



THE

NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE

EXTRAORDINARY.

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WELLINGTON, TUESDAY, APRIL 26, 1887.

THE Fourth Session of the Ninth Parliament of New Zealand was this day opened by the Governor, when His Excellency was pleased to make the following

SPEECH.

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

I have again to express the pleasure I feel in meeting you in Parliament assembled.

You will join me in regretting that, since last session, so many members of both Houses have been removed by the hand of death. The loss of Mr. Macandrew is widely mourned. It is unnecessary that to you, who knew him so well, I should dwell on his great qualities as a statesman and a patriot.

The proper manner of celebrating the Jubilee of our Most Gracious Sovereign has been considered by Her Majesty, and she has intimated that the founding of an Institute that will remain a permanent exhibition of the wealth and industries of Her wide dominions will be most pleasing to Her. Steps have been taken in England to carry this project to a successful issue, and the colonies have been invited to join in this mode of celebrating Her Jubilee. My Advisers, in accordance with the wish of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, have asked the local bodies to invite assistance from private individuals, and it will be for you to consider what further steps should be taken to testify in the way desired by our Sovereign, or in such other manner as you may approve, the love and loyalty of the people of this colony to the Crown.

A Conference convened to discuss important subjects affecting all parts of the Empire is now being held in London. This is the first meeting of the kind in the history of our country, and it marks a new era in the great work of colonization. I have no doubt that, even should its results appear to be meagre, the very fact of such a Conference will help forward that close union of the Empire which the

citizens of a great State must desire to see maintained and developed. The more firmly the bonds of relationship between English-speaking people are drawn together the better it must be for every colony and dependency of the Empire.

The question of Naval Defence has necessarily been discussed by the delegates. I am glad to be able to inform you there seems every prospect that a reasonable and fair arrangement will be concluded between the Mother-country and her colonies. A proposal has been made, which will be duly submitted to you, by which, at a comparatively small cost to the colony, the fleet in the Australasian waters will be increased, and due provision made in time of war for the protection of coasts and shipping. Perhaps, however, the most gratifying announcement that can be made in reference to this subject is that the firmness of my Advisers in urging the claims of New Zealand to be regarded to some extent as a distinct naval station, has been crowned with success. New Zealand, subject to your approval of the proposed arrangements, is henceforth to be the headquarters of a portion of the fleet, with a peace establishment of two vessels of war. Such a recognition of her maritime position cannot fail to be of service to her commercially; and my Ministers desire to express their sense of the generosity with which the other colonies supported this proposal. So far as the Conference has proceeded, all may rejoice at the harmony that has characterized its proceedings, and at the evident feeling in favour of union that has been displayed by Her Majesty's subjects in all parts of the Empire.

Intimately related to naval protection are the defences of the principal ports, which are also the chief centres of the wealth of the country. I am glad to be able to state that the defence works are gradually approaching completion, and that the Government is now in a position to entrust their execution to the permanent forces of the colony. When the forts and batteries are finished, the harbour defences of New Zealand will redound to the credit of the colony, and will be of the utmost service to her should war unhappily arise.

The cultivation of friendly feelings amongst the colonies cannot be too strongly urged. The Colony of Victoria is about to celebrate the Australian centenary by holding an international exhibition, and you will be asked to consider whether New Zealand shall be represented on such an important occasion. An exhibition of this character cannot fail to be of immense service to the colonies in bringing before visitors from all parts of the world the products and resources of these vast territories that only require capital and labour for their further development.

The increase in the price of wool, and the bountiful grain harvest that has just been reaped, must have a beneficial effect on all the industries of the colony. Though the price of agricultural produce has been low, the work of settlement has made great progress, and you will be pleased to learn that large numbers of families have been attached to the soil during the past year under the various schemes of land settlement that are provided for in the Land Act. When the large areas that have been recently acquired from Native owners on the route of the North Island Main Trunk Railway have been made available for occupation by the construction of the line, there will no doubt be further extension of settlement in the interior of this Island. The difficulties in the past in arranging with Natives for obtaining suitable land are daily being lessened, and the recent adjudications by the Native Land Courts on some millions of acres prove that the Maoris are awakening to the advantages to be derived from the profitable occupation of their lands.

Papers will be laid before you regarding the conference held in Sydney relating to the importation of stock into the colonies.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The Estimates of the revenue and expenditure for the current financial year will be brought before you at an early date. The revenue has been diminished to a considerable extent, partly by the fall in the price of goods, and partly also by the happily increased habits of temperance amongst the people. My Advisers recognize the necessity of limiting the expenditure as far as the wants of the colony will permit, and I have no doubt that when the financial position and requirements of the country are placed before you they will receive your most careful consideration.

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

A Representation Bill will be brought before you. Its purpose will be so to deal with the subject that after every census the representation of the colony will be self-adjusting.

The reform of the Legislative Council has been frequently before Parliament. My Advisers believe that it may be fittingly considered when a measure for the representation of the people is being discussed. A Bill on the subject will be brought before you.

The Loans to Local Bodies and Government Loans to Local Bodies Acts, which were passed by Parliament last year, have given general satisfaction throughout the colony; experience, however, has shown that some amendments may be necessary in order more effectually to carry out their provisions. These will be submitted to you.

My Advisers believe that one of the main aids to the progress of the colony is the promotion of agricultural settlement. Much has already been done in this direction; it will be for you to consider whether exceptional legislation is not desirable to establish small-farm settlement where there are no Crown lands available.

My Advisers believe that, together with agricultural and pastoral settlement, it is of the utmost importance that other industries should be encouraged. You will be invited to consider how this object can best be accomplished.

The good feeling that is being exhibited by the Maoris towards the Government has been evinced in a marked manner by the generous offer to the colony of the Ruapehu, Tongariro, and Ngauruhoe mountains by the Ngatituwharetoa Tribe, who desire that a large area of land should be set aside as a national park. You will be asked to legislate on the subject in order that effect may be given to their wishes.

Efforts have been made to further and develop the mining industries of the colony. The pressing want at present seems to be some mode of treating the rich and varied ores that are to be found in many parts of the country. It is hoped that new methods may be applied which will turn to account the valuable mineral resources of the goldfields that are now left unproductive. The question as to the assistance that can properly be devoted to such a purpose will no doubt receive your close attention.

You will be asked to consider Bills providing for amendments in the Electoral laws, the Government Insurance Act, the Criminal law, and the Guardianship of Infants, and for the constitution of Railway Boards of Advice. Various other Bills will also be submitted for your consideration.

I commend to your attention the important questions that will be brought before you, and I hope that, under the blessing of God, your labours may prove of great service to the colony.

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