



NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY.

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By His Honor's Command,

F. E. STEWART,

Provincial Secretary.

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FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 1866.

[No. LXXIV.]

ADDRESS OF HIS HONOR THE SUPERINTENDENT,

On Opening the Twenty-sixth Session of the Provincial Council.

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL:—

I regret that unavoidable circumstances have postponed your meeting to an inconvenient season of the year.

The General Assembly was in session before the provincial elections were completed, and it appeared to me advisable to delay calling you together until after the rising of the Colonial Parliament.

The Council has derived from the late proceedings of the Assembly an instructive experience preliminary to its own labours, and is now able to measure with some accuracy its financial resources for the year ending June, 1867.

The matters I have to lay before you this session, so far as I am at present advised, will embrace no novel propositions. I shall only request your attention to very few legislative measures, beyond the granting of ordinary supplies, intending shortly to summon you to a more protracted session, prompt administrative action being at this season very much called for in various outlying portions of the province, particularly on the goldfields; on this, among other grounds, I am very desirous that the present should be as brief a session as is consistent with a deliberate consideration of emergent business.

It will be necessary to agree upon resolutions suggesting amendments by the General Assembly of the waste lands regulations in the matter of pre-emptive rights, and in some other less important particulars.

Vol. 13.—No. 74.

You will be requested to pass an Ordinance enabling the Provincial Government to relieve the Road Boards of the management of main trunk roads.

The Fencing Ordinance has been found to work imperfectly, and requires remodelling. And I shall request your sanction to a few other measures of general interest, although of comparatively minor importance.

During the Session I trust to receive your sanction for the erection of bridges over the Hurunui and Waitangi; one-half the cost in each case being offered by the adjoining provinces. Government is also contemplating the erection of bridges over some other of the larger and more dangerous rivers intersecting the Southern Plains, and probably you will be asked, on an early day, to authorise their construction.

With considerable reason the settlers of the south have complained, during some years past, of inattention to their demands for Public Works. I believe you will concur in the propriety of at once, and in future, awarding to the Timaru District a full proportion of the public revenues. With your assent it is purposed to hand over to the Municipal Council of Timaru the steam landing service and warehouses, with all the boats, gear and appliances.

The presence in the Council of an increased number of representatives from the Gold-fields is justly a subject for general congratulation, as being evidence of the serious desire of our fellow-subjects on the West Coast to contribute their valuable assistance towards the government of this Province, and to become permanently identified with all its fortunes.

There will be laid before you a plan for enabling the settlers in Westland to become purchasers of rural lands, and also regulations for the sale of lands within the limits of the towns in that district.

I shall request you to confer upon me powers to expend considerable sums of money in opening up the amazing resources of Westland, by means of various Public Works throughout its districts.

Among other measures, I shall invite your concurrence in a Bill for leasing the Coal-fields of the Grey to a public company, under conditions calculated to ensure large commercial benefits to the Province.

During the recess an extension of the western telegraph from Hokitika to Greymouth has been completed at a moderate cost, and I purpose taking authority for some very desirable extensions in a southerly direction.

With regard to the condition of the Province generally, I am hopeful that, with your assistance, Government will succeed in meeting all its present engagements, and completing all those works which have been commenced. But at the same time it cannot be concealed that the extraordinary drain upon our resources in favour of the Northern Island has, during the last few years, very materially affected our powers of sustaining large public expenditure in reproductive works.

Under these circumstances, it will be imperatively necessary to exercise the most watchful precaution against incurring financial embarrassments, and at the same time employ ourselves in preparing plans for a more rapid progress when the southern Provinces have recovered from the comparative prostration into which they have been thrown by their misalliance with the Northern Island.

I may be permitted to express a confident hope that, by some fitting measure of the General Legislature, the Middle Island will speedily be relieved from a pressure which is not only unnecessary but unendurable.

Recent events in Hawke's Bay, added to a dozen parallel facts, prove very conclusively that the Provincial Governments of the Northern Island, *if let alone*, and relieved from the pressure of the southern interference in Native affairs, are, with their own resources, capable of reducing the Native population to a condition of usefulness and contented

subjection to law and order. And, although somewhat late in the day, the leading men in the colony are beginning to confess that the interference of southern statesmen in Native matters is, and has been, a most fruitful cause of embarrassment and expense to the North Island, while it has resulted in an enormous injury to the Southern Island. In the certainty that henceforward the people of the Middle Island will not make any further sacrifices of their means to sustain the expenses of meddling in matters naturally the business of the Northern Island; and further, taking into consideration the rapid increase of our population and commerce, we are quite warranted in looking for a speedy restoration to that healthful financial condition formerly enjoyed by the Province.

It is the intention of Government to ask you to sanction the continued immigration of single women only.

The anticipations of Engineers, who have at various times reported upon the River Waimakariri, have been verified during the recent freshets. I shall cause a report of the state of the river, and an estimate of the expense of protective works, to be laid before you shortly.

I shall have the gratification of forwarding for your information copious reports of the scientific labours of the Provincial Geologist (Dr. Haast); which reports are to be accompanied by elaborate maps and illustrations.

The tunnel of the Lyttelton and Christchurch Railway is progressing favourably, only about 245 yards of the centre remaining to be executed. I am advised that the line from Lyttelton to the Selwyn will be ready for traffic within nine months from this date. As you are aware, the railway is now working regularly between Ferrymead and Rolleston, a distance of about nineteen miles. It will be necessary to take steps for providing wharfage to serve shipping in connection with the railway immediately.

You will be glad to learn that my Government is in the enjoyment of a most cordial understanding with the Governments of the adjoining Provinces of Nelson and Otago, a condition of things highly conducive to the advancement of the Colony, and which I shall take every care to preserve; henceforth, let us hope that unprofitable jealousies will be displaced by a mutual desire to co-operate in the real work of colonisation.

The public will join me in deeply regretting that our old and faithful friend Mr. Selfe, after a long course of gratuitous services to the Province, as its agent in London, has found it necessary to forward his resignation. The Province, I trust, notwithstanding that Mr. Selfe has, to a great extent, discontinued his official relations with us, will, at the same time, retain a most grateful recollection of Mr. Selfe's labours, and enjoy the advantage of his continued friendship.

Gentlemen, I am confident that the very pleasant relations that have always subsisted between the Superintendent and Provincial Council of Canterbury will be continued in these times.

I trust that it may be my privilege to see our united labours attended by profitable results.

I now declare this Council open for the transaction of business.

W. S. MOORHOUSE,
Superintendent of Canterbury.

CHRISTCHURCH :

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