

No. 19.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to His Honor A. P. SEYMOUR.

Wellington, 30th January, 1872.

(Telegram.)

I do not quite understand your letter of 17th January, with respect to Road Boards. In the first part you seem to wish for waiver of that condition which requires contribution to be paid proportionate to road rates levied, but at the end you recommend payment in proportion to rates levied. As whole Province is divided by law into specified road districts, and presuming that law will not be altered this year, I do not think one-tenth need be reserved for new districts. Classification clause requires districts to be classified as they are comparatively more or less populous; cannot, therefore, all the districts except Pelorus and Picton be put into Class 1, and those two districts in Class 2. This will secure the exact relative proportionate distribution which you recommend. Let me know your views at once by telegraph, as I am, with you, anxious that road funds should be utilized during the dry season.

W. GISBORNE.

His Honor the Superintendent, Marlborough.

No. 20.

His Honor A. P. SEYMOUR to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

Blenheim, 31st January, 1872.

(Telegram.)

ROAD Boards, Pelorus and Picton Counties, can be placed in Class 1, rest in Class 2. Can money be handed to Road Boards at once, notwithstanding clauses 17 and 18 of Act?

A. P. SEYMOUR,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

No. 21.

His Honor A. P. SEYMOUR to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

Superintendent's Office, Blenheim, 1st February, 1872.

SIR,—

Referring to your telegram of 30th January, in the matter of the Road Board allowances, there would appear to be no objection to placing the counties of Pelorus and Picton in Class 2, and those of Wairau, Awatere, and Kaikora in Class 1. Clause 12 of the Payments to Provinces Act provides that the amount to be allotted to each Board shall be in proportion to rates raised, but I am anxious that the distribution should be authorized in proportion to rates levied. The Boards are now using their utmost diligence to collect their rates, but it will be very difficult at any given time to ascertain exactly what amount has been actually raised by them; and I am of opinion that substantial justice will be done in all cases if the amounts are calculated on the rate roll, and this course will admit of an earlier application of the money to the works most needed whilst the fine weather lasts. Again, must the provisions of clause 18 be strictly enforced? It would be far more satisfactory if the amount which can be paid to each Board could be at once handed over to the different Chairmen for disposal without constituting the Superintendent, as it were, a general overseer of works undertaken by bodies who are in no way responsible to him, either in their constitution, the rates they may choose to levy, or the character and the extent of the works they construct.

I have, &c.,
A. P. SEYMOUR,
Superintendent.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

No. 22.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to His Honor A. P. SEYMOUR.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 17th February, 1872.

IN answer to your letter of 1st February, *re* allowances of certain Road Boards in Marlborough Province, the proportion of payment should be as much as possible according to the rates raised; but if you are satisfied that every effort is made to raise the rates levied, and that only slight balance of rates levied remains unraised, you might exercise your discretion as to calculation on basis of rate roll. If necessary, I could hereafter advise Governor to waive condition to that extent. All that is intended by section 18 is the Superintendent should be satisfied before he signs warrants that the expenditure is *bonâ fide* on the objects specified in the 15th section.

W. GISBORNE.

His Honor the Superintendent, Marlborough.