


NEW ZEALAND
GOVERNMENT GAZETTE
PROVINCE OF CANTERBURY.

Published by Authority.

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By His Honor's Command,
EDWARD JOLLIE,
Provincial Secretary.

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No. LV.

A D D R E S S

O F

HIS HONOR THE SUPERINTENDENT

O N

OPENING THE THIRTIETH SESSION OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL.

“MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE PROVINCIAL COUNCIL,—

“I much regret that a serious illness from which I am only now recovering, should have prevented my attending to public business for some weeks past, and from meeting you at an earlier date after the rising of the General Assembly. I have felt, however, that the year is so far advanced that I can no longer delay the usual session on personal grounds. I would desire in a few words to advert to some points in the legislation of the General Assembly, which will in some measure affect your deliberations.

“In the first place, I wish to call your attention to an Act passed in the recent session of the General Assembly, entitled “The Immigration Act, 1868,” which enables the Superintendent of the Province, with the advice and consent of the Provincial Council, to make permanent provision out of the Land Revenue of the Province for the introduction of immigrants from the United Kingdom.

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"The present and future prosperity of the Province depends so largely upon the introduction of population, and the supply of labour suited to the requirements of existing industries, that I have no hesitation in recommending you in the terms of the Act to make liberal provision for this purpose. You will be requested to give your consideration to a Bill which will be submitted to you on this subject in accordance with the Act to which I have alluded.

"A Bill will also be submitted to you for the purpose of bringing into operation within the Province of Canterbury, an Act intituled 'The Hawke's Bay and Marlborough Rivers Act.' The Act appears to me to be well adapted to meet the wants of some districts of this Province which suffered during the floods of last February. 'The Canterbury Rivers Act, 1868,' was passed with more especial reference to the danger which was anticipated to the city of Christchurch and its environs, from the outbreak of the Waimakariri river. You will be asked, in terms of the 2nd section of this Act, to consider the advisableness of proclaiming this Act to be in operation within such district as is likely to be affected by overflows such as occurred during the early part of this year.

"By an Act, intituled 'The Canterbury and Westland Public Debts Appointment Act, 1868,' the previous decision of the Legislature as to the appointment of the debt between the province of Canterbury and the County of Westland has been revised, and the question remains to be determined by arbitration. I shall lose no time in appointing an arbitrator in accordance with the requirements of the Act.

"Correspondence will be laid before you on the subject of the balance of the loan unraised at the time of the passing of the Public Debts Act, 1867, amounting to £266,600. It will be observed from this correspondence, and from the information derived from the public accounts of the sales of Canterbury debentures, that the province has only received from the General Government for each debenture unsold at the time of the passing of the Public Debts Act, 1867, the sum of £97 less certain charges, while the holder of bonds previously sold has, in the terms of conversion offered by the Colonial Treasurer, realised a premium of from five to six per cent. on each debenture. It is right, however, to observe that the amount payable annually in interest by the province will be considerably less than it would have been had the Colonial Treasurer complied with the terms of the 6th section of the Public Debts Act, 1867.

"In accordance with your decision in a previous session, I have appointed a Commission to enquire into the questions which, in your opinion, required investigation in connection with the Lyttelton and Christchurch and Great Southern Railways. The gentlemen appointed to conduct the enquiry were Mr. Paterson, of Dunedin, Civil Engineer (whom I have every reason to believe to be thoroughly qualified to give an opinion on all matters coming within the scope of his profession, and having special qualifications in respect of the construction of railways), and Mr. Symington, of Christchurch, merchant, who has specially devoted his attention to the examination of the accounts. Their report will be laid upon the table.

"I have to express my entire satisfaction with the amicable arrangement entered into by my Executive with Messrs. Holmes and Co. for the delivery of the Railway by the Contractors to the Government on the 1st of August last.

"Your consideration will be asked to proposals for the apportionment of the balance of the Loan which will remain after meeting existing liabilities. I cannot too earnestly press upon your attention, in the present financial condition of the Province and the Colony, the necessity of devoting this balance, as far as possible, to works of a directly remunerative character; and, holding this view, I would respectfully suggest the primary

importance of making the appropriations which are absolutely required for carrying out such works and providing such accommodation as are necessary for utilising to its fullest extent the large expenditure which has been incurred on the Railway and Harbour Works.

“The reiterated promises of successive Governments in respect of a Railway to the North give the Northern districts claims upon your consideration only second to the necessary works in connection with the Railway to which I have just referred.

“The large amount of land which has been sold in many of the outlying districts, compared with the expenditure upon roads for the conveyance of their largely increasing products, deserves your careful attention.

“You will be asked to grant a sum for providing more ample accommodation for the number of orphans which is now dependent on public charity, and which, from various causes, has been largely increased during the past few years. Apart from other considerations, I need hardly insist upon the importance to the Province of such institutions as the Orphan Asylum being properly and efficiently conducted with all the necessary appliances. At the present time, the buildings in use for this purpose are wholly inadequate, and the expenditure considerably in excess of what would be sufficient to maintain and educate a larger number of children in much greater comfort.

“The benefit of the valuable and in some respects unique collection of geological and other specimens which has been accumulated through the industry and zeal of the late Provincial Geologist, is at present in a great measure lost to the public for the want of a building suitable for its distribution and arrangement.

“The postponing of the building of a museum has, I believe, hitherto been owing to the desire for a more expensive building than the resources of the Province could afford. I venture to recommend to your consideration the advisableness of erecting a cheaper building, which may form the nucleus of a larger group of buildings hereafter, and give the public the immediate advantage of many valuable collections which are at present practically useless.

“It will be a matter of satisfaction to you to learn that, so far as the Government is aware, there has been no spread of the disease pleuro-pneumonia beyond the limits within which active measures were taken to confine it. I have, therefore, thought it right to remove all restrictions and prohibitions from the larger district previously proclaimed as infected, and to confine them to the smaller localities in which disease is known to exist.

“The fall in the price of wool and other causes have combined to maintain the depression under which the colony and the province have laboured for some time past. I have, however, every confidence that an abstinence from speculative undertakings and a steady course of economy, both public and private, will enable the province to recover such a measure of sound prosperity as may be counted upon as of permanent duration.

“You will with me deeply regret the outbreak of another Native war in the North Island, and the lamentable loss of valuable lives which it has entailed; and you will cordially sympathise with those of our fellow-colonists whose lives have been endangered, and whose property has been destroyed. Such disasters as those which have occurred will awaken in all British colonists the desire to do their utmost to assist the sufferers. Up to the present time we are without information as to the course which is intended to be adopted to meet a crisis unparalleled in the history of the colony.

"In concluding this address, I must, for the personal reasons to which I referred at the outset, ask the indulgence of the Council for what must necessarily be a very imperfect summary of the subjects which will be brought under your attention by those who have attended to the business of the province at a time when I was unavoidably prevented from assisting them in their labours.

"I now declare this Council open for the despatch of public business.

"WM. ROLLESTON,

"Superintendent."

CHRISTCHURCH :

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