

EXPENDITURE FOR 1873-74.

The total proposed expenditure for the current year amounts to £1,013,154 3s. 7d., of which £443,510 16s. 9d. is for Colonial Permanent Charges, £186,930 for Provincial Permanent Charges, and £382,713 6s. 10d. for Ordinary Appropriations. Honorable Members will observe from the Estimates, that the Permanent Charges are so made up as to include the whole of the interest on the Immigration and Public Works Loan; but in calculating the amount the Consolidated Fund will have to provide, we may take into consideration the recoveries on account of the cost of works in construction, for which amount, as I have before explained, the Government propose to make provision. I estimate that £10,000 will be recovered from Provinces on account of works constructed; and £75,000 from the Immigration and Public Works Loan Account for works in course of construction: there being thus £78,000 left to be paid out of the Consolidated Revenue. I may remark that this amount is £56,500 in excess of the payment made out of the same fund last year. The total expenditure then, exclusive of Provincial interest and of recoveries for interest on works constructed and in course of construction, will amount to £826,224 3s. 7d. The appropriations of last year, together with the absolute expenditure on Colonial Permanent Charges, amounted to £788,917 0s. 1d., showing an excess of estimated expenditure of £37,307 3s. 6d. for the current year. But the excess on Permanent Charges for the current year is £54,518 6s. 4d. so that the ordinary Estimates amount to £17,211 2s. 10d. less than the appropriations of last year. Of this amount £16,290 is represented by the Public Buildings included in last year's appropriations, but not included in the present year's Estimates. Honorable Members will observe that Public Domains and Buildings do not now stand as Class I. as was the case last year: in fact, the items and also the control of the expenditure have been transferred to the Public Works Department, but the expenditure, exclusive of the buildings authorized to be charged to Loan, will still be chargeable to the Consolidated Revenue. We propose that the cost of Public Buildings shall be charged upon an amount to be borrowed; and we have forborne submitting an estimate of what we consider will be required, until we know whether or not the House approves of the proposal. Public Departments now become Class I. of the Estimates; but the items Land Transfer Act and Deeds Registry, have been transferred from this Class to that of Law and Justice; so that there is apparently a large increase in the one, but a corresponding decrease in the other. Taking the two classes together, there is a small increase. Class III., Postal, &c., Services, shows an increase which arises in the Telegraph Department; there being a considerable decrease in the Postal Department. The increase in the working cost of the Telegraph Department is naturally to be expected, seeing how the increased receipts involve a larger amount of departmental work. Class IV., Customs, shows a small decrease in the total, because no charge for the construction of Lighthouses is now included in the estimate for the Marine Department; but the Customs Department proper shows a slight increase, arising principally from the system of classification, and the consequent annual claim of officers to small advances in their salaries. In Class V., Native, there is an increase, because a sum of £2,000 has been included for the working of the Native Councils—a Bill for the establishment of which is before the House. Under Class VI., Miscellaneous, there is a small decrease; and a noteworthy one will be found under Class VII., Militia and Volunteers. I think I shall be consulting the wish of honorable Members if I abstain from more detailed reference to the Estimates. I shall be able to give more extended explanations when the Estimates are under consideration.

I now ask honorable Members to follow me in a statement of the total proposed Colonial Expenditure for the year. First, there are the items for Permanent Charges and Ordinary Appropriations, already mentioned, and amounting together to £826,224 3s. 7d. I propose to continue the Capitation Allowance to Provinces, on the same basis as last year, namely, 15s. per head of population; and also to continue the special allowances to Auckland, Taranaki, Wellington, Hawke's Bay, and Westland. Taking the Registrar-General's estimate of the population at the close of last year (279,423), the total

Proposed Expenditure, 1873-74, £1,013,154 3s. 7d., including—£443,510 16s. 9d, Colonial Permanent Charges; £186,930, Provincial Permanent Charges; £382,713 6s. 10s., Ordinary Appropriations. Recoveries on account of Interest on Public Works during construction.

Comparison of Colonial Permanent Charges, 1872-73 and 1873-74.

Classes of Estimates.

Capitation Allowance to Provinces, £217,964 5s.