

No. 31.



S U P P L E M E N T

TO THE

NEW SOUTH WALES

GOVERNMENT GAZETTE

OF FRIDAY, MARCH 24, 1848,

Published by Authority.

SATURDAY, MARCH 25, 1848.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

THE following is a copy of the opening Address of His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the Legislative Council, on the 21st instant:—

MR. SPEAKER AND GENTLEMEN OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL:—

I have called you together at this early period of the year in consequence of the approaching dissolution of the Council. I am happy, however, to believe that whilst this arrangement will allow ample time for the business of the Session, it will equally suit your convenience.

It is consolatory to reflect that, notwithstanding the commercial depression which prevails to so great an extent in the Mother Country, and the consequent low prices of Colonial Produce in that Market, the chief resources of this Colony have continued to increase in a manner alike rapid and surprising. The Exports of Wool—its main staple—reached in the past year the large quantity of upwards of twenty-two millions of pounds, of the official value of £1,260,000, being an increase on the previous year exceeding five millions seven hundred thousand pounds in weight, or equal to the whole export of that article in the year 1838. The Export of Tallow in 1847, was 69,000 cwt. of the official value of £107,000, being an increase on the previous year of 49,000 cwt.

It is our privilege to continue to enjoy, under the blessing of Divine Providence, a great superabundance of all the necessaries of life, of the best quality, and procurable at very moderate rates.

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Although the advanced and still rising price of agricultural and pastoral labor, consequent on its scarcity, has lately pressed so severely on the employers, it has on the other hand been the source of highly remunerative employment to the working classes; but as no community in the aggregate can long continue to be prosperous where the fair profits of the capitalist are liable to be absorbed in the payment of an excessive or disproportionate rate of wages, I have endeavoured, by seeking fresh supplies of labor from the Mother Country, to restore that equilibrium, the maintenance of which, between the two classes, is so essential to the general as well as to their mutual welfare.

The anticipations which I entertained in my last opening Address to the Council have, I am glad to say, been fully realised. The whole of the Land and Immigration Debentures have been paid off, and the Territorial Revenue has exhibited so prosperous a state as to have enabled me to request Her Majesty's Government to send out to the Colony, in addition to the 5,000 Statute Adults already promised—and of whom the two first ship-loads lately arrived in the "Hyderabad" and "Lady Peel"—an equal number in the ensuing season. There is every prospect that the whole of this Immigration may be effected without the necessity of incurring any debt. The Territorial Revenue will thus remain available as a security for raising the necessary funds for any additional supply of labor which circumstances may render expedient. The Emigrants now in progress of arriving are to be selected equally from the three great divisions of the United Kingdom. They are also to be equally divided between the Sydney and Port Phillip Districts, and the expense charged accordingly, so that each District will receive the number for which it pays. I will cause to be immediately laid before you the Correspondence which has taken place on the subject with Her Majesty's Government and the Land and Emigration Commissioners.

Connected with the supply of labor to the Colony, I will also cause to be laid before you, a Despatch from the Right Honorable Earl Grey, setting forth the terms on which Her Majesty's Government will be disposed to send out Exiles and Ticket of Leave Holders, to be subsequently followed by their wives and families, and by a number of free Emigrants, equal to the number of such Exiles and Ticket of Leave Holders, at the expense of the British Treasury. This proposal is made subject to the concurrence of the Legislative Council, and I accordingly recommend it to your early and attentive consideration.

Immediately on receipt of Earl Grey's Despatch, No. 203, of 31st July, 1847, I considered it my duty to cause it to be published for general information. It communicates the important decision, at which Her Majesty's Government have arrived, of proposing to Parliament the erection of the District of Port Phillip into a separate Colony, under the designation of Victoria. It also communicates the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with respect to some important alterations in the Constitution of this and the neighbouring Colonies.

The usual Abstracts of Receipt and Expenditure for the past year will be forthwith laid before you. I am happy to be able to say that the Revenue continues in a very prosperous state. The collections in 1847 show a considerable increase on the previous year, particularly in the District of Port Phillip. The Estimates are in course of preparation, and will be presented to you on as early a day as possible.

In conformity with my previously expressed intention, I have appointed a Board to superintend the temporal Regulation of the Denominational Schools supported in whole or in part from public funds, leaving, as heretofore, the religious instruction of the children in these Schools entirely under the direction of the Clergymen of the different denominations to which they respectively belong.

I have also appointed a separate Board to superintend the Schools to be established on Lord Stanley's National System. I confidently expect that the appointment of these Boards may be attended with beneficial results as regards the general education of the people; but I am fully aware that much is required yet to be done in this respect beyond the Settled Districts, and it is my intention therefore, on submitting the Estimates, to propose to you an appropriation for this purpose from the produce of the Revenue arising from the Assessment on Stock in those localities.

I have received a Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State, on the subject of establishing Steam communication between England and this Colony by way of the Cape of Good Hope, by means of vessels fitted with auxiliary screw propellers;—this Despatch will also be laid before you. The great importance of a speedy introduction of any means to effect a certain and rapid postal communication with England is so obvious, that it is only requisite for me to recommend the subject to your further attentive consideration, and to repeat the expression of my willingness to co-operate with you to the utmost of my power, in devising the means of speedily accomplishing this most desirable object.

I will also cause to be laid before you a Despatch from the Secretary of State, conveying to me the authority of Her Majesty's Government to introduce a measure authorising the employment of the funds of the Savings' Bank in the prosecution of any public works of general utility. This will place at the disposal of the Government a fund which, so soon as the state of the labor market will allow, may be very usefully employed in facilitating the means of communication between the different parts of the Colony, and will enable the Depositors in the Savings' Bank to enjoy a moderate rate of interest on their earnings. A Bill for this purpose will be presented to you on an early day.

It will be my further duty to place before you some other Despatches, on subjects of interest to the Colony, which I have received from Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonial Department; among them is one transmitting a series of Reports relating to the project of constructing a Railway from Halifax to Quebec. His Lordship directs particular attention to one of these Reports on the result of experience in the United States of America with regard to Wooden Railways, and points out the great importance of establishing such means of communication at the earliest possible period in this Colony.

I shall avail myself from time to time of the usual medium of conferring with you by Message on any other subject of importance which it may be necessary to communicate to you.

CH^s. A. FITZ ROY.

Sydney, 21st March, 1848.

The following is a copy of the Address of the Legislative Council in reply:—

To His Excellency Sir Charles Augustus Fitz Roy, Knight Companion of the Royal Hanoverian Guelphic Order, Captain-General and Governor-in-Chief of the Territory of New South Wales and its Dependencies, and Vice-Admiral of the same, &c., &c., &c.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY:—

We, the Members of the Legislative Council of New South Wales, in Council assembled, desire to express to your Excellency our affection and loyalty to the Person and Government of Our most Gracious Sovereign, and to offer our respectful thanks for your Excellency's Speech to this Council.

The great commercial crisis which has so lately occurred in England, has been felt by this Colony in the depreciated value of its staple productions. The fact, however, that during the past year there was so great an increase in the aggregate of the two main Exports of the Colony—Wool and Tallow,—over the Export of the preceding year, affords a striking proof of the magnitude and rapid development of the resources of the Colony. We lament, however, that owing to the deficiency of labor, and its consequent high price, the condition of many employers is one of great difficulty. We concur with your Excellency in the belief that no community can, in the aggregate, continue to be prosperous, where the fair profits of the capitalist are liable to be absorbed in the payment of an excessive or disproportionate rate of wages. We therefore offer to your Excellency our thanks for those enlightened efforts whereby your Excellency sought to restore that due relation between the profits of the employer and the laborer—the maintenance of which is essential to their reciprocal welfare.

We are happy to learn that your Excellency's anticipations, expressed in your last opening Address to the Council, have been fully realised, and that the whole of the Land and Immigration Debentures have been paid off. The pressing want of labor now experienced throughout the Colony will render the arrival of the 5,000 Statute Adults, whose introduction was recommended by your Excellency, a most seasonable, though only a partial relief. We therefore rejoice that your Excellency has felt justified in recommending to Her Majesty's Government to send out, in addition to the 5,000 Statute Adults who are now in progress of arriving, an equal number in the ensuing season.

Whilst we would, however, respectfully express our doubts as to whether the amount of Immigration herein contemplated may be adequate to the wants of the Colony, we would beg to record our conviction that the Crown and Land Revenues of the Territory afford ample security for any loan which, in pursuance of previous resolutions and recommendations of this Council, it may be thought necessary to raise for the purpose of furnishing the Colony with that amount of population and labor, without a due supply of which its growth must be arrested, and the most important branch of its productive industry diminished or destroyed.

The Despatch from the Right Honorable Earl Grey, setting forth the terms on which Her Majesty's Government will be disposed to send out Exiles and Ticket of Leave holders, to be subsequently followed by their wives and families, and by a number of Free Emigrants in a proportion equal to the number of such Exiles and Ticket of Leave holders, at the expense of the British Treasury, will receive that attentive consideration which the great importance of the question merits.

The Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary for the Colonies communicating the important decision at which Her Majesty had arrived of proposing to Parliament the erection of the District of Port Phillip into a separate Colony, under the designation of Victoria, and also communicating the intentions of Her Majesty's Government with respect to some important alterations in the constitution of this and the neighbouring Colonies, is one which will receive our most grave and anxious consideration. We shall lose no time in communicating to your Excellency our deliberate opinion upon this most important subject, with the view of bringing the same, with the least possible delay, under the notice of Her Majesty's Government.

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We are happy to learn that the condition of the Revenue is prosperous, and we shall bestow our careful consideration on the Estimates of Expenditure for the ensuing year, when laid before us by your Excellency.

The Despatch of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State, on the subject of establishing Steam Communication between England and this Colony by way of the Cape of Good Hope, by means of vessels fitted with the screw propeller, will receive our attentive consideration.

We agree in considering that the introduction of Railways into this Colony is a subject of the greatest importance. The Despatch from the Right Honorable the Secretary of State, and the documents accompanying it, will afford ample materials for investigation, and shall receive such attention as the shortness of the Session will allow.

We entirely concur with your Excellency in believing that beneficial results, as regards the general education of the people, are likely to arise from the appointment of the respective Boards for superintending the Denominational and General of Systems of education, in securing a more satisfactory and efficient appropriation of the sums granted out of the public revenue for these purposes.

We rejoice to learn that your Excellency intends to make early provision for the establishment of schools beyond the settled districts. The present destitution of all means of education in those localities, is an evil, the correction of which is well worthy the deliberate attention of the Government.

The Bill which your Excellency proposes to lay before us in connexion with the investment of the funds of the Savings' Bank, together with such other documents and messages as your Excellency may refer or address to us, shall receive our most attentive and anxious consideration.

CHARLES NICHOLSON.

*Legislative Council Chamber,
Sydney, 21st March, 1848.*