

1876.

NEW ZEALAND.

DESPATCHES

FROM THE GOVERNOR OF NEW ZEALAND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor the Most Hon. the Marquis of NORMANBY,
to the Right Hon. the Earl of CARNARVON.

(No. 42.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 7th June, 1875.

I have the honor to inform your Lordship that on the 29th ultimo I returned to Wellington, after paying an official visit to Christchurch and Dunedin.

2. My visit South was unfortunately unavoidably delayed until too late a period of the year to enable me to see the country to the best advantage; but, at the same time, I did not feel justified in postponing my visit to those great centres of population till next summer. I therefore left this on the 20th of April, and arrived in Christchurch the next day.

3. The reception which was there accorded me as Her Majesty's Representative was most gratifying, as evincing the loyalty and attachment which are entertained by the inhabitants towards the government of Her Majesty.

4. Although I had heard much of the flourishing condition of the Provinces of Canterbury and Otago, I own I was quite unprepared to witness the evidences of prosperity and advancement which presented themselves to me on every side. I have long been accustomed to see the rapid progress which takes place in young countries; but I can assure your Lordship, that in no place have I seen so much accomplished in so short a period.

5. I landed at Port Lyttelton, and at once proceeded by railway to Christchurch. This railway is seven miles in length, and was in the first instance constructed as a provincial undertaking, but has subsequently been purchased by the General Government as a portion of the Main Trunk Line. It is a work of considerable magnitude, as the range of mountains which separates the Plains from Port Lyttelton necessitated the formation of a tunnel $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles in length. The undertaking was a bold one for so young a community, but I am happy to state that the result has proved the wisdom of the step; as not only has this ready communication with a safe and commodious harbour given to Canterbury an importance which it could otherwise never have obtained, but the railway itself is at the present moment paying far more than the interest on the cost of construction, after deducting the working expenses.

6. The town of Christchurch is well laid out with wide well-made streets, while many of the public buildings and churches are fine substantial edifices built of stone, and even in an architectural point of view possessing considerable merit; among these I may especially mention the Provincial Buildings, the Supreme