

colony that I hope that by this means we may exclude all party feeling from the question, and that we may be enabled so to reorganize our Civil Service as to render it both efficient and economical, while its status and pay will be such as to attract men of ability and character to its ranks. The reorganization of the Civil Service is, no doubt, a work of considerable difficulty, and it is possible, after thorough consideration by the Committee, there may not be time to carry a Bill this session; but I yet hope there will be. If, however, there should not be sufficient time to legislate this session, the House will have laid down the principles upon which it will be the duty of the Government to prepare legislation for next session. Should no Act be passed this year, it will be necessary to ask the House for increases to some of the present salaries where such increases are fairly due.

ESTIMATED REVENUE FOR THE YEAR 1883-4.

Table No. 6.

I have now, Mr. Hamlin, to bring under the notice of the Committee the estimated revenue of the year 1883-84. I anticipate that we shall receive a total ordinary revenue of £3,573,800 for the current year, exclusive of land sales, if our taxation remains unaltered. I have thought it prudent not to increase the estimated receipts from Customs duties more than £20,000 above the estimate of last year; but I hope, looking to all the circumstances of the colony, as far as it is possible to do so in advance, we may reasonably expect to receive £1,520,000 from these duties. I have also estimated an increase of £8,000 on stamps, £7,000 on telegraph receipts, and £18,000 on the property-tax under the new valuation. I estimate, then, the total revenue at £3,573,800; to which I add the balance of £35,549 which stood to our credit at 31st March last, and get the sum of £3,609,349 as the total amount available for the services of the year.

Now, the total revenue received last year was £3,673,933, including the balance with which the year began. Honourable members will therefore see that our ways and means for the current year are less than those of last year by £64,584. The estimated revenue proper, it is true, for this year exceeds that of last by £103,550, but the credit balance with which we begin this year is less by £168,134 than the credit balance with which we began last year; so that, as I have said, our total ways and means is less by £64,584.

It should also be remembered that the increase in the receipts from railways this year is only obtained by the necessary addition to the expenditure of £48,187 for their working expenses and maintenance, and it must also further be borne in mind by the Committee that it was only in consequence of the large surplus on the 31st March, 1882, that the whole of the cost of the Armed Constabulary was, for the first time, charged against the consolidated revenue.

I have already shown the estimated expenditure as £3,661,496. There will therefore be a deficit of £52,147; as to the means of meeting which I will speak presently.

LAND FUND, 1883-84.

Table No. 7.

The estimated expenditure chargeable against the Land Sales Fund is as follows: For charges fixed by Acts of the General Assembly, £36,600; for the Crown Lands, Survey, and Mines Departments, £157,280, and for rates on Crown Lands £40,000, amounting in the whole to £233,880. The receipts from land sales are estimated at £275,600 for the current year. To this must be added the balance standing to the credit of the Fund on 31st March last, £86,564; making the total estimated receipts for the year £362,164. Deducting from this the estimated expenditure, we obtain a surplus of £128,284; against which, however, is chargeable £100,000 payable to Main Roads Account for last year. There is, therefore, only available, if the above estimates are correct, £28,284 for the Main Roads Account, under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, for the current year. I shall have to refer to this subject again before I conclude.

PROPOSALS FOR THE YEAR.

Ordinary Revenue Account.

I have said, Mr. Hamlin, that the estimated expenditure for the year is £3,661,496, and that, without further taxation, the estimated revenue is only £3,609,349. It is evident, therefore, that we must either decrease our