



THE  
**NEW ZEALAND GAZETTE**  
 EXTRAORDINARY.

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**T**HE Third Session of the Fifteenth 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,—

It is with unfeigned pleasure that I again meet you in Parliament assembled.

During the recess I have visited several parts of the colony and made myself acquainted with the people, and my preconceived conclusions as to their loyalty to the Throne and devotion to our Most Gracious Sovereign have been more than confirmed. The loyalty expressed in each of the addresses presented greatly impressed me, and the cordial reception tendered me everywhere, whilst gratifying personally, marked the due and becoming respect to the high office I hold.

The information I had respecting the great possibilities of the colony has been confirmed by what I have seen. Nature has been bounteous in her gifts, and you have here all and everything essential to the well-being of mankind.

I am glad to be able to congratulate you upon the continued prosperity of the colony. The spending-power of the people has increased, as evidenced by the returns from the State services, notably our Railways and Customs. The conditions generally of the people are much improved, whilst the outlook is most promising, and contentment and happiness obtain everywhere.

I have to announce that the Honourable William Pember Reeves has been appointed High Commissioner for the Colony of New Zealand. A copy of the Warrant of appointment will be laid before you in due course.

My Ministers, in accordance with the resolutions of the House of Representatives, recommended, and I appointed, a Royal Commission to inquire into the laws relating to land and land-settlement. The Commission has not yet completed its labours, but will do so in the course of a few days, and I anticipate that the report will reach you within the time limited by the resolution passed in that behalf.

With a view of ascertaining the desires of the Natives whose ancestors gave certain lands, situated at Porirua and in other parts of the North Island, to trustees for specific purposes, I have, on the advice of my Ministers, appointed a Royal Commission, which is prosecuting an inquiry. The report will be placed before you.

As authorised by Parliament, steps have been taken for holding an international exhibition at Christchurch. It is proposed to have the exhibition opened in the month of November, 1906.

Some time ago a New-Zealander, under contract for employment in the United States, was not allowed to land in San Francisco. On the voyage back to this colony he suffered at Honolulu an indignity at the hands of the captain of the steamer. Representations were made through the Secretary of State for the Colonies to the United States Government, and a satisfactory conclusion resulted and reparation has been made.

You will be gratified to learn that the population of the colony is steadily increasing, the excess of arrivals over departures being considerable, especially during the last twelve months. There is also an increased birth-rate. Since the year 1890 the population has increased by 230,000, and the total population of the colony, including Maoris, is now estimated to be 900,682.

The arrival of Chinese in large numbers, and the fact that some fifty were recently a charge on the Otago Charitable Aid Board, are matters for your serious consideration.

The returns which will be laid before you indicate that there has been during the year a very large increase in the traffic on our railways, showing a considerable growth in our staple products and an extension of the industries of our colony, whilst the greater number of passengers demonstrates increased spending-power. The Customs returns show a steady advance on the preceding year, and the result of the preferential tariff has been a slight improvement in the importation of goods from the United Kingdom; on the other hand, the increase in the importation from foreign countries has stopped, and there is now a slight decrease as compared with previous years.

The question of the export trade in perishable goods from this country is of great importance. My Advisers consider the sheep-owners and dairy-farmers of the colony should be placed in a position that will enable them to obtain an adequate return for their enterprise and industry.

Further, that the freight on goods from the United Kingdom should be as much as £2 10s. a ton, when the freight on the same class of goods from the United States is only 12s. per ton, is a matter of grave concern.

A pleasing feature I have to announce is that, notwithstanding the increased amount received through the Customs, the general taxation per head of the population has decreased as compared with the last two years.

You are aware that the Post and Telegraph and Railway branches of our public service have been classified to the advantage of the State and those employed. My Ministers, in the interest of economy and uniformity, are of the opinion that the whole of the Civil Service should be classified, and the superannuation allowance now granted in the case of the Police and Railway services made universal throughout the service.

In view of altered conditions and the uncertainty of the attendance basis upon which salaries are made payable, an amendment in the Education Act will be submitted for your consideration with the view of increasing teachers' salaries. The endeavour to provide a superannuation scheme for school-teachers is beset with difficulty, especially in respect to teachers of advanced years. A scheme, however, will be submitted, and my Ministers hope the same may soon be passed into law.

For the purpose of promoting the industries of the colony and placing them on a satisfactory basis and providing for economical working and lighting, my Advisers consider that the natural motive power of our rivers, lakes, and waterfalls should be utilised. Especially is this necessary if we are to compete on anything like equal terms with other countries where wages are lower,

longer hours are worked, and motive power is much cheaper than in this colony. Proposals to this end will be submitted for your consideration.

The occupation of the Native lands is desired by both Natives and Europeans. The spread of settlement is retarded by large areas of Native land lying waste, and with the necessity for closer occupation it is deemed essential, in the interests of both Europeans and Natives, that an initial effort should be made to place the Native owners on such of the lands as are required for their use, and, next, that the landless Natives of the same hapu or tribe should be provided for as tenants, and that the surplus lands should be acquired under a law similar in character to the Land for Settlements Act, the land to be dealt with through the Land Boards, and the proceeds to go to the Native owners; the settlement of the Natives on their own lands to be dealt with by the Maori Councils. A Bill dealing with this important matter will be introduced.

The mining industries of the colony, both gold and coal, are in a satisfactory condition. The discovery of gold-bearing reefs on the east side of the main range between Canterbury and Westland is important, and there are reasons for hoping that a permanent goldfield has been found in that locality. Dr. Bell, of Canada, has been appointed to the charge of the Geological Department, and exploration of the auriferous belts of the country is now being made. A conference, attended by the Wardens and Mining Inspectors and Engineers, has been held, and, as a result, extended and improved proposals for prospecting will be submitted. An increased supply of water in central Otago is required not only for mining but for general irrigation purposes, and, if provided, will prove most beneficial.

The colony will be represented at Bisley this year. The team which has been selected, it is anticipated, will fittingly represent the colony. The New Zealand Bisley team had the honour of winning the Kolapore Cup in 1904, and it will be very gratifying should the team which now represents New Zealand succeed in retaining the trophy.

The Imperial Government has placed at the disposal of New Zealand the gunboat "Sparrow." Proposals will be submitted for her equipment as a training-ship, and you will be asked to make the necessary provision accordingly.

From various causes considerable delay has taken place in holding the Pacific Cable Conference. The Conference, I am pleased to say, is now sitting.

It is with regret that I mention the demise of the Honourable Sir Alfred Jerome Cadman, K.C.M.G., for many years a Minister of the Crown, and at the time of his death the Speaker of the Legislative Council. I further regret to have to mention the death of Mr. George Fisher, a former Minister of the Crown, and for many years member for the City of Wellington in the House of Representatives.

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

The estimates of the revenue and expenditure for the year will be placed before you, and in their preparation due regard has been paid to efficiency and economy. The revenue for the past year exceeded the estimate, a substantial surplus on the year's transaction resulted, and so far this year the receipts are in excess of the corresponding period for last year.

The over-subscription and satisfactory returns obtained on our last loan and the enhanced prices our stocks are realising denote a marked improvement in the public credit, and I am pleased to state that the rate of interest is lower. This will stimulate industries, the development of our natural resources, and assure a saving to the taxpayers.

The amount required for the payment of the pensions to the deserving aged of our colony will be found to be less than it was three years ago. The financial position of the colony has much improved, and my Advisers are of the opinion that the pension should be increased, making the weekly payment 10s. in lieu of 7s. now paid.

You will be asked by the public-works proposals, which will be submitted, to provide for the more expeditious construction of important railway-lines, for the extension of telephones to back-block settlers, and for the early completion of roads to the outpost settlements.

The increased attendance at the schools in the large centres of population has to some extent resulted in overcrowding, and the spread of settlement necessitates provision being made for additional school accommodation. You will be requested to make larger appropriation for school buildings generally and particularly for school buildings in newly settled districts.

The subsidies and contributions to the funds of local authorities from the State require to be placed on an improved basis, and it is proposed to grant the net royalties on timber and flax to the several local authorities whose roads are used and impaired by the cartage of these products.

The estimates will be increased by the amount required for taking the census and defraying the cost of the general election.

You will be glad to learn that during the year a very large area of land has been acquired under the Land for Settlements Act. Every section of the Lindsay Estate, in Hawke's Bay, and the Greenfield Estate, in Otago, has been taken up; and in regard to the Flaxbourne Estate, only one small section of 5 acres remains unapplied-for: yet the earth-hunger still continues. Other large estates in both the North and South Islands are under negotiation, and the demand for closer settlement must be provided for. It is a matter for congratulation that settlement generally throughout the colony has proceeded at a rapid rate, whilst the markets for our products have increased, and good prices are ruling.

The extent of the area of land which under the law as it now stands may be held in a borough by any person and which is exempt from being taken under the compulsory provisions of the Land for Settlements Act renders the obtaining of land for workmen's homes in urban districts practically impossible. It is desirable that the area should be reduced if land is to be taken for the purpose intended by the Legislature.

Few workmen have money wherewith to pay for the erection of houses, and they have to borrow money at high rates of interest, resulting in many cases in cramped and unsuitable buildings. Although provision has been made under the Municipal Corporations Act enabling Borough Councils to provide workmen's homes, practically nothing has been done. To prevent overcrowding, and to house the workers properly, my Ministers are of the opinion that the same powers which are conferred upon local bodies should be taken by the State itself, with power to build workmen's homes or to advance moneys for this purpose. The necessary legislation to enable this to be done will be submitted for your consideration.

The existing laws enabling advances to be made to settlers provide only for such advances being made up to 50 per cent. of the tenant's interest in the land leased by him. My Advisers are of the opinion that larger advances could with safety be made, and to that end you will be asked to amend the law.

Considering the onerous, important, and additional duties performed by them, the salaries of the Magistrates, it is considered, should be increased, and proposals in that behalf will be placed before you.

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

The imperfection of the law and its inadequacy to protect young girls has recently been demonstrated, and an amendment in the Criminal Code extending the time under which an information may be laid against offenders demands your early attention.

In the opinion of my Ministers, the usurious and excessive rates of interest charged for moneys lent in some instances render it necessary that a maximum rate of interest and charges, differentiative in respect to the several classes of security upon which moneys are advanced, should be fixed by law. Proposals to this end will be submitted.

A further endeavour has been made to establish a mail-service between this colony and Vancouver. The Government of Queensland was agreeable to forego its connections, but other difficulties have arisen, and a further contract has been entered into between the Commonwealth of Australia and Canada. My Advisers will continue their efforts to establish a mail-service between Vancouver and New Zealand.

The laws relating to local government require amending. This important matter has had the attention of my Advisers, and proposals will be submitted having for their object the relieving of Parliament and Government of certain public works, thus enabling more time to be devoted to larger questions; reduction in the number of local authorities; conferring extended powers on those remaining and putting them in a better financial position.

An alteration in the laws respecting valuation my Advisers deem advisable, and that valuations made by the Valuation Department should in future apply only to State Departments, leaving local authorities to make their own valuations; the State to have the right in cases of disputed valuations to acquire the properties on paying therefor 10 per cent. over the owner's value.

The delays which have taken place in dealing with matters under the Conciliation and Arbitration Act have caused considerable inconvenience. My Ministers are strongly of the opinion that effectual steps are required to prevent a continuance of these delays, and a maximum time should be fixed within which awards should be given after the cases have been heard; and should this be impossible under existing conditions, then that a second Court should be established. This, with other alterations in the Conciliation and Arbitration Act, you will be asked to consider.

In the administration of the Workers' Compensation for Accidents Act the law as it stands has been found to be inconvenient, and it is considered expedient and desirable that employees should be able to apply for and obtain payment of lump sums in cases of permanent injury, and that interim payments (under due safeguards) should be made at stated intervals, pending applications being dealt with by the Court.

Bills providing for the extension of control of electric lines; for the general improvement and consolidation of our electoral laws; for the suppression of gambling; for the more complete inspection and improvement of our hospitals and charitable institutions, and the inspection of private hospitals and nursing homes; for making better provision for the protection of life and property from fire, and for placing fire brigades on an improved footing; for the repeal of clause 3 of "The Shops and Offices Act, 1904," and otherwise making such amendments in this measure as seem desirable; and for the referring of matters direct to the people by way of referendum, and other necessary measures, will be placed before you for your consideration.

My Advisers have concluded that for the protection of the public, and in fairness to all concerned, all goods manufactured in the colony should be stamped and marked as having been made in New Zealand.

The rapid denudation of our forests is a matter for your earnest consideration. At the present output from our kauri forests it is estimated that they will be practically exhausted within twenty years, consequently forestry and tree-planting should be more vigorously carried on. It is considered, too, that the reservation of some forests, the timbers of which are required for special industries, is worthy of your attention.

With the view of facilitating the exchange of Native lands, and of enabling Natives to transfer to each other, my Ministers consider that the time has come for the abolition of stamp duties on such transfers, and that greater facilities for exchange should be provided.

Provision having been made by Parliament last session, a nursing home has been established at Wellington, and steps are being taken for the establishment of other similar homes in various parts of the colony. The legislation in respect to the registration of midwives has been given effect to, and a large number have been registered. Provision has been made for the training of maternity and other

nurses, and in this respect a long-felt want has been provided by increasing the nursing-power in the colony.

You will, I feel confident, give the position of the colony and the several matters that I have brought under your notice, together with the measures that are to be submitted, your earnest and careful consideration, and I trust that your labours and decisions may, with God's blessing, result in materially promoting the prosperity, happiness, well-being, and lasting benefit of the people of this fair land.

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By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.