

BANK OF NEW ZEALAND.
HALF-YEARLY MEETING.

The half-yearly general meeting of the shareholders of the Bank of New Zealand was held at the Banking-house Queen street, on the 22nd April, or Dr. L. Campbell (chairman of Directors) presiding. There was a large attendance of proprietors.

Mr. D. L. Murdoch, general manager, read the minutes of the annual meeting, which were confirmed, also the report and balance sheet, as follows:—

FORTY-SEVENTH REPORT of the Directors of the Bank of New Zealand to the half-yearly General Meeting of the Proprietors, held at the Banking-house, Auckland, on Wednesday, the 22nd April, 1885.

The Directors submit to Shareholders the following as the result of the past half-year's operations:—

The net profit for the half-year ended 31st March, after full appropriation for all known bad and doubtful debts, and in reduction of Bank Premises and Furniture Accounts, amounts to	£	79,048	0	9
To which has to be added				
Balance from half year ended 30th September, 1884	£	21,093	17	7
Giving a total available for division of	£	100,141	18	4
Which it is proposed to appropriate as follows:—				
To payment of Dividend at the rate of 10 per cent per annum	£50,000	0	0	
To bonus of 5s per share, equal to 5 per cent per annum	£25,000	0	0	
To balance carried to Profit and Loss New Account	£25,141	18	4	
	£	100,141	18	4

The Dividend and Bonus will be payable at the Head office, Auckland, on Friday, the 24th instant, and at Branches on receipt of advice.

For the Board of Directors,

J. LOGAN CAMPBELL,
 Chairman.

AGGREGATE BALANCE-SHEET of the Bank of New Zealand at 31st March, 1885, including London Office at 31st January, 1885.

LIABILITIES.

Dr.		£	s.	d.
Capital paid-up	...	1,000,000	0	0
Reserve fund	...	625,000	0	0
Notes in circulation	...	532,060	0	0
Bills payable in circulation	...	1,853,274	5	0
Deposits and other Liabilities	...	10,750,649	4	11
Balance of profit and loss	...	100,141	18	4
		£14,861,125	8	3

ASSETS.

Cr.		£	s.	d.
Coin and cash balances at bankers	...	1,383,475	1	5
Money on short call in London	...	135,157	11	6
Bullion on hand and in transit	...	278,908	1	11
Government securities	...	883,877	19	11
Bills receivable and securities in London	...	1,958,236	16	8
Bills discounted and other debts due to the Bank	...	9,913,446	14	3
Landed property, Bank premises, etc.	...	308,024	2	7
		£14,861,115	8	3

PROFIT AND LOSS ACCOUNT.

Dr.		£	s.	d.
To dividend on 100,000 shares of £10 each at rate of 10 cent. per annum	...	50,000	0	0
To bonus at the rate of 5s per share equal to 5 per cent. per annum	...	25,000	0	0
To balance carried to profit and loss new account	...	25,141	18	4
		£100,141	18	4
Cr.		£	s.	d.
By balance from half-year ended 30th September, 1884	...	21,093	17	7
By net profit for half-year ended 31st March, 1885,	...	79,048	0	9
		£100,141	18	4

RESERVE FUND.

Dr.		£	s.	d.
To balance	...	625,000	0	0
Cr.		£	s.	d.
By balance from last half year	...	625,000	0	0

We hereby certify that we have examined the accounts of the Bank of New Zealand for the half-year ended 31st March, 1885, and that we have counted the cash balances and examined the bills and other securities held at the head Office, and compared the returns of the branches with the statements in the foregoing balance-sheet, and have found the same to be correct.

(Signed) **J. L. WILSON** }
A. K. TAYLOR } Auditors.

The Chairman, in moving the adoption of the report, said:—
 Gentlemen,—In rising to move the adoption of the report and

balance-sheet which have just been read, I will, as usual, shortly comment on the figures contained in them and on the general condition of business since we last met. Looking to the debtor or liability side of the balance-sheet, and contrasting the figures with the previous half-year's statement, the capital and reserve fund remain as before. The circulation shows a slight expansion, but so slight as scarcely to be noteworthy. The bills payable exhibit an increase of over £400,000, consequent on the more active exchange business pertaining to this season of the year. The deposits and other liabilities are increased by over £250,000, and the balance of profit and loss is greater by £4000. On the credit or assets side, the available resources of the Bank, which comprise coin and cash balances at branches, money at short call in London, bullion, Government securities, and bills receivable, etc., in London, are greater by over £300,000. Bills discounted, and other debts due to the Bank, are increased by £400,000, and landed property, Bank premises, etc. are also increased by £11,000. This last account will probably in next balance-sheet exhibit a larger increase, as we have acquired the freehold premises in Sydney recently occupied by the Oriental Bank, a purchase necessitated by the too limited space in our own premises, and the rapidly-growing business of the Bank in that city. It is, however, anticipated that by sale of our present freehold, and a portion of that acquired from the Oriental Bank, and not required for our own purposes, no large addition will ultimately result to Bank premises account from this purchase. We have also obtained in Melbourne the leasehold premises recently occupied by the Oriental Bank, in the most commanding site in Collins street, but this, though contributing largely to the prominence of the Bank, and to its capacity for doing an increasing business, will not involve a charge to premises account. When we last met I expressed some confidence that there would be an early and marked improvement in general business, and though this has in some measure been verified, there have been adverse compensating influences which have, in great measure, nullified the improvement. Bountiful crops have been partially damaged by weather, and prices have continued to rule very low. Increased shipments of wool and frozen mutton have also been subject to the present long-existing wave of low prices which appears to affect every industry; but though at the moment it is difficult to see from what source improvement is to arise, it would be against all past experience to believe that products can long remain saleable only at little over the cost of production, and I can but express a hope that it will not be long before you are congratulated from this chair on a marked change in the beneficial results of business. The Colony meantime continues to make steady progress in public works and in settlement on land, and is evidently attracting increasing attention of English capitalists as a desirable field for investment. With these remarks I beg to move the adoption of the report and balance-sheet.

Sir F. Whitaker, M.L.C., said: Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—
 Under the circumstances I think the shareholders are to be congratulated at the result of the last half-year's operations, and I think they must be well satisfied with the report and balance-sheet which have been presented to them; I say, gentlemen, under these circumstances, because we all know that trade throughout the world has been in a very disorganised and most unsatisfactory state. We know, also, that our products of the Colony have been in a state which has not been remunerative to the producers. When we look around us and see that wheat and other produce cannot at the present prices, except under very special circumstances, leave much margin for the producer, we must be satisfied that banking, like everything else in the community, must to a certain extent suffer. But I have to congratulate you, gentlemen, with this fact at all events, that we have stood our own as regards the banking business of the Colony, and stand in as high a position now as at any past time, and I believe in the future we shall maintain that position. Gentlemen, when we look around and see that we are progressing so far as our manufactures are concerned, and numbers of new industries are springing up in every direction, we have really a reasonable hope that from this source alone there is much to expect. There has been latterly—for a year or two past—a very considerable depression, but that depression must sooner or later pass away. You know we are subject to these depressions periodically, but they are always followed by a revival. It is difficult to say at the present time from whence that revival can come; but that it will come we know from experience, because if we are to judge of the future by the experience of the past, we know that depressions have taken place—take place periodically, not only in New Zealand, but in every other part of the world, and we know that these depressions are always followed in reasonable time with an improvement. Now, I think, under all the circumstances, we may fairly expect that improvement during the next half-year, under ordinary circumstances, to take place; but we must bear in mind this, that we may have a different state of things and different circumstances altogether to deal with. Looking at the telegrams of the morning, and looking at the position of political affairs, it appears to me we are now on the eve of a great war. It may be, however, averted, and I trust it may be averted. What the result on trade may be it is very difficult to say. We know perfectly well our products to a certain extent will be more valuable; but great disorganisation must result in the business of the world; and we know also that at the conclusion of war there must be a reaction and great depression. But as regards the Bank, we feel ourselves in this position, that we have very large resources; and looking at our position, I think we are in such a way that we shall be able at all events to take advantage of any opportunity that occurs of increasing our business. Gentlemen, I think we may look forward with satisfaction in the future—I mean so far as banking business is concerned. I rose for the purpose of seconding the report, and, as I said, I think the report and balance-sheet must be satisfactory to you; therefore, I will conclude by seconding the proposition of the Chairman that the report and balance-sheet be adopted.—(Cheers.)

The motion for the adoption of the report and balance-sheet was then put and carried unanimously.

The usual vote of thanks to the Directors and Officers closed the proceedings.