

powers vested in him by the 14th section of the Act, and to waive the conditions set forth in sections 12 and 18. The grounds upon which I base my request are as follows:—Section 12 prescribes that the amount to be received by each Board shall be in proportion to the sum raised by such Board by local rates. This makes it imperative that each Board, before being admitted to any participation of the Road Board Fund, should levy and collect a rate. It has been shown to me, by deputations from several Boards, that the strict enforcement of this condition would be very prejudicial to them, as in some cases no rates have ever been levied, and therefore much time would elapse before the rateable property could be assessed and the rate collected, which in the case of a first rate being enforced is reasonable. In addition to this it is urged that the rateable property consists chiefly of mining claims and plant, and against the rating of these properties many objections are raised and great difficulties are encountered. I am aware that the policy of this portion of the Act is to encourage the imposition of local rates, as is shown by section 14, and my desire is not to interfere with this, but to make the distribution without being obliged to divide it in proportion to the rates raised by each Board, making it essential that rates should be levied before any money is given to any Road Board, in accordance with the 15th section of "The Payments to Provinces Act, 1871."

With reference to the classification of the County into districts, as required by the Act, I have the honor to inform you that I cannot see any reason why I should make any distinction amongst the Road Boards in the County. The population of each road district, in nearly all cases, bears the same proportion to the extent of the district and the relative value of the rateable property, while their requirements are very similar. The only exception to this is the Okarito Road Board, and in that district the population is scattered and the rateable property consists almost entirely of mining claims and appliances. As a set-off against this, the County Council have lately constructed nearly all the tracks and roads that were much required, and have, in addition, lately entered into contracts for bridges over the principal streams.

In conclusion, I would beg to refer you to my letter No. 729, of the 22nd August, 1871, <sup>See No. 10. G. 22</sup> forwarding a scheme for the distribution of the grant among the Road Boards, and I am certain <sup>1872.</sup> that if this scheme be adopted it will give general satisfaction, and deal equitably with each Road Board.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,  
Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
H. H. LAHMAN,  
Chairman of the County Council.

No. 27.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to Mr. H. H. LAHMAN.

(Telegram.)

Government Buildings, 30th January, 1872.

RECEIVED your letter of 18th January about Road Board money. Governor waives condition prescribed by 12th section of "Payments to Provinces Act, 1871." If you think road districts all belong to one class, you need not act on the 13th section. The condition prescribed by 14th section should be observed. As road districts cannot be increased in Westland, except by legislation of Assembly, you need not reserve for new road districts one-tenth. Distribution should be according to plan forwarded by you on 22nd August last.

W. GISBORNE.

H. H. Lahman, Esq., Hokitika.

No. 28.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the Hon. W. REEVES.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 23rd March, 1872.

HAVE you arranged as to payment to be made to County Westland for permanent works under 28th section of Act? Chairman wants payment made. Please say what has been done, or is to be done.

W. GISBORNE.

The Hon. W. Reeves.

No. 29.

The Hon. W. REEVES to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.

Office of the Resident Minister for the Middle Island,  
Christchurch, 27th March, 1872.

SIR,—

Referring to the Payments to Provinces Act, and your telegram No. 152, of 23rd instant, Mr. Lahman, the Chairman of the County of Westland, expressed his desire to me, when in Hokitika, that the money payable under section 28 of the Act should be appropriated to the construction of the Arnould Road.