

1909.
NEW ZEALAND.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

(In Committee of Supply, 10th November, 1909)

BY THE MINISTER OF FINANCE, THE RIGHT HON. SIR J. G. WARD, P.C., K.C.M.G.

Mr. WILFORD,—

It was my privilege to place before the House during the short session that took place early in June last the financial results for the year ended 31st March, and I now propose to deal further with the financial position of the country, to review some of the conditions of the past, and to submit for your consideration important proposals affecting the future.

For the convenience of honourable members, so that they may have before them the complete figures for the last financial year, and thereby be better able to intelligently consider the proposals I submit to them this evening, I attach the Statement I delivered in June last. This will render it unnecessary for me to deal with them in detail, except in the case of the public debt and our loan transactions, full particulars of which I am desirous of placing before the House.

I will first deal with the—

PUBLIC DEBT.

The increase of the public debt, as shown in Table No. 10 attached, for the past year was £4,484,637, but it is only right to say that of this amount no less than £2,633,919 may be regarded as directly interest-bearing, with an additional profit. The acquisition of the Manawatu Railway, which was in full working-order and therefore immediately revenue-producing, necessitated a loan of £1,000,000 to complete the purchase. To enable advances to be made to settlers and workers an additional £1,172,300 was obtained. £250,000 was raised for lending moneys to local authorities under the Loans to Local Bodies Act, and £211,495 was provided for the purchase of lands under the land-for-settlements scheme. These items, with a small sum of £124 invested in New Zealand Consols, make up the £2,633,919, all of which, I repeat, is not only interest-bearing, but yields a profit after paying interest and working-expenses. This leaves a sum of £1,850,718 for general purposes, a large portion of which, however, is expended on additions to open lines and railway-construction—works that will add to our revenue receipts later on.