

VIII.—CANTERBURY.

No. 23.

His Honor W. ROLLESTON to the Hon. W. REEVES.

SIR,—

Superintendent's Office, Christchurch, 29th December, 1871.

In reference to the circular letters of the Hon. Colonial Secretary, of the 4th December, 1871, and to what has passed in conversation between us on the subject of the apportionment of the sums payable to this Province, under "The Payments to Provinces Act, 1871," I have the honor, after conference with Members of the Provincial Executive, to make the following proposals for your consideration:—

1. That the conditions prescribed in sections 12, 13, and 14 of the Act be waived in the case of the Province of Canterbury.

As I had the honor of explaining to you personally, the provisions as to local rating do not apply in several of the cases where the moneys available would be most advantageously expended. I may instance specially the main lines of communication with the West Coast and with Akaroa, where the roads skirt or pass through several Road Boards which are not so largely interested in their construction and maintenance as the districts at the extremities of the lines of road, and where there is in some of the districts no population capable of being rated.

The provisions of section 13 are inapplicable to a large number of districts, for reasons which will occur to you from your personal acquaintance with the circumstances of the country; and I may remind you that it was in a great measure on account of the impossibility of adapting those provisions to the circumstances of Canterbury, that the power of waiving them was given by the Legislature in the proviso to section 14.

2. That of the total amount of £18,260 payable to Canterbury, one-half, viz., £9,130, should be distributed among the several Road Boards in accordance with the recommendations previously made by me in my letter dated 1st July, 1871, which were submitted to the Provincial Council at its last session.

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It is presumed that in the term "new roads," in section 15 of the Act, roads hitherto not metalled will be included.

3rd. That the remaining £9,130 be appropriated, as provided in section 28, for repayment to the Province of the cost of the following works for which appropriations have already been made by the Superintendent and Provincial Council, viz:—

	£	s.	d.
Rangitata Bridge .. .. .	600	0	0
Road approaches to Waimakariri Gorge Ferry .. .. .	500	0	0
Timaru Roads south of Rangitata .. .. .	875	0	0
Le Bons Bay Road, Banks' Peninsula .. .. .	100	0	0
Timaru Gaol .. .. .	1,550	0	0
Road to Malvern Hills (coal road) .. .. .	150	0	0
Harbour Works .. .. .	5,355	0	0
	£9,130	0	0

I have named these appropriations—for which votes have already been sanctioned by the Council, and for which moneys will have to be provided—in order that the Province may have it in its power, out of the moneys thus set free for further appropriation, to provide for such other works as it may determine upon.

Among other works I may mention that it is my intention to recommend an appropriation of half cost of repairs necessary to the Hurunui Bridge, in accordance with an understanding which was entered into between the Colonial Government and myself when in Wellington.

As there is no portion of the Province in which Road Boards are not established, I presume that the provisions of section 19 do not apply; but as it is possible that changes may be made in existing boundaries of the Road Boards before July next, I would suggest that a re-adjustment of the votes in accordance with the change of the districts might, if thought advisable, be made in any case, with the approval of the Resident Minister, and that this should be a condition attached to all the appropriations.

Trusting that the above proposals will meet with your favourable consideration,

I have, &c.,

W. ROLLESTON,

Superintendent.

The Hon. the Resident Minister for the Middle Island.