

MEMORANDUM BY THE RIGHT HON. MINISTER OF FINANCE, SHOWING THE POSITION OF THE PUBLIC ACCOUNTS ON THE 31ST MARCH, 1909, AND THE REQUIREMENTS TO THE 14TH OCTOBER, 1909.

As Parliament will shortly prorogue, and the usual Financial Statement will not be delivered until it reassembles, honourable members are no doubt desirous that I should place before them an outline of the position of the finances of the Dominion.

Dealing first with the past year, the results of which have already been made public by the publication of the Public Accounts in the *Gazette* as required by law, it may not be out of place to make a few comments on them for the information of honourable members.

The revenue for the financial year was estimated at £8,985,000, and the expenditure at £8,878,346, the anticipated surplus, after bringing forward balance of £767,849 from the previous year and transferring £800,000 to public works, being £74,503.

An analysis of the figures shows the actual surplus for the year to be £184,321, or £109,818 more than was anticipated. The surplus of the previous year was £767,849; but for purposes of comparison there must be taken into consideration the increased expenditure and the relinquished revenue which were foreseen and allowed for in the Budget of last year. The recurring large surplus year after year caused the Government to make concessions in Customs, Railways, &c., amounting to about £600,000, and in view of those reductions it could not be expected that such large credit balances would continue.

REVENUE.

The revenue for the past year amounted to £9,001,185, an increase of £16,185 over my estimate, the respective amounts being:—

Estimate.	Actual.	Excess.
£8,985,000	£9,001,185	£16,185

Comparing the revenue with that of the previous year, there is only a difference of £54,761 on the total receipts, the figures being:—

1908-9.	1907-8.	Decrease.
£9,001,185	£9,055,946	£54,761

The revenue for the year exceeded the expenditure by the sum of £215,672, made up as follows:—

Revenue ....	....	....	....	£9,001,185
Expenditure ....	....	....	....	8,785,513
Excess revenue ....	....	....	....	£215,672

Dealing with the various heads of revenue:—

The Railways contributed £2,918,507, as against an estimate of £2,835,000 and an actual receipt of £2,765,395 in 1907-8, the receipts being better than the estimate by £83,507, and an increase on the previous year of £153,112. The