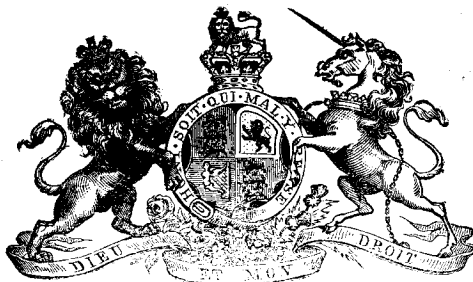


(SPECIAL.)



OTAGO

## PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT GAZETTE.

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DUNEDIN, WEDNESDAY, APRIL 12, 1876.

No. 1016

The following Correspondence is published for general information:—

Government Buildings,

Wellington, March 28, 1876.

SIR,—I have the honor to inform you that Messrs. William Gisborne, William Seed, and John Knowles are visiting in succession all the Provinces in order to obtain for the Colonial Government the information necessary to prepare estimates for the provincial services after the abolition of provinces takes place. The Government desire to ascertain the extent to which it is found practicable, without occasioning local inconvenience, to incorporate some of the Provincial with the General Government departments.

I shall be obliged if your Honor will extend to these gentlemen your good offices, by giving them your views on points about which they seek advice, as also by placing them in a position to obtain the information they require. May I ask your Honor to introduce them to the members of your Executive, and to any officers of the provincial service with whom it is desirable they should consult, as also to allow them access to the Provincial offices.

For your Honor's information I enclose a copy of the instructions with which the three gentlemen have been furnished, and which are the same in respect to all provinces.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL.

His Honor the Superintendent of—

Government Buildings,

Wellington, March 28, 1876.

GENTLEMEN,—The Government wish you to visit all the provinces in order to obtain the information requisite for preparing and submitting to the Assembly the estimates for carrying on the public services in the provinces during the coming year.

It is especially desirable not to make changes

so suddenly as to cause local inconvenience. Whilst, therefore, some of the departments may be at once incorporated with the General Government service, it may be found desirable to continue for some time others on a more or less local footing. For example—it is proposed to arrange to make local payments for contracts in progress for works which, as soon as the necessary arrangements can be effected, will devolve upon the local governing bodies, for which it is intended to make provision during the coming session.

For your guidance I have to inform you that the Government intend to incorporate, as stated below, Provincial and General Government services. In some respects, as for instance the land and education administrations, which it is desirable to continue under local control, the incorporation will mean little more than the appointment of the General Government department with which the local department will correspond.

With respect to charitable institutions, it will scarcely be necessary for you to do more than indicate their present cost and footing, as they will be handed over to local control, without, it is hoped, any intervening taking charge by the Colonial Government. With regard to the police forces, it would be better to confine yourselves to reporting on the present cost and standing of the various forces.

Will you be so good as to suggest to the General Government the appropriations which you consider necessary under the circumstances I have pointed out, and also to indicate the officers whom you think might be dispensed with. To save you the feelings of regret which such an invidious task might otherwise occasion, I have to inform you that the Government propose to ask the Legislature to make much larger provision than at present authorised by way of compensation to the officers dispensed with. In most cases it may be better to indicate the office which you think can be spared than to name the holder of it.

You will, as soon as you arrive in the province, present to the Superintendent the ac-

companying letter of introduction. If, as I do not doubt, the Superintendents meet you in the courteous and conciliatory spirit in which you are accredited to them, you will defer as much as you feel justified in doing to their advice, and when you do not concur with it you will not fail to represent it to the Government. You will be careful to treat them with the respect their high position merits, and to remember that their functions still continue, and that the General Government are not entitled to do more at present than to seek information which will enable them to adequately discharge the responsibilities the law devolves on them after next session.

The Provincial Auditors, who are General Government officers, will render you such aid as you may require from them, for which these instructions will be sufficient warrant.

The following transfers of Provincial departments are proposed:—

All executive departments connected with uncompleted clerical work, the keeping of records, &c., to be in the Colonial Secretary's department.

The police forces to be in the Minister of Justice's department.

The Crown Lands, Survey, and Goldfields departments, and the Inspectors of Sheep to be in the Secretary for Crown Lands department.

The Railway and Public Works departments and the Public Plantations to be in the Minister for Public Works' department.

The Harbor departments to be placed in the Commissioner of Customs' department.

Education, for a time at least, in the Minister of Justice's department.

The hospitals, lunatic asylums, industrial institutions, Charitable Aid Organisation orphan asylums, public libraries, and museum—subject to arrangements to be made for the continuance of local control of charitable institutions—to be in the Colonial Secretary's department.—I have, &c.

JULIUS VOGEL.

Messrs. Wm. Gisborne, Wm. Seed, John Knowles.

Province of Otago, N.Z.,  
Superintendent's Office,  
Dunedin, 6th April, 1876.

SIR,—I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 28th March, informing me that Messrs. Gisborne, Seed, and Knowles, are visiting this Province for the purpose therein stated; and enclosing copy of the instructions with which these gentlemen have been furnished.

In reply I have to say, that the present action of the Colonial Executive, in taking for granted that the New Parliament, to which was relegated the ratification or otherwise of "The Abolition of Provinces Bill," will ratify the same, appears to me to be premature, and that it will be time enough to take such action after the Parliament has determined as to what is to be the specific form of Government for the future.

I cannot for a moment suppose that in the case of Otago, where, under much abused Provincial Institutions, the Province has grown up and flourished to a marvellous extent, these institutions are to be wantonly destroyed in the very prime of their manhood, and directly in the teeth of the declared and all but unanimous desire and convictions of the people. I feel persuaded that if a plebiscite were taken on this question, a vast porportion of the votes would be on one side and in favour of the Province retaining its own revenues, distributing them on its own behalf, and working out its own destiny in its own way.

Your favourite idea of counties, with fixed endowments, far more permanent and secure than any that is likely to be acquired from colonial legislation, has been for years within reach of the people of Otago, if they chose to avail themselves thereof, and it needs no action on the part of the Colonial Legislature to confer that privilege on them.

Under all the circumstances of the case, I desire to be excused from being a party to initiating the policy now in question, as being alike disastrous to the interests and repugnant to the feelings and wishes of the people of Otago.

I cannot recognise the right of the rest of the colony to force upon Otago any system of administration of its local affairs which is to be centered at Wellington, and which does not commend itself to the judgement of the people concerned.

It is bad enough, for example, that Taranaki, with 6,000 people, should have an equal voice in the disposal of the consolidated revenue, with Dunedin having a population of 25,000; and it will be infinitely worse that in disposing of our territorial revenues and dealing with the domestic affairs of Otago, the Province of Taranaki is to have as much power as the city of Dunedin.

The probable revenue of Otago may be set down as about one-half that of the whole colony, while the voting power of the Province in the disposal thereof in the Colonial Parliament will be less than one-fourth of the whole. If left to itself the revenue of Otago would, I believe, in a very few years exceed that of the whole of the rest of the colony put together.

You may rest assured that it is a grand mistake to suppose that the people of this province will tamely submit to have forced upon them a system of political communism from which they have everything to lose and nothing to gain, to aid and abet in which, on my part, would be to belie the position which I have for so many years held at the hands of the people.

I cannot think that the action of the late Colonial Parliament, which, as shown at the recent general election, has been so universally condemned in Otago, will be maintained by the new Parliament in so far as this province is concerned.

It is, I think, useless to disguise from ourselves that, stripped of all the verbosity and special pleading with which the question may be surrounded, there remains the naked fact that Colonial Finance, and not the good of the people of New Zealand, is at the bottom of the proposed changes—changes which I have an intense conviction will, if carried into effect, very seriously prejudice the interests and retard the progress of this section of the colony.

I need not say that this has hitherto been the foremost province in New Zealand, and that it is not by depriving it of its revenues, bringing them under the sole appropriation of the Parliament at Wellington, and reducing the province to the dead level of Colonial uniformity that it can hope to maintain that position.

If I might venture to say so, it is to my mind deeply to be deplored that Colonial states-

men can see no other way of grappling with the evils which have arisen out of a vicious system of finance than by applying a remedy which cannot fail to prove worse than the disease.

No doubt it may be said that, while my views are limited to the narrow platform of a province, you are called to deal with the interests of the Colony as a whole.

I submit, however, that no policy can be beneficial to the colony which affects so injuriously such an important section thereof as that over which I have the honor to preside.

In consequence of what I have so fully stated in this letter, and as I am advised that the sending of three gentlemen to inspect the departments of the Provincial Government is without legal or constitutional authority, I must inform Messrs. Gisborne, Seed, and Knowles, that, so far as the Provincial Government of Otago is concerned, they cannot expect any aid in their mission.

Regretting that, in the performance of my public duty, I should have been compelled to refuse your request,

I have the honor to be Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

J. MACANDREW,  
Superintendent of Otago.

The Honourable the Premier, Wellington.

HOLIDAYS.

THE Provincial Government Offices will not be Opened on Friday, 14th, Saturday, 15th, or Monday, 17th April, 1876.

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