



THE  
**NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE**  
**EXTRAORDINARY.**

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**T**HE Second Session of the Eighth Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by the Governor, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following

S P E E C H.

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

It affords me great pleasure to meet you, for the first time, in Parliament assembled.

Since my assumption of the Government of this Colony, to which Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint me, I have visited a considerable portion of each Island; and have thus been able to obtain a personal knowledge of various districts, and to make the acquaintance of many of the residents. I trust ere long to be able to complete my tour through the Colony.

I cannot but regard the cordial manner in which I have been everywhere received, as an evidence of the loyal attachment of the people of New Zealand to the Throne and person of our beloved Sovereign.

I have been specially gratified by the hearty welcome given to me by the Natives whom I have met in different parts of the country.

I was much impressed, wherever I went, by the signs of present prosperity, and especially by the vast capabilities of New Zealand, which only need for their development a larger population, and more extended markets for the produce of the Colony. I feel sure that, as the inducements this country has to offer become more fully realized in Europe, increasing numbers of suitable settlers will be attracted to its shores.

A few days ago, the Government of Victoria telegraphed to my Advisers, proposing that New Zealand should join the Australian Colonies in asking the Imperial Government to establish British rule over the New Hebrides and other Islands of the Pacific. Realizing the great importance of these islands to Australasia, and the serious detriment it would be to British interests should they fall into the hands of a Foreign Power, I have telegraphed to the Secretary of State for the Colonies, expressing my full concurrence in the desirability of such action; and my Advisers, at once acceding to the proposal made to them by the Victorian Government, telegraphed to the Agent-General of this Colony, instructing him to co-operate with the Agent-General of Victoria in urging these views on the Colonial Office.

On Tuesday last, a telegram was received from the Agent-General, to the effect that Lord Derby would be willing to promote the views of the Colonies on this subject, if some satisfactory assurance were given that they would bear the necessary expense.

Since Parliament last met, a marked improvement has become apparent in the relations between the Maoris on the one hand and the Government and European settlers on the other.

On the West Coast of the Northern Island, where great anxiety recently prevailed, there now exists a general feeling of security. The Native Chiefs, Te Whiti and Tohu, have been released from custody and permitted to return to Parihaka, where they are residing. There is no indication that this concession will lead to the renewal of dangerous proceedings on the part of the Natives.

The labours of the West Coast Commission, now drawing to a close, will no doubt be productive of much good to the Maoris, and will greatly promote the beneficial occupation and improvement of the country by both races. The thanks of the Colony are especially due to Sir W. Fox, for his very valuable services towards bringing about so satisfactory a result.

The Maoris who have for so many years maintained their isolation in the district between the European settlements at Waikato and those on the Waitara River, have now unreservedly renewed their intercourse with the Government and the European population; and it is a gratifying fact that, on a recent occasion, important Chiefs of the tribe which has hitherto maintained the most exclusive attitude, and which occupies the most isolated part of the Colony, have recognized our laws by voluntarily attending at the Supreme Court in Auckland, to give evidence against a number of their own people who had committed a serious outrage on a party of Government surveyors. There are grounds for a reasonable hope that in the future the Natives will yield willing obedience to the laws of the Colony.

The unopposed reopening of the Harbour of Kawhia, which had been closed to Europeans for more than twenty years, the laying-out of a Government township adjacent to the harbour, and the exploration for railway purposes of a part of the country where for many years Europeans had not been permitted even to travel, warrant the belief that the Natives are realizing that the development of the resources of the country will most effectively promote their own interests.

I have issued a Proclamation, under the Act of last session, granting an Amnesty without any exception; and there is every reason to believe that the Amnesty has produced an excellent effect on the Native population.

The pressing forward of surveys and the construction of roads prior to the alienation of Crown lands, have proceeded actively during the past year, and satisfactory results have been attained in the promotion of permanent settlement.

Further experience in Departmental administration has shown that some changes are requisite in the land laws, in order to give fuller effect to the desire of the Legislature that the public estate should be so disposed of as to promote the distribution of the land amongst a numerous and industrious population. Amendments of existing Acts, having that object, will be submitted for your consideration.

During the last session, Parliament determined to adopt, within fixed limits, a system of leasing agricultural lands with a perpetual tenure. The initiation of the system has been attended with results which may upon the whole be deemed satisfactory.

The introduction of population under the nominated system of immigration was resumed on its being authorized by Parliament, and has been carried on during the recess. The increasing facilities of communication with Europe, the large area of land which is being opened for settlement by roads and railways, and the establishment of new industries, offer year by year greater inducements for the introduction of capital, and at the same time point to the necessity of steadily continuing the assistance which is given from the public funds in aid of immigration.

With the aid of money voted by Parliament, increased facilities for the development of the Gold Fields have been provided, and encouragement to this important industry has been thereby afforded. Large sums have been expended by private enterprise in opening-out quartz reefs; and this branch of the industry is steadily assuming larger proportions, and becoming a permanent source of wealth to the Colony.

I have been able to give effect to the wishes of the Legislature by arranging for the continuation of the San Francisco Mail Service for a period of two years beyond the termination of the existing contract, at a cost to this Colony something less than that prescribed by the resolution passed last session. The particulars are contained in papers which will be laid before you.

Tenders for the establishment of a direct line of steamships between Great Britain and the Colony were advertised for here as well as in the United Kingdom; but neither the Agent-General nor the Postmaster-General received any offer. Your renewed attention to this subject will be invited during the session.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The estimates of revenue and expenditure for the current financial year will be laid before you in the course of a few days.

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

Returns will be presented to you which will show that, notwithstanding considerable commercial depression during a part of the past year, the public revenue has been well maintained.

The increasing receipts from railways are satisfactory evidence of the general progress and well-being of the country.

The frequent applications that are made to this Colony to take part in Exhibitions in various parts of the world, have led my Advisers to give careful consideration to this subject; and they have come to the conclusion that the object sought by Exhibitions would be more effectually promoted, and at a less cost, by the establishment in London of a permanent Exhibition for the products of the industries of Australasia. It is proposed to submit to you resolutions, with a view of inviting the co-operation of the several colonies interested.

It is, I think, generally conceded that the Legislative Council has for the most part discharged its functions with credit to itself and with advantage to the Colony; but public opinion has, I believe, come, or is fast coming, to the conclusion that the time has arrived when an elective should be substituted for a nominated Chamber. It is obvious that a constitutional change of such magnitude should not be attempted without mature deliberation, the more so as opinion is very much divided as to the mode in which a suitable constituency should be created. The views of my Advisers on this very important subject will be laid before you during the session.

There are a number of subjects in reference to which legislation is more or less urgently required, but which, for the last two sessions, have had to give place to the several very important measures that have been submitted by my Government for the consideration of Parliament and engrossed its attention. Those measures having for the most part become law, the present session will, I hope, afford a convenient opportunity of dealing with the subjects to which I have referred, with a reasonable expectation that they may be satisfactorily disposed of.

The work of Consolidating the Statutes of the Colony has been steadily proceeded with during the recess, and is now fast approaching completion. Several consolidating Bills of importance will be brought before you without delay.

I do not doubt that all the business submitted to Parliament will receive that attention to which it may be entitled; and I earnestly hope that, under the blessing of God, your deliberations may result in promoting the happiness and welfare of all classes of Her Majesty's subjects in this portion of her dominions.

