



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE
 EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

WELLINGTON, THURSDAY, JUNE 23, 1892.

THE Third Session of the Eleventh 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 to meet you in Parliament assembled so soon after my arrival in New Zealand.

I have also to express my pleasure at the warm and loyal welcome given me as Her Majesty's Representative by the inhabitants of this city and district. I feel convinced that this is but an earnest of the cordial feeling of loyalty to our Sovereign entertained by the whole people of the colony—a feeling which found expression in the widespread grief and sympathy manifested some months since on the occasion of the sad and lamented death of Her Majesty's grandson, the Duke of Clarence.

It is my pleasant lot, at this the commencement of my term of office, to be able to congratulate you upon the continued and sustained improvement in the public finances and private industries of the colony. New Zealand is now in a sounder and more prosperous state than at any time during the last thirteen years. I am happily able to state, as my predecessor stated twelve months ago, that the provision made during last session for carrying on the public services has proved more than sufficient. The remarkable volume of our exports, still greatly in excess of that of our imports, proves clearly that the colony possesses both the power and the will to steadily reduce its liabilities. The relative increase of the imports, moreover, may be considered evidence that this process of reduction is now sufficiently far advanced to allow to the people of the colony a wider margin for expenditure. It is with pleasure that I draw your attention to the fact that the exports of New Zealand produce for the financial year show an actual increase, despite the partial failure of the wheat harvest of 1891, and the comparatively low price of our staple export, wool.

On the occasion of your meeting together last year your attention was especially invited to that exodus of population from this to the neighbouring colonies, which, after continuing for some years, had up to that moment shown no sign of abatement. I am glad, however, to be able to inform you that, since the

prorogation of your Houses in September last, the statistics of arrivals and departures show a fair excess of the former over the latter. My Ministers are of opinion that this improved state of affairs is due in part at least to the efforts made by the Bureau of Industries to accelerate the circulation of labour through the colony. The change is the more gratifying in view of the fact that the public-works expenditure of some of the Australian Colonies has for years so enormously exceeded our own.

The disposal and settlement of the waste lands of the Crown has gone on apace during the last twelve months. The extraordinary stream of applications which has been flowing in from special-settlement associations affords, in the opinion of my Advisers, a further convincing proof of the great and still increasing demand for land among *bona fide* intending settlers on the soil. The returns to be laid before you by the Lands Department will, so my Advisers think, prove that the rate of settlement in the colony is now chiefly limited by but three conditions: First, the amount of Crown land still available for occupation; second, the amount of money in hand for spending on surveys; third, the willingness of Parliament to amend and improve such parts of the land-laws as form, in the opinion of my Ministers, a hindrance rather than a help to rapid and genuine settlement.

The purchase of Native lands has been carried on as speedily as financial considerations have permitted, and the demeanour of the Native tribes at various conferences with members of the Government has been marked by a satisfactory inclination for fair discussion. The arrangement entered into with Tawhiao, by which he accepts a Government pension, marks, I trust, a removal of the last barrier to the peaceful development of that portion of the North Island which has for a whole generation been more or less isolated by what has been known as "the King movement."

A departmental rearrangement has broken up the Native Department, distributing its functions through the Departments of Lands and Justice. It has, however, been considered very necessary not to leave the Maori race to imagine that this means any lessened attention by the Government to their wants and interests. For this and other reasons it has been thought well to add to the Executive Council a member of the Native race, in the manner provided for by statute.

On meeting you last year regret was expressed by my predecessor at the continued and discouraging decline in the yield of our goldfields. I have therefore the greater pleasure in being able to congratulate you upon the distinct improvement shown by the mining returns of the financial year just ended.

My Government has recently been invited to send representatives to the proposed Australasian Conference to consider the further introduction of coloured labour into the northern continental colonies; but the invitation has not yet been accepted.

HONOURABLE GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL,—

I deeply regret that your already diminished numbers have been still further reduced by the deaths of three much-esteemed members, by the resignation of a fourth, and by the temporary departure from the colony of others of your number.

GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The estimates of revenue and expenditure will be laid before you. The estimates of expenditure have been framed with a strict regard to economy.

You will doubtless be gratified to learn that information carefully gathered points to the conclusion that the important reform of the direct taxation made by you last session will be carried into effect without any loss to the revenue whatever.

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

Returns will be laid before you showing the results of traffic in all branches of the railways. You will be asked to give your attention to the question of the future management of this large and valuable part of the national property.

The prosecution of public works during the last year has been marked by one or two features calling for special notice. The encouragement of associations of workmen on the co-operative system has led to results equally satisfactory to the State and the workmen concerned. The same may be said of the abolition of the system known as "sub-contracting."

You will be asked again to consider Bills dealing with the land-laws, the acquisition of private lands for settlement in small blocks, and for the relief of certain hard-pressed tenants of the Crown. The Electoral Bill, as introduced last year, will again be laid before you, with one very noticeable addition. The Juries Bill will this year contain certain further reforms; and you will be asked to pass a Bill amending the law of bankruptcy, and another providing for the payment of members.

There are also ready for your consideration Bills dealing with the Civil servants and other employes of the State, several measures relating to agriculture, Bills for amending the law relating to insurance companies and policies, for dealing with unclaimed lands and moneys, for aiding the acquisition of Native lands, for dealing with the Native Land Court, with the West Coast reserves, with technical education, with the transfer of land, with testamentary restrictions on property, as well as other Bills relating to matters of public interest.

In the opinion of my Advisers the time has now arrived for placing on the Statute-book a measure providing for the establishment of Boards of Conciliation and a Court of Arbitration to cope with industrial disputes. Other measures designed to improve the condition of the wage-earners and workmen of the colony will be laid before you.

These matters I commend to your attention, assuring you of my earnest wish to aid your labours in the interests of the colony, and praying that your efforts may, with God's blessing, tend to the happiness and well-being of the people of New Zealand.

