

Details of the *net* expenditure will be found in the various tables on other pages. In addition, 121 credit vouchers for work done by the department, 541 applications for imprest advances, and about 1,200 letters, memoranda, returns, &c., have been dealt with or prepared.

Two hundred and twenty-eight agreements (prepared in triplicate) have been issued, representing grants to local bodies of £53,950 1s. 7d.; and the payments under agreements amounted to £55,585 18s. 7d., including payments under agreements of previous years.

A statement (71 pages) of the expenditure, liabilities, &c., in respect of each of the 1,112 separate appropriations, and a full statement from the commencement of the position of the Government Loans to Local Bodies Account has been issued, within the department, quarterly, and the various authority and expenditure registers have been balanced as between themselves.

A large amount of work has been performed during the year in preparing returns for departmental information, compilation of reports, statements and tables for the last annual report, supplying information daily as to the condition of road and other accounts, preparation of Consolidated Fund, Public Works Fund, and other estimates under the direction of the head of the department, and general supervision of the accounts of the district offices, though press of other important work has prevented this supervision being carried out in a thorough and systematic manner.

The comparative statement below shows to some extent how the yearly increase of work in the department affects this branch:—

Year.	Number of Vouchers.	Gross Amount authorised for Payment, Credit, &c.	Number of Appropriations.	Number of Grants to Local Bodies prepared.	Amount granted to Local Bodies.	Payments to Local Bodies under Agreements.
		£			£	£
1890-91	9,810	152,775	210	80	17,782	Not compiled.
1891-92 (9 months)	8,355	177,903	219	87	23,391	13,448
1892-93	10,676	260,498	252	108	21,568	20,388
1893-94	13,071	353,772	440	181	42,847	22,704
1894-95	14,367	420,531	592	215	52,892	45,302
1895-96	15,422	578,778	682	203	33,761	42,813
1896-97	15,689	711,660	932	248	59,712	32,419
1897-98	17,719	587,422	1,112	228	53,950	55,586

AUDIT.

Mr. RUNCIE, Auditor of Land Revenue, reports as follows:—

Attached herewith I forward you a comparative statement of receipts of revenue for the financial years 1896-97 and 1897-98. The cash balances at credit in the Bank of New Zealand and Receiver-General's Deposit Account belonging to the various Receivers' ordinary deposit accounts on the 31st March last were as follow:—

						£	s.	d.
Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	742	7	6
New Plymouth	...	...	...	...	...	70	18	0
Napier	...	...	...	...	...	86	18	6
Gisborne	...	...	...	...	...	33	14	4
Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	1,447	1	11
Blenheim	...	...	...	...	...	163	7	8
Nelson	...	...	...	...	...	675	4	2
Sub-offices—Ahaura	...	...	...	...	...	9	9	0
Reefton	...	...	...	...	...	49	19	0
Westport	...	...	...	...	...	104	2	3
Hokitika	...	...	...	...	...	26	17	6
Christchurch	...	...	...	...	...	810	10	4
Dunedin	...	...	...	...	...	902	0	10
Invercargill	...	...	...	...	...	908	14	9
						£6,031	5	9

The cash balances at credit in the Bank of New Zealand and Receiver-General's Deposit Account of "thirds" and "fourths" due local bodies in the under-mentioned land districts were,—

						£	s.	d.
Auckland	...	...	...	...	...	3,490	5	0
Taranaki	...	...	...	...	...	5,332	8	8
Hawke's Bay	...	...	...	...	...	3,558	15	9
Gisborne	...	...	...	...	...	33	14	4
Wellington	...	...	...	...	...	10,936	13	9
Marlborough	...	...	...	...	...	153	8	5
Nelson	...	...	...	...	...	931	10	4
Westland	...	...	...	...	...	28	14	3
Canterbury	...	...	...	...	...	1,129	13	6
Otago	...	...	...	...	...	2,429	15	7
Southland	...	...	...	...	...	1,195	3	11
						£29,220	3	6