

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS.

Public Accounts. The improvement in economic conditions during last year was to some extent reflected in the public revenues, and this fact, combined with a saving of £250,000 in expenditure, enabled the deficit to be reduced from the Budget forecast of £2,094,000 to £709,000. All things considered, it will, I think, be generally agreed that this was a satisfactory outcome to a very difficult year.

The accounts for the year have already been published, and are summarized in comparative form in the tables attached to this statement.

Revenue. The total revenue received during the year amounted to £23,492,749, comprising taxation receipts, £17,059,830; interest, £2,863,856; other departmental receipts, £1,569,063; in addition to which £2,000,000 was obtained by liquidating reserves invested in discharged - soldiers - settlement mortgages, advances being obtained from the Bank of New Zealand against the hypothecation of the securities.

Taxation. From the comparative tables attached to this statement it will be seen that the total receipts from taxation exceeded the Budget estimate by £845,830, the principal items in excess being Customs duties, £285,000; income-tax, £261,000; stamp and death duties, £113,000; and sales tax, £97,000. Practically all the items of taxation produced more than the estimate, and the total amount received from this source was £1,455,000 more than in the previous year.

Interest receipts. The only important feature of the interest receipts was the fact that interest on railway capital liability showed an increase of £294,000 over the estimate, and was £234,000 greater than the amount received in the previous year. This is a further indication of an improvement in the economic position of the Dominion.

Other receipts. Little comment is called for regarding the receipts from other departmental activities, which, in total, were £28,000 greater than estimated. The improved position of the farming community is reflected in the increased returns from territorial revenue (£65,000) and national-endowment revenue (£19,000).

Expenditure. The net expenditure for the year amounted to £24,202,027, against an estimate of £24,456,846, a net saving of £254,819. The bulk of this saving was made under the annual appropriations, and, as the various votes had received careful consideration, this result can be regarded as eminently satisfactory, and is a clear indication of the continued efforts of all Departments to maintain efficiency at the lowest possible cost. As will be seen from the comparative tables, almost all Departments contributed their share to the saving.

SUMMARY OF YEAR'S OPERATIONS.

The operations for the year may be summarized as follows:—

		<i>Expenditure.</i>				£	£
Permanent appropriations—							
Debt services	..	..	..	..	10,397,332		
Exchange	..	..	..	..	1,797,188		
Highways	..	..	..	..	1,201,837		
Other services	..	..	..	..	353,797		
Annual appropriations—							
Social services	..	..	..	..	6,841,819		
Other services	..	..	..	..	3,610,054		
							24,202,027
		<i>Revenue.</i>					
Taxation	..	..	..	..	17,059,830		
Interest	..	..	..	..	2,863,856		
Other receipts..	..	..	..	..	1,569,063		
From reserves..	..	..	..	..	2,000,000		
							23,492,749
Deficit	..	..	..	..	..		£709,278