

were—For Interest and Sinking Fund to the 15th July, £7 10s. ; Reserve Account, £20,604 8s. 7d. ; Balance of Capitation due to the Provinces, £10,372 5s. 6d. ; and Miscellaneous Liabilities, £25,000. These items amount to £55,984 4s. 1d. ; and on deducting them from the sum of £176,430 12s. 11d., already referred to, we reproduce the sum of £120,446 8s. 10d., the ultimate surplus of the year 1874–75.

#### THE SPECIAL FUNDS.

Having already dealt with those accounts which make up the main items in the Special Funds—I mean the several Loan Accounts—I shall here remark on one only of the other accounts under this head. I refer to the New Zealand Settlements Act Account, or, as it is more commonly styled, the Confiscated Lands Account.

Table B (1),  
page 10.

The actual transactions of receipt and payments during the year just closed will be found in the Table B1 ; but in order to state the precise position of the account, I will, with the permission of the Committee, summarise the operations of the past two years. The receipts from Confiscated Lands for the two years ended 30th June, 1875, have amounted to £80,826 10s. 11d., and the expenditure, after deducting advances, to the amount of £595 12s. 11d. outstanding on the 30th June, 1873, has amounted to £94,779 13s. 3d. There has therefore been an excess of expenditure over receipts for the two years to the amount of £13,953 2s. 4d. This deficiency has from time to time been covered by transfers of cash under the power given in “The Appropriation Act, 1872,” from the fund provided for land purchases in the North Island. The total of these transfers during the two years has amounted to £20,500, and there is therefore a balance of £6,546 17s. 8d. now at credit of the account.

The Expenditure to which I have referred includes,—

	£	s.	d.
For Ordinary Services authorized by Parliament ..	57,284	19	1
Treasury Bills chargeable hereon, under Act of 1868, redeemed	20,000	0	0
Payments to Provinces .. .. .	11,692	15	4
Land Purchases .. .. .	3,650	10	0
Public Works (Bridges, &c.) .. .. .	2,151	8	10
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	£94,779	13	3

A portion of the expenditure made during the past year, and included in the total stated, has been made without the authority of Parliament, and I shall have to ask the Committee to cover it by a vote. The liabilities outstanding on the 30th June, including the sum of £20,500 already referred to, amounted to £51,022 7s. 6d., or after deducting the credit balance to which I have referred, to £44,475 9s. 10d.

I believe that the Committee will agree with me that the time has arrived when these lands should become subject to the ordinary Land Laws, and I shall presently submit a proposition upon the subject for the approval of the Committee.

#### THE LAND FUND.

Table C,  
page 20.

With regard to the ordinary Land Revenue, it will be seen that the receipts, amounting for the year to £762,475 8s., or, including the sales in the North Otago District, £10,790 9s. 9d. credited to the Special Fund, to £773,265 17s. 9d., show a considerable falling off as compared with the receipts of the previous year. This decrease it was reasonable to expect, the quantity of land taken up during the year 1873–74 being evidently disproportionate to the immediate requirements of the settlers. The Government are very anxious that the public estate should be conserved and the proceeds applied to legitimate purposes, such as the payment of the debts secured upon it for local public works, the construction of further local public works, the introduction of immigrants, and, if necessary, in temporary aid of education. In the opinion of the Government, it has become the duty of this House to consider carefully this matter, and to insist that the public estate shall not be sacrificed or dissipated, or the proceeds misapplied. The total receipts from Land Fund, exclusive of gold duty, for the six years ending 30th June, 1875, were as follows :—