

Jubilee of Hawke's Bay.

RECORDS OF A RICH PROVINCE—NAPIER, THE BEAUTIFUL AND SALUBRIOUS.

A TEN DAYS' "CARNIVAL."

NAPIER, the picturesque, prosperous, and salubrious capital of the Hawke's Bay district, has for the better part of the past two weeks been holding high holiday. Its streets have been gay with flags and bunting, and crowded with citizens and visitors. Music, "with its voluptuous swell," has been heard almost continuously. There has been a dizzying round of spectacles, entertainments, sports and competitions. These rejoicings mark the jubilee year of Hawke's Bay, which was declared a province in 1858, and though Provincial Government has long been abolished, the old provincial feeling lingers, and lingers worthily, in the form of local patriotism, pride in past achievement, and hope and emulation for the future. All that is objectionable in the word "provincialism" has been happily swept away, and the ancient jealous rivalries have disappeared; and hence, though it is Hawke's Bay that to-day specially rejoices, all New Zealand joins in the jubilation and unites in the hymn of praise for what the pioneers of Hawke's Bay have accomplished, and in the prayer for the continued progress and prosperity of that fertile part of the Dominion.

It was on the 1st of November, 1858, that Hawke's Bay was by Act of Parliament separated from Wellington district, and erected into a province. The first Superintendent was Mr. A. C. Fitzgerald, and he was succeeded on 26th February, 1863, by Sir Donald McLean. At the time of the foundation of the province the population was small, and Napier was practically non-existent. It consisted of little else than a barracks, a small building in which official business was transacted, a store or so, and some residences which were more useful than ornamental. Twenty years later the town was little better, while Port Ahuriri, or the Spit, as it was then called, was a wilderness of shingle wastes and lagoons. Napier was composed of two stretches of shingle, running north and south, nearly parallel with each other, with hills on the one side and the wide sweep of the bay on the other. There were a few buildings on the hills, and Hastings-street was beginning to be formed on the shingle bank nearest the sea. Between that shingle bank and the other was a foul and fetid lagoon. Beyond the inner shingle bank was another and larger lagoon, cut off from what is known as the inner harbour by the road from Napier to Taradale. The portion of the town known as Olive Square was then nearly three feet lower than it is now, and after heavy rains boats floated there. The whole seemed apart from the bold, natural beauty of the scene, a most unpromising site on which to build the capital of the province. But the men of those days knew the wealth of the district and the potentialities of Napier as a port; they had faith in the future, and they set to work in the way directed by the enormous difficulties with which they were confronted.

A TOWN IN THE MAKING.

The first thing to be done was to reclaim the noisome lagoons and make the surroundings wholesome and fit for the site of the city of the future. In a corner of what is now the Recreation Ground stood a large hill. The borough borrowed money, cut down the hill, and with the spoil thus obtained, and also with similar spoil from the hills at the bottom of Chaucer-road, made Munroe-street and the streets running from it at right-angles to Hastings-street. These streets went through the small lagoon above referred to, leaving the intervening locks stagnant water, more fetid than before. An Act passed by Parliament gave the borough power to fill in these blocks, recovering the coast from the owners, or in default taking possession of the reclaimed land. The other flat sections of the town were raised, some of the lower portions three feet. The outer lagoon has also been reclaimed. Where formerly schooners could sail is now fertile land, from two to three feet

higher in level than any other portion of the flats. The result of these and other works carried out with vigour and intelligence has been to make of what was once an insanitary waste, a beautiful and thriving town, justly celebrated for its salubrity and yearly growing in wealth, population and prosperity. The sanitary arrangements of the town are well-nigh perfect, and the water supply is pure and abundant, obtained from artesian wells varying in depth from 200 to 300 feet. From these wells the water is pumped up into reservoirs 200 and 325 feet above sea level, from which reticulation mains supply the various parts of the town under pressure.

THE BREAKWATER AND ESPLANADE.

Chief among the works undertaken by the far-seeing people of a past generation were the breakwater, necessary to make the harbour secure, and the Marine Esplanade, which has done so much to add to the attractions of Napier. The first block of the breakwater was laid on January 25th, 1887, and on the 31st of December last the length of finished work was 2,674 feet. When completed, the area of the harbour will be about 120 acres. The depth of water for more than half that area will be 27 feet at low water spring tide. Some portions of the harbour will have a depth of 35 feet at low water spring tide. Inter-colonial vessels drawing up to 25 feet now berth at the breakwater. A contract has been let to the Ferro-Concrete Company of Australia to enlarge the Glasgow wharf in ferro-concrete from its present dimensions of 410 feet by 30 feet, to 653 feet by 88 feet, so that in about a year and a-half from now ocean liners will have a suitable wharf to berth at. In the Marine Parade Napier owns the finest and largest Esplanade in the Dominion. Commencing at the root of the breakwater, near the foot of a perpendicular mass of limestone rock known as the Bluff, the esplanade, protected by a symmetrical sea wall, extends southward in a direct line for a length of nearly two miles. The asphalted road presents a fine surface for the cyclist and an ideal promenade for the pedestrian. Along the sea frontage Norfolk Pines have been planted and form a shelter from the sun, while at the same time they add to the beauty and the general effect. The total expenditure on the Esplanade to date has been £13,255. Ample seating accommodation has been provided by the Borough Council. In a central position on the Esplanade a fine band rotunda has been erected, and during summer evening concerts are regularly given by local bands.

NOTES OF PROGRESS.

Napier was constituted a borough on November 26th, 1874, and its real progress dates from that time. Thirty years ago the value of the borough for rating purposes was in round figures £38,000. Today rates are collected from properties whose letting values reach the total of £106,000, representing a capital value of fully two millions sterling. The following tabulated statement shows the progress of the town since 1875—first in ten-year periods, and latterly from year to year:—

Year ending	Rateable value.
Nov. 15th, 1875	£37,300
April 24th, 1885	62,286
April 24th, 1895	81,268
March 31st, 1906	87,415
March 31st, 1906	88,532
March 31st, 1907	91,614
March 31st, 1908	96,071
March 31st, 1909	104,269

The population of the town is now about 10,000, and is steadily increasing. The capital value of the Napier Harbour Board rating district was in 1891 assessed at six and a half-millions. It is now twelve millions. The port of Napier stands third in the Dominion for exports of meat, and fifth in the Dominion for general exports, the total value of the

latter for 1906 being £1,807,362. The following figures show the progress of the port of Napier for the period of ten years from 1897 to 1907:—Cargo received, 45,878 tons—106,399 tons; shipping in tonnage, 349,219 tons—823,346 tons; Customs revenue, £68,104 8/10—£118,340 10/11.

A record of the successive Mayors of Napier shows that eight gentlemen have filled the position from the formation of the borough to the present time. They are as under:—

Stuart, Robert, from 18th January, 1875 to December 17th, 1878.
 Vautier, John Helier, 18th Dec. 1878, to 19th May, 1882.
 Spencer, William T., 20th May, 1882, to 25th Nov., 1885.
 Swan, George Henry, 26th Nov., 1885, to 24th April, 1901.
 McVay, John Commons, 24th April, 1901, to 23rd April, 1902.
 Williams, Fred. W., 23rd April, 1902, to 4th May, 1904.
 Carnell, Samuel, 4th May, 1904, to 1st May, 1907.
 Brown, John Vigor, 1st May, 1907, to date.

Mr. Vigor Brown is also Chairman of the Napier Harbour Board, and in his dual capacity he has done excellent service to the district, his business qualities and his energy and zeal in all that pertains to the advancement of Hawke's Bay being universally recognised.

THE NAPIER OF TO-DAY.

The Napier of to-day is a bright, clean town, with its handsome residences on the hills, its well-appointed business premises, its two fine cathedrals, its esplanade, its breakwater approaching completion, its school buildings, and with a natural asset in the shape of a climate almost without an equal in the world for mildness and salubrity. Napier has now 38 miles of streets kerbed and formed, 6 miles of tarred roads, 24 miles of footpaths, kerbed, channelled and tarred, and 23 miles of water mains.

For picturesqueness and grandeur, combined with rich fertility, Napier and its surroundings stand unrivalled. The business part of the town is built on the flat surrounding Scinde Island, which forms a beautiful centre setting. Away north towards Portland Island, and south to Cape Kidnappers, the bay curves gracefully, forming a remarkable counterpart of the Bay of Naples. Westward and southward the Ahuriri Plains stretch away over 15 miles of country, so rich that the land literally only requires to be tilled to produce all that man may require; land, which has proved the best sheep country in the world; land, which with its vast peach orchards, grows sufficient to supply the whole Dominion with its luscious fruit. Away to the south and north-west stretch the Kaimanawa and Ruahine Ranges, protecting the town from the cold rains and wintry blasts of the West Coast.

The residential portion of Napier is partly built on the slopes of Scinde Island and partly at its base along the sea front. Charming villa residences are dotted about the hills in a most picturesque manner, and these, protected from the north and west winds by the slopes and embowered in trees and shrubs of luxuriant growth, afford shelter all the year round to the most delicate.

Chief among the public buildings of Napier is the handsome structure in Shakespeare-road, recently erected by the Government at a cost of about £20,000, for the accommodation of its various departments. Other buildings worthy of notice are the Anglican Cathedral, the Athenaeum and Free Reading Room, Post Office, the Hawke's Bay Club, Napier Club, and the Working Men's Club (which has one of the finest private circulating libraries in New Zealand). There are two theatres, and the volunteers have a drill-shed which provides an excellent ball-room. The hotels are large and well-appointed—the Masonic in particular having a reputation that may almost be called world-wide. At Awatoto the Municipal Alatoirs are situated and equipped on the most modern lines, whilst at the port are numerous spacious wool stores, which, in the busy season, are simply packed with the golden fleece.

The town beach affords safe and pleasant surf-bathing, a pastime which has become extremely popular with visitors and residents. Dressing tents for both ladies and gentlemen have been erected by the Borough Council, who have at-

tendants in charge to afford assistance to the timid and keep bathers within due bounds. For those of the public who do not care for the surf, the inner harbour beach at Westshore affords splendid bathing facilities. The Council also contemplates the erection of a fine tank bath on the sea-shore, and to carry out this desirable work a loan of £5,000 has been granted by the ratepayers. It is proposed to provide hot salt water, vapour and Turkish baths, and a tea-room will be run in conjunction with the institution; while in winter the water in the bath will be heated, so that bathing may be indulged in the whole year.

While the chief resources of Hawke's Bay, so far, are her agricultural and pastoral products, she has in Napier made a fair start with a variety of manufacturing industries. Entitled to a foremost position is the woollen mill, a modern and well equipped factory, which is turning out materials that will stand comparison with the best of the Dominion's products. Deep sea fishing proves a not inconsiderable item when reckoning up the causes which contribute to the progress of the town; and the freezing works represent what has long been recognised as one of the staple industries of the province. Engineering works, wine-making, the railway workshops, extensive sawmills and soap and tannery works also contribute in no small degree to the general prosperity.

CLIMATIC ATTRACTIONS.

Its equable temperature, its dry air, its bright sunshine and genial breezes, make Napier an ideal health resort. The mean annual temperature is 58.6 Fah., the highest of any town in the Dominion except Auckland, which is not quite half a degree higher (59). The mean mid-

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