



THE  
**NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE**  
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THE Fourth Session of the Tenth 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 gives me much pleasure again to meet you in Parliament assembled.

When I first met you shortly after my assumption of the Government, I had had time only for a hurried journey through the North Island, but I expressed my gratification at what I had then seen and at the manner in which I had been received as Her Majesty's representative. I have now visited the four centres, and have had the advantage of residing for some months in three of the principal cities. The experience which I have obtained in the course of my journey through many different parts of the colony has enabled me to take a more comprehensive view of its capabilities. I have been greatly pleased with the abundance of its resources, with the beauty of its scenery, and with the enterprise and industry of its inhabitants. I have also been much gratified by the manner in which I have been welcomed in every place which I have visited, and with the loyalty exhibited by the people to Her Majesty the Queen and to the Empire.

The New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition proved a greater success than was anticipated by the most sanguine. While its conception, accomplishment, and management reflected special credit upon the enterprise and ability of its originators and of the citizens of Dunedin, the manner in which it was supported by those living in other parts of the colony evidenced the power of the inhabitants to co-operate in a great undertaking. The splendid display of natural products, of arts, manufactures, and minerals, must have had a great educating influence upon the

inhabitants of the colony, while at the same time it has enabled visitors to form some idea of our natural wealth and of the energy and industry of our people.

In the very successful demonstrations which were held in Wellington and Auckland for the purpose of celebrating the completion of the fiftieth year of the existence of New Zealand as a part of the Empire, I was greatly impressed with the marvellous progress which the colony had made, with the large proportion of happy and healthy children who were prominently put forward to join in the celebration, with the orderly behaviour of the great crowds of people, consequent without doubt on the high standard of comfort and prosperity enjoyed by all classes, and with the patriotic love for the colony entertained by those who have made it their home.

It affords me much pleasure to be able to congratulate you upon the evidences which during last year were afforded of the substantial progress made in the circumstances of the colony. The provision made during last session for carrying on the public services has proved more than sufficient. It is satisfactory to note that where there has been an increase of revenue it has been in items which show that a further advance has been made in productive pursuits, while the stationary condition of other items shows that there has been no departure from the temperate habits of the people. The volume of exports has still further increased, and, while the value of some—notably flax—has unfortunately declined, that of others remains fairly satisfactory.

My Ministers will place before you information which will show that the productiveness of the colony is enlarged; that, notwithstanding the increased expenditure of capital which must have been incurred in making productive the additional area of land acquired during the year by private persons, the position of colonists so far as their private indebtedness is concerned has greatly improved; and that there has been a satisfactory addition to the funds held by the Savings-Banks and the Insurance Department.

The waste lands of the Crown have during the past year been settled at a satisfactory rate of progress. My Ministers have endeavoured to afford to selectors as wide a choice as the nature of the land now held by the Crown would admit. Statements will be placed before you to show that this has resulted in the settlement of a large area of land, and I am glad to be able to inform you that the increase in the number of agricultural holdings was last year greatly in excess of that during any previous year of the colony's history.

While my Advisers are gratified at the substantial progress which has been made in the productions of the colony, and with the advance of settlement, they believe that still greater progress can be made if more adequate means are provided for opening up land in advance of settlement by means of roads, and for acquiring Native lands. They will therefore submit for your consideration proposals for effecting these objects.

During the recess General Edwards, an officer who holds an important position in the Imperial army, and a high place in the estimation of competent authorities, visited this and the other colonies of Australasia, in order to ascertain and report upon the condition and efficiency of the colonial forces. He has furnished me with a valuable and exhaustive report upon our defences, our permanent corps, and our Volunteers, and has made many suggestions as to the best means of rendering them more efficient. The report has received the careful consideration of my Ministers, who will submit for your approval a scheme which they believe will, if carried out, provide for the defence of the colony against any attack which is likely, in case of war, to be made upon it.

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

The estimates of revenue and expenditure will be laid before you. The estimates of expenditure have been prepared with a due regard for economy. The increased demand for school-houses and other public buildings has been considered. In the opinion of my Advisers it will be necessary for at least two years to make exceptional provision for these purposes. They believe that such expenditure should be provided for out of revenue, and votes for these purposes will be found in the estimates.

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

During the year propositions were submitted by the Government of New South Wales for holding a Conference of delegates from the various colonies of Australasia in order to consider the question of creating one Federal Government. Recognising the magnitude of the subjects which were to be discussed, and the importance of cultivating close and friendly relations with the other colonies, I consented to accredit the Hon. Captain Russell and the Hon. Sir J. Hall to attend on behalf of the colony. The meeting took place in Melbourne during the month of February, when matters of the greatest moment were discussed. The report of the proceedings will be laid before you, and you will be asked to ratify the arrangement entered into for the appointment of delegates to attend a meeting of representatives of the colonies to be held this year.

Proposals were some time since submitted by the Imperial Government to my Ministers, inviting the colony to enter into an arrangement by which the rate of postage to Europe would be reduced to 2½d. per letter. My Advisers were unable to agree to these proposals, inasmuch as they would have entailed a serious loss of revenue, unless changes were made in the mail systems, which they could not, without your sanction, effect. You will be asked to discuss the matter, and to agree to a proposition which, if adopted, will, without causing a burden to the revenue, greatly reduce the cost of postage to the United Kingdom and other countries.

Returns will be laid before you from which you will learn that there has been during the year a large increase in all branches of traffic upon the railways, affording another evidence of a steady advance in the productive power of the colony.

There are now ready for your consideration Bills for consolidating and amending the law relating to the qualification and registration of electors and providing for the issue of electoral rights, dealing with the Civil Service, amending the law with regard to hospitals and charitable aid, amending the Counties Act, altering and consolidating the law of bankruptcy, and providing for local government on the west coast of the South Island, as well as other Bills dealing with matters of public interest. These Bills will shortly be placed before you.

During the recess a Commission was appointed for the purpose of considering how far the evil which has been termed "sweating" had affected New Zealand. The thanks of the country are due to the members composing this Commission for the ability, industry, and care with which they conducted their inquiries, and treated the matters which were referred to them. My Government, although gratified to learn from their report that "sweating" had not fully taken root, agree with the Commissioners that an amendment of the law is necessary. Bills, therefore, dealing with the questions referred to in the report, and other cognate subjects, will be submitted for your consideration.

I commend all these matters to your careful attention, and I assure you of my earnest desire to co-operate with you in endeavouring to further the interests of the colony. I pray that your deliberations may, by the blessing of God, promote the well-being of its inhabitants.

