

That Convention has been passed by the British Parliament, and will be ratified by France when its Parliament meets in November. I believe that its adoption will mark an era from which will date wider enterprise, greater prosperity and increased happiness in this Colony. It is intended to settle and will settle forever, the anomalies, the vexations, the injustices that have existed for so long a period on the Treaty Shore. For the peaceful settlement of this vexed question, for the healing of this open sore, for this termination of patient suffering on the part of our people, the present Government may justly claim your approbation.

I think I am correct in saying that the foregoing is a record of which any Government might well feel proud; that it is a record that must be convincing in itself to the Electors of the Colony generally, irrespective of party leanings or proclivities. But it does not represent by any means the whole of what has been accomplished by the Government during the past four years. If you desire to know more of what has been experienced, I would respectfully suggest to you to look around you, and, in the absence of able-bodied pauperism, in the comfort and happiness of the homes throughout the land, in the increased earning power of the people, in the ever-enlarging volume of trade and commerce, you have reflected the result of a careful, honest and stable Government, working harmoniously for the common good, and blessed in their labours by Divine Providence.

If you compare the condition of things to-day with the condition of things that existed four years ago, when the present Government entered upon the duties you confided in them, there is no man, I care not how partisan he may be, who can judicially look at the position then and now without coming to the conclusion that we have emerged from almost midnight darkness into the clear light of a new day.

In making this statement, I am appealing to the conscience of the country, not to its imagination or passions.

You will have in recollection that widespread demoralization consequent upon the wholesale distribution of able-bodied pauper relief marked the advent of the late administration, the enormous sum of Two hundred and Ten Thousand, Two Hundred and Forty-six Dollars having been expended by them on that account during their first six months of office, and that to such a condition were the finances of the Colony brought by that party that the then Minister of Finance declared, in introducing the Budget, "it was necessary to solicit aid from some quarter or other in order to carry the heavy responsibilities."

You will also have in mind the disorganization of the Civil Service following upon their unjustifiable dismissal of unoffending and capable officials; their unpatriotic and reprehensible conduct in connection with the transfer of the Railway and other Assets of the Colony; and the general distrust that was awakened throughout the country by the disgraceful exhibition of a Ministry rent asunder by internal dissensions in the struggle for personal aggrandisement.

You will further remember that such was the state of the Colony and such the circumstances under which the present Government entered upon their duties. Backed by the moral support of nearly the whole people of the country, we were enabled to cope with and overcome the difficulties of the situation, and we have the satisfaction of seeing the Colony to-day in a more prosperous and contented condition than it ever was before.