

cotton in England, the supply of chrome exceeded the demand. The men were therefore discharged; and the tramway only used for the conveyance of firewood and lime from the mine to town, and for the passenger traffic to the port. It is hoped that mining operations will be resumed before long.

Vacancies in the Provincial Council have been supplied by the election of Mr. C. Elliott for the town, Messrs. Harkness and Thompson for Richmond, and Mr. H. Redwood for Waimea West. This last vacancy was caused by the sudden death of Mr. John Kerr, an old and highly respected settler, who came to Nelson with the first expedition, in the year 1842.

Two sessions of the Provincial Council have taken place during the year. The first was opened on the 21st of April, when his Honor the Superintendent congratulated the Council on the "prosperity and contentment" which he said prevailed "among all classes, in an increasing degree." He estimated the revenue for the current year at £70,000, of which it was proposed to devote £43,000 to public works; and he gave an interesting account of the surveys and explorations, and other means, already undertaken to open up better communication with the interior and western districts of the province. To carry out these and other proposed works, he intended to apply to the General Government to sanction a loan of £50,000.

With the exception of this loan, and the proposed railway, there was little business to occupy the Council. A select committee was appointed to consider the subject, and the report of the committee recommended the construction of a railway to the plain of the Four Rivers, distant from Nelson about eighty-five miles, and that application should be made to the General Government for permission to raise a loan of £300,000 to construct the line. The report of the committee was adopted by the Council, after a long discussion, but by a majority of one only.

The Council was prorogued by the Superintendent on the 5th of August, when he announced his assent to the following Acts, viz.:—Waterworks, Country Roads Amendment, Fencing, Scab, Dog Nuisance, Education, Cattle, Slaughtering, and Appropriation Acts. Four other Acts, viz.:—the Marine Board, Buller River Reserve, Coalfield Leases, and Cemetery Acts, were reserved for the Governor's sanction. The Waterworks Act was based upon the report of a commission appointed by the Superintendent, and it proposes to provide for a supply of water to the town of Nelson at an expenditure of about £15,000.

Another session commenced on the 29th of September, when the Council were called together to consider some amended Land Regulations, previous to the meeting of the General Assembly. The Regulations were passed, and also a Bill authorizing a loan for Waterworks, &c.; and the Council adjourned after a session of about three weeks.

At the sitting of the Supreme Court, in January, there were six criminal cases, of which three resulted in acquittal, and in the others, the prisoners received sentences of from six months to two years. The May sitting of the Court is memorable for the trial and condemnation of the Maori Takerei, for murder, at the Pelorus; and for the trial and acquittal of a clergyman of the Church of England, charged with an unnatural offence.

The Marriage of the Prince of Wales was celebrated with great rejoicings on the 16th of June. It was a complete public holiday; and the triumphal arches, processions, feasting, fireworks, and fun, will no doubt long have a place in the memories of the youth of Nelson.

But a sad episode of the year has been the total wreck of the brigantine Delaware, which occurred on the 4th of September. This vessel, which had but recently arrived from England, left Nelson for Hawke's Bay on the 4th, and was overtaken by a furious gale, which drove her on to the rocks near Wakapuaka,

about twelve miles from Nelson. With the exception of the mate, who was drowned, the crew and passengers got safely to shore by means of a line, and assisted by the bravery of three or four Maories. The wreck, with cargo left, was sold by auction for £85.

The heroic conduct of the Maori Julia, and others, was generally appreciated by the Nelson settlers, a public subscription was got up; and as a result of it, on the 14th November, the Subscribers met at the Provincial Hotel, and presented Julia with a gold watch, suitably inscribed; and the men each with a silver watch; while the Superintendent added a sum of £50, in cash, given by the General Government.

Space will only allow the bare allusion to other events, such as, the successful driving of sheep, overland, to the river Grey; the destruction by fire of Mr. Levick's house, and the narrowly-escaped destruction of the town by a fire in Mr. West's shop, in Bridge-street; the importation of a steam-plough; the reported discovery of a live Moa; the experimental quartz crushing; the importation and working of steam-planing machines; and the wonderful success of the three Building Societies.

During the twelve months ending October 1st, 1863, the number of births registered in Nelson was 358, being an increase of 43 as compared with the previous year. The number of marriage-certificates issued was 76, being a decrease of 8 on the previous year. And the number of deaths was 91, being an increase of 1 as compared with the previous year. It should be remembered, however, that the population has much increased since last year.

The value of exports at the Customs at Nelson, during the above period, was £58,172; the value of imports, £304,699, realizing a duty of £23,864 13s. 11d. The quantity of gold exported was 8,300ozs. 4grs. 6dwts., of the value of £32,163, and yielding a duty of £1,037 10s. 8d.

The quantity of Crown Land sold during the above period amounts to 107,388a. 3r. 34p., which realized a total of £52,530 15s. 0d., of which £16,837 represents scrip on land orders.

The following description of Nelson, in April, 1863, (which is from the pen of a contributor to the 'New Zealander,' and published in that journal) will form an interesting and truthful record:—

"Sweet Auburn, loveliest village" —

"But I must cut short the quotation. Nelson is not of the plain, but rather of the ocean drive and mountain dingle. It is indeed a sweet spot, and well deserves the epithet "pretty," so universally applied to it.

"The harbour of Nelson is the most unique of any in New Zealand. Situated at the bottom of Blind Bay, its approaches are extremely beautiful, the coast line being of a mountainous and precipitous character, which pleasingly subsides on nearing the haven. There the wood-crowned hills are studded with handsome villas and pretty cottages, each rejoicing in its well-trimmed lawn and shrubbery, rising ridge upon ridge, and nesting amid the most charming nooks and coverts. Nelson, at a first glance, looks as if it were won from out the mountain's base,—clean, compact, and every way worthy of its favourable reputation.

"I have said the harbour of Nelson is unique. As it is neared, the town is seen embosomed in a mountain gorge, with a lake-like sheet of water in front. This lake is protected by a ridge of shingles, extending from side to side of the harbour, which constitutes a sort of natural mole, called the Boulder Bank; by no means unlike the Plymouth break-water. On the centre of this bank there is an excellent light-house, an admirable land-mark by day and unerring guide by night. The entrance of the port lies to the southern extremity of the bank. The channel is narrow, and the tide runs strong; but it is well buoyed and beacons,