, to increase the representation of the people, and to afford more frequent opportunities of ascertaining the opinions of the constituencies, may, I trust, cause all classes of the community to watch your deliberations with keener interest, and be found conducive to the permanent welfare and happiness of the colony.

I am glad to be able to congratulate you upon the renewed and well-founded confidence which exists as to the commercial prospects of the colony, upon the disappearance of distress among the working-classes, and upon the general increase of the revenue.

The proposals submitted to Parliament last session, for the systematic laying-out of roads to promote the colonization of the waste lands, have had careful attention during the recess, and in all parts of the colony the work of settlement is progressing favourably. New openings are in the course of development for the employment of labour and capital, the railways have become more productive, and fresh groups of population are settling in districts which only require means of convenient access to make them prosperous.

A desire for permanent settlement on the gold fields, and for the profitable union of mining and agricultural pursuits in the same localities, is becoming more manifest. The present time is, in the opinion of my Advisers, a very favourable one at which to press forward the construction of roads, and to facilitate the influx of population.

The success of the scheme which has been adopted at Rotorua, on a limited scale, for administering Native lands on behalf of the Native owners, leads me to hope that it may have a beneficial and more extended operation in the future.

My Advisers are of opinion that a plan for leasing agricultural lands, with fixity of tenure, upon reasonable terms, may with advantage be incorporated into the general system of administering Crown lands of the colony, and a measure will be submitted to you with this object.

Towards the close of the last session of Parliament, the aspect of affairs on the West Coast of the North Island appeared to my Government to have become more threatening than had previously been the case; and my Advisers felt themselves compelled to consider whether more active steps than had yet been taken might not be required for the repression of lawlessness, the protection of Her Majesty's peaceable subjects, and the termination of the increasing excitement in that district. At their request, the House of Representatives voted a sum of £100,000 to meet such a contingency.

In the month of October, the time arrived when, conciliation having, in the opinion of my Ministers, failed to effect its object, they considered the adoption of more vigorous measures to have become necessary. A Proclamation was accordingly issued, during my absence from the colony, by the Administrator of the Government, calling on Te Whiti and his adherents to accept within a specified time the lands offered to them—a requisition with which Te Whiti failed to show any sign of compliance.

The dangers and difficulties of the position were judged by my Government only to increase with the continued exercise of forbearance, and it was resolved that the periodical meetings of Natives at Parihaka should be no longer allowed to be held, that the numerous Natives from other localities congregated there should be compelled to return to their own districts, and that Te Whiti and Tohu should be removed from a position which was deemed by my Advisers to constitute a standing menace to the peace of the colony. Te Whiti and Tohu were therefore arrested, and were committed for trial on a charge of sedition.

In order to secure the success of the operations necessary for these objects, the Volunteers were invited to leave their districts to render assistance; and a large addition was made to the Armed Constabulary.

The thanks of the colony are due to the Volunteers for the readiness with which they answered the call made on them, and for their soldierly conduct while on active service.

The discipline and good conduct of the Armed Constabulary entitle them to the highest praise.

My Government desire it to be recognized that in the course pursued they have been, and are, actuated by anxiety to avert consequences disastrous to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects, rather than by any desire to inflict punishment. A Bill will be laid before you having for its object to render the trial of Te Whiti and Tohu unnecessary, and at the same time to prevent them from returning for the present to Parihaka, or recommencing an agitation which has long caused alarm and apprehension of danger among the settlers on the West Coast.

I am assured that confidence in the tranquillity of the district is established, and that a feeling of security exists among its inhabitants which has been long unknown to them.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The Estimates of revenue and expenditure for the current financial year will shortly be placed before you.

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

Returns will be laid before you which show that the revenue has considerably exceeded the amount estimated.

The railway returns especially show a gratifying increase. The surplus of receipts over expenditure during the past year amounts approximately to 4 per cent. upon the cost of construction.

A new impetus appears to have been given to every branch of industry. The yield of gold for the year which has just closed, as compared with that of several previous years, shows a marked development of this important industry, and encourages the belief that further expenditure in opening-up the gold fields will be productive of the best results to the colony at large.

These facts appear amply to justify your making provision for the extension and ultimate completion of the main trunk lines of railway, as well as for other important works in connection with them, to which Parliament has already given its sanction. Proposals with these objects will be made to you, which the increase of revenue and the revival of prosperity appear fully to justify.

The Commissioners appointed to inquire into the constitution, practice, and procedure of the Courts of Judicature within the colony, with the view of preparing such measures of reform as would render the administration of justice more speedy and efficacious, and at the same time less costly, than at present, have completed their labours, and Bills will be presented to you for giving effect to the recommendations of the Commissioners.

Bills will also be introduced—

To amend the Counties and Road Boards Acts;

To regulate the Making and Levying of Rates;

To effect important Changes in the Working of the Government Life Insurance Department;

To improve the Law affecting Lunatics;

To enable Affirmations and Declarations to be taken in lieu of Oaths;

To abolish the Restraints on the Alienation of Land;

To amend the Law relating to the Property of Married Women;

To consolidate and amend the Law relating to Legal Practitioners; and

For the better Management of Native Reserves.

Each of these subjects will require your very careful consideration; and, under the guidance of Providence, I trust that your deliberations will result in just conclusions, beneficial to all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in this colony.

