

PERMANENT WORKS ON GOLDFIELDS.

The development and extension of our goldfields require attention, and the gold-mining industry is playing no unimportant part in producing our present prosperous state. Considering the present and the past yield of gold, relatively speaking, there has been less spent by the State in developing this industry than in any other gold-producing country in the world. It is essential that works of a permanent character should be taken in hand, producing collateral and general advantages, rather than yielding direct returns, and which private enterprise could not be expected to undertake. For permanent work on the goldfields £50,000 is required.

PUBLIC AND TECHNICAL SCHOOL BUILDINGS.

The necessity for due provision being made for public and technical school buildings forces itself upon us day by day, and it is a matter of impossibility for the Boards of Education, especially in those districts where settlement is progressing so rapidly, to provide necessary accommodation; and it adds to the hardships of the hardy pioneers in the back blocks to see their children denied the benefits of education, and made to suffer a serious drawback in the battle of life; and I feel sure that, in asking that £50,000 be raised for the purpose of public and technical school building, all will admit that such moneys will be profitably and prudently spent.

PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS.

To complete the purchase of Native lands now under negotiation, and to obtain lands required, so that our purchases to date may be placed in a satisfactory position for settlement, £50,000 is required. For some time past we have been tapering off, and I anticipate that ere long moneys for the purchase of Native land will not require to be raised.

CONTINGENT HARBOUR-DEFENCE.

To bring our harbour-defences into a reasonably complete state further expenditure is required. Commitments under the advice of the Commander of the Forces have been made, and these are properly chargeable to Capital Account. I must confess that the expenditure of large sums of money for defence-works and for arms and munitions which become so quickly obsolete is open to question, especially seeing the roadless condition in which our settlers are placed. However, it is well to be prepared for any emergency, and the amount of £25,000 asked for can with advantage be expended.

Briefly summarised, I deem it advisable that we should raise £1,000,000 for the purposes hereinbefore mentioned; and, considering the necessities therefor, and the pressure brought to bear on the Government by the people, the Press, and by members, the moderation of the proposals will commend itself to all well-wishers of the colony.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, it is a matter for sincere congratulation that we are possessed of one of the fairest spots on the face of the earth. Our climate is congenial and equable; the productiveness of our soil is unequalled; our mountains within the auriferous and argentiferous belts contain rich lodes of the precious metals, and the valleys and river-beds are yielding gold in large quantities; our scenery is unsurpassed in grandeur, beauty, and variety; our thermal springs are a great boon to the afflicted, and attract visitors from all parts of the globe. With such vast wealth of natural endowments, and with the energy, pluck, and determination of our people, it is not to be wondered at that in New Zealand life is worth living, and that we enjoy advantages denied to those of our own race in other parts of the world.

Whilst ungrudgingly giving, in the first place, every credit to the people as being chiefly instrumental in promoting the present satisfactory condition of the colony, I claim that the progressive policy of the Government for the