



THE
NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE
 EXTRAORDINARY.

Published by Authority.

WELLINGTON, TUESDAY, JULY 2, 1901.

THE Second Session of the Fourteenth 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 is to me a great pleasure to meet you again in Parliament assembled.

Since the last session of Parliament an event of a strikingly sad character has overtaken the nation in the death of Her late Gracious Majesty Queen Victoria, who passed away on the 22nd day of January last.

On her demise becoming known one great throb of grief went forth throughout the civilised world. It was our late Sovereign's constant desire to promote the best interests of her people, and to maintain their liberties and improve their conditions. Her greatness and good works will live for ever, and her reign has added imperishable glories to our Empire. In the death of our late good Queen Victoria the world has suffered an irreparable loss. She was beloved and revered by her subjects, and her memory will ever be enshrined in their hearts, and well may it be fervently said that "Her grave was watered by a nation's tears."

Messages of sincere sympathy and condolence were forwarded by me to His Gracious Majesty the King and the Royal Family, to which the following reply was received from the Secretary of State for the Colonies: "His Majesty the King and the Royal Family command me to express their sincere gratitude, in which His Majesty's Government join, for the sympathy of New Zealand in the lamented death of Her Majesty Queen Victoria."

On the death of his beloved mother the late Good Queen Victoria, His Majesty assumed the Throne as King Edward VII., and the people of this colony most loyally acclaimed the reign of the new King, and his assumption of the Throne was with fitting ceremony proclaimed at the threshold of our Parliament Buildings. In almost every city, borough, and county throughout the colony similar functions took place, and the people with one voice exclaimed, "Long live the King!"

The most pleasurable event, since the founding of the colony, was the recent visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York, and the enthusiastic and loyal reception given them by the people of this colony will, I feel assured, ever be remembered with pleasure. The addresses presented came spontaneously from a free and devoted people, and breathed loyalty to His Majesty, his throne, and royal person. The enthusiastic welcome and receptions given to their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York were, in all parts of the colony visited, heartfelt, sincere, and universal.

The demonstration by the people of the Native race at Rotorua was magnificent, unique, and historical, and it is questionable if ever again there will be another such gathering of the noble Maori race.

The following passages taken from His Royal Highness's farewell message in a letter conveyed to me on the eve of their Royal Highnesses' departure places on record the pleasure experienced and impression formed during their visit:—

DEAR LORD RANFURLY,—

Dunedin, 27th June, 1901.

On the eve of our departure I am anxious to tell the people of New Zealand how happy we have been in their beautiful land, with what regrets we leave it, and what lasting feelings of gratitude we carry away for the loyal enthusiasm, cordiality, and kind-heartedness so universally accorded to us throughout our stay.

I was especially glad to meet face to face the Maori people, to have witnessed their vast and interesting gathering at Rotorua, and to have had personal friendly intercourse with their leading chiefs and representatives. It was gratifying to hear their assurances of loyalty to the King, their expressions of sorrow for their deeply loved Queen, and to experience their enthusiasm and warmth of heart towards ourselves. I am glad to think that this ancient and chivalrous race is living in peace and prosperity, and sharing with their Pakeha brothers the duties and responsibilities of good citizenship.

Though, unfortunately, our stay has, from force of circumstances, been a short one, I earnestly trust that the experience and knowledge of the country which I have gained, and my personal intercourse with its people, may in some measure tend to sustain and enhance the existing feeling of sympathy and interest between the Mother-country and New Zealand, and thus draw still closer those ties of affection and brotherhood by which we are so happily united.

Heartily wishing that the steady growth and prosperity of the country may ever continue,

Believe me,

Dear Lord Ranfurly,

Very sincerely yours,

GEORGE.

With the dawn of the new century the birth of the Commonwealth of Australia was celebrated: New Zealand was officially represented by the Right Honourable the Premier and the Honourable the Native Minister. The Commonwealth Parliament was opened by His Royal Highness the Duke of Cornwall and York on the 9th May, and was a most imposing ceremony: the Honourable the Colonial Secretary and the Honourable the Minister of Education officially represented this colony.

It will be pleasing to all well-wishers of the colony and the inhabitants of the Cook and other islands to know that by Letters Patent, dated the 13th day of May, 1901, His Majesty has approved of the extension of the boundaries of the colony so as to include the islands mentioned in the resolutions passed last session by both branches of the Legislature, and by Proclamation issued by me and read in the presence of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York on their arrival at Auckland. The boundaries have been so extended as from the 11th day of June, 1901.

As you are aware, Representative Troops of the Imperial and Indian Armies were present at the inaugural Australian Commonwealth celebrations, and subsequently arrived in our colony, and it was with sincere pleasure I noted the hearty reception extended to them by the people of New Zealand. The hospitality shown them was very much appreciated by the officers and men. The officers in command, on leaving, expressed their appreciation of the hospitality and kindness shown.

I am pleased to inform you that the United States warship "Brooklyn," under the command of Rear-Admiral Remey, visited New Zealand, and, after a short stay at Auckland, came on to Wellington.

The Rear-Admiral, his officers, and men were accorded a very hearty welcome, and will, I feel sure, carry away with them a kindly remembrance of their visit to this colony.

I regret to say that the war in South Africa still continues. The successes however, that have attended the vigorous efforts made by Lord Kitchener afford every reason to anticipate that ere long the war will come to a close.

The First, Second, and Third Contingents have returned to the colony. The Fourth and Fifth are on their way home, and on the 29th ultimo their safe arrival at Albany was reported.

The Sixth and Seventh Contingents were sent to relieve the contingents returned and returning, and the colony has now in South Africa about one thousand officers and men, and they are fully maintaining the high reputation for bravery, energy, and gallant bearing earned by the New Zealand troops that preceded them.

It is a pleasure to me to announce that the commencement of the construction of the Pacific cable is now an accomplished fact. The contract has been signed, a Board of Advice has been formed, and the work of laying the cable is progressing, and this Imperial work, advantageous alike to the colonies and the Mother-country, will, it is expected, be completed well within the next two years.

I regret to say that some friction has arisen owing to the Government of New South Wales—one of the contracting parties—having granted concessions to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, which are deemed inimical to the Pacific Cable scheme. The others of the contracting parties were approached with the same object in view, but steadily refused to be any parties to doing anything which would militate against the success of the Pacific cable. This course will, I feel sure, be appreciated. It is the first time that the Imperial authorities and Canada have, with the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, jointly undertaken a work of Imperial and Colonial importance, and nothing should be done which alters the situation until after consultation, and with the concurrence of all the contracting parties.

I regret to state that the bubonic plague still continues in some of the other colonies. It is pleasing, however, to know that New Zealand is free therefrom. The Health Act of last session is working well, and every precaution is taken to insure the health of the inhabitants of our colony, and to prevent the dreaded plague reaching our shores. In connection with health matters I am pleased to note that the Native race under the powers given by the Maori Councils Act of last session are using every precaution and are improving the sanitary condition of their kaingas. One of the Native race, who is duly qualified, has been appointed a Health Officer, and I have every reason to believe that the health of our brethren—the Native race—will be improved, and that the death-rate will be reduced.

During the recess, Royal Commissions have been appointed to inquire into and report on matters affecting the coal-mines of the colony, the disposal of mining *debris* into certain rivers, the Midland Railway, Federation with the Commonwealth of Australia, and the feasibility or otherwise of a colonial scale of salaries for the teachers of New Zealand.

On the 1st of January last the penny-postage scheme came into force in this colony, and has given universal satisfaction. I am happy to say it is a pronounced success, and it is more than probable that within two years, as the result of the increased business, the revenue will equal that preceding the reduction. My Ministers regret that up to the present several of the Australian Colonies have not seen their way to adopt the system, and are surcharging our letters. I sincerely hope the time is not far distant when the penny postage will be adopted by the Australian Commonwealth, and be universal within the British Empire. Many foreign nations that have not adopted the penny-postage system within their own countries have most willingly consented to admit our letters at the penny rate.

On the 31st March last the people of this colony were enumerated. The returns disclose a substantial increase as compared with the census of 1896, and a considerable increase as compared with the census of 1891. The increase on the whole is not unsatisfactory, yet in a young country like this, so favourably circumstanced, there is room for improvement, especially in respect to the natural increase, and the falling-off in the birth-rate gives ground for reflection and anxiety. The most pleasing feature in the late enumerating of the people is that there is a marked increase in the number of those of the Maori race, and the outlook in this respect is cheering in the extreme, and exceptional in regard to aboriginals when surrounded by and brought into close contact with other races, their customs, and environments.

The system of advances of cheap moneys to settlers continues popular and is working very satisfactorily, and during the last few months, when there was a

tendency to increase the rates of interest, the cheap-money scheme of the colony proved a great boon not only to settlers, but to all requiring to borrow. My Ministers have under their consideration an amendment of the Advances to Settlers Act to meet the cases of lessees on Education endowments who claim to have advances made on their improvements in excess of the amounts mentioned in their leases, upon which the Educational authorities have agreed to pay compensation.

Fair progress has during the year been made for the purchase of lands for closer settlement. The earth-hunger continues, and to meet the demand the acquirement of lands suitable and required will be vigorously proceeded with. The law in respect to acquiring lands within boroughs for workmen's homes has proved to be defective: owners, on being notified to place their land under offer, have immediately transferred portions to relatives so as to bring the area within the limit allowed to be retained, thus defeating the object of the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,—

The estimates of the year, with a due regard to economy and the requirements of the colony, will in the ordinary course be placed before you. Until the war in South Africa is at an end a normal condition in respect to defence expenditure is impossible.

Owing to the large demand caused by unusual conditions in the English money markets it was not deemed advisable to follow the usual course of raising the money required under the Aid to Public Works Act in London. My Ministers deemed it desirable to raise the half-million loan locally, and the experiment has proved entirely satisfactory. The amount asked for was almost doubly subscribed. A pleasing feature was the large number of small amounts that were offered, and offers of £5,000 and under were allotted in full. There was no commission or payment for underwriting, the only expense being that of advertising. An important departure, and one which my Advisers anticipate will be followed in other colonies, was that of the interest being made payable in New Zealand, Australia, or London.

The traffic and revenue on our railways, I am glad to say, still continue to increase, and an increased expenditure of necessity follows. With the arrival of the extra locomotives and rolling-stock now on hand and ordered, the requirements of the railways will be fairly met, and at no distant date, both as regards locomotives and rolling-stock, my Ministers hope to have the same constructed within the colony.

Another matter demanding attention is, that some provision should be made whereby railway servants who, through age or infirmities, or by meeting with accidents, may, when retired, receive some superannuation or other allowance. To retire some of the older servants under existing conditions is not, my Ministers think, a fitting reward for faithful services rendered. This lack of consideration not only applies to the railway but to other public servants, and to continue the present anomalous position is undesirable. Some Civil servants on retirement are entitled to pensions, others are entitled to a month's salary for every year's service, and others are granted an amount equal to one month's salary, but not exceeding in the whole a sum equal to one year's salary. Very many whose pay does not enable them to save, be they ever so thrifty, are, as matters now stand, cast adrift without receiving anything. The classification of the whole of the State departments, and the adoption of a superannuation scheme and fund to which all the State servants contribute, are matters worthy of grave consideration.

Fair progress has been made with the construction of the main trunk lines of railway during the recess, and the vigorous prosecution of these works will be continued. There is a matter of considerable importance in connection with several of these lines of railway—namely, that lands suitable for close settlement are increased in value as the work of construction proceeds, and my Ministers consider that if these lands are acquired by the State under the Land for Settlements Act, say, within five years from date, the now existing value of the lands should be the basis upon which the price to be paid by the State should be determined.

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

The mail arrangements as between the colony, Australia, the Mother Country, and elsewhere, are not at all on a satisfactory footing, and our commercial arrangements are not sufficiently promoted under existing conditions. My Advisers consider that the existing barriers should, in fairness to the colony, be removed, so that reasonable facilities should obtain for trade and commercial reciprocity.

The necessity for the extension of the commerce of the colony, and for the granting of facilities for the transmission of our products to other markets, still continues. With the object of improving matters, offers were called for from steamship owners willing to carry our products at given freights and at regular intervals between New Zealand and South Africa. The offers received were unsatisfactory, and no further action was taken pending the meeting of Parliament, and authority being given to have complete arrangements made to meet this pressing necessity. Proposals respecting this question will be submitted to you in due course.

In respect to the Cook Group and other islands now within the extended boundaries of the colony, my Ministers are of opinion that no sudden change should be made in the laws affecting the same, and that for the present the ordinances passed by the Cook Islands Parliaments should be legalised and continue applicable until other provision is made. Colonel Gudgeon has been asked to act as representative for the colony in respect to the management and control of the Cook and other islands.

Recent developments in other countries and in our own colony, in the formation of trusts or combinations with a view of fixing abnormal rates for the purchase and sale of products within the colony, are worthy of attention, and my Advisers are of opinion that the Legislature should, if the evil continues and grows, pass, as a precautionary measure, a law making it illegal for persons, corporations, or companies to enter into contracts or agreements fixing an abnormal price at which food-stuffs or coal within the colony should be sold.

My Ministers desire to bring under your notice the increased prices payable for coal for State requirements. As a way of meeting this difficulty, and to insure a supply of coal for Government purposes at reasonable rates, it is essential that a State coal-mine be established. The great and growing demand for coal, and the inadequacy of the supply from the coal-mines on the west coast of the Middle Island, also render a State coal-mine advisable.

The Referendum Bill, the Mortgages of Land Bill, and Bills amending and consolidating several laws relating to labour, working-hours in factories and workshops, and regulating the working-hours of bank clerks and clerks engaged in mercantile houses, and other measures affecting social matters, will in due course be submitted.

A measure having for its object an increase in the salaries of members of Parliament will be submitted for your consideration and early attention.

The conflagrations that have taken place in the colony since last session, and the loss of life and property caused thereby, call for immediate consideration, and with a view of bettering the condition of the colony in this respect my Advisers will bring before you remedial measures with the object of placing the fire brigades, fire appliances, and water-supply in a better condition, and also of bringing under the control of the police the means of escape from fire in the case of persons living in hotels and lodging-houses, and in respect to the larger hotels making it necessary to have efficient night watchmen employed, whose sole duty it will be to patrol the buildings and give the alarm in case of fire.

The Legislature having last session consolidated and amended the municipal laws of the colony, it is necessary to complete and perfect the laws relating to local self-government. With this object the County Councils Bill will be introduced at an early period, and, I hope, passed into law.

A Bill amending the Chinese Immigration Act is necessary, more particularly as affecting those of the race that come to the colony as members of ships' crews.

A measure extending the power of the Inspector-General of Hospitals and providing for the registration of hospital nurses will be brought under your consideration.

On the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall and York it was found that the laws existing did not empower local authorities to incur the necessary expenditure to meet the pleasurable occasion. A Bill will therefore be introduced indemnifying and making legal the expenditure of the local authorities for the purpose.

A measure will be introduced giving extended powers in respect of land affected by the proclamation of rivers in which dredging obtains.

The mining and companies laws also require amending in the direction of insuring that the directors of companies shall be liable to be proceeded against for payment of calls, and that the calls of other shareholders shall be invalid unless the calls of the directors have been paid, or steps taken for the recovery thereof; and also that in the case of gold-mines, as in that of coal-mines, a small royalty may be charged for the purpose of assisting the Sick and Benevolent Fund of the miners engaged in the said mines.

I am pleased to inform you that the constitution of the Councils and Boards under the Maori Councils Act and Maori Lands Administration Act has been proceeded with, and, with the exception of one part, the colony has been subdivided into districts. The outlook is very promising, and there is reasonable expectation of waste lands owned by those of the Native race being thrown open ere long for settlement.

The roading and settlement of the people on the lands of the colony is of paramount importance. My Ministers are giving this matter every attention. Proposals furthering this object will be placed before you. The energy of our sturdy settlers has in no small degree contributed to the largely increased exports of last year, which formed a record, and the trade returns warrant me in believing that our prosperity is based on a solid foundation, which I hope will be lasting and for the good of the people.

I trust that the several matters brought under your notice may receive your careful attention and earnest consideration, and pray that, with the blessing of the Almighty God, the results of your labours may be for the good of the Empire, and to the lasting benefit of the people of this fair colony.