

FINANCIAL STATEMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY THE OFFICER ADMINISTERING THE GOVERNMENT.

(ENCLOSED IN MESSAGE NO. 14.)

In forwarding to the House a Bill for the Appropriation of the Revenue of the Colony, it would have been desirable that the House should at the same time have been furnished with Abstracts of the Receipts and Expenditure of the Government for the whole of the past year, but the Southern Accounts for the quarter ending 30th June last, reached Auckland only a few days since, while some of the Treasury and Customs Accounts for the March quarter are also deficient; so that there are no means in the Audit Office of rendering complete statements for the information of the House, for a later period than the 31st of December last. It is probable, however, that complete statements for the whole of the past financial year will be laid on the Table before the termination of the present Session.

The Revenue of the six months ending the 31st December, 1854, amounted to £110,537 4s. 11d., and the Disbursements to £57,283 5s. 4d. exclusive of Advances issued to Provincial Chests on account of the anticipated Surplus Revenues of the period amounting to about* £45,943; and exclusive also of Advances issued to the Chief Commissioner, &c., for the purchase of Native Lands, amounting to £24,650 5s. It will be observed that the expenditure including the Advances alluded to was in excess of the Revenue; but any deficiency was made good out of sums deposited in the Colonial Treasury for the purchase of lands. The Balances in the Colonial Chests on the commencement of the financial year was £65,005; and the Balances in hand on the 31st of December last was £62,863, of which £39,356 were Land Deposits; and £21,152 Deposits unavailable,—the remainder being Surplus Revenues.

Statements in detail shewing the Receipts and Disbursements of the General Government will be found among the papers attached to a Memorandum of the Auditor-General, which I have directed to be laid on the Table for the information of the House.

A statement of the Advances issued to the Chief Commissioner and Mr. Kemp, for the purchase of Native Lands, accompanies this Minute. It will be seen that the sums issued on this Account, up to the 30th June last, amount to £34,500 5s.

The acquisition of land from the Natives is an object of such vital importance to the progressive prosperity of the Colony, that I am glad to be able to inform you that considerable progress has been made with this branch of the service, notwithstanding the various difficulties arising from the prejudices and jealousies of the different tribes in reference to their conflicting interests and claims.

In the Auckland Province since March 1854, it may be estimated that six hundred thousand acres of land have been acquired from the Natives; of this extent two hundred thousand are situated at Whangarei, on the coast between Auckland and the Bay of Islands.

In the Piako and Thames District one hundred thousand acres. On the West Coast, between the Waikato and Mokau, extending inland towards the Waipa, about two hundred thousand acres. And in the vicinity of Auckland, including the Waiuku Block of thirty thousand acres, about one hundred thousand acres.

The external boundaries of the greater portion of this land have as yet to be surveyed; either before the final arrangements and details of purchase with the Natives are completed, or the land is thrown open for selection. Additional provision for this service in connection with the Land Purchasing Department is necessary.

In the Wellington Province it was found absolutely necessary to take advantage of a disposition on the part of the Natives to dispose of several most valuable tracts of land which they agreed to transfer to the Crown on the condition that prompt payment was made to them. In this Province £18,032 was issued to the Chief Commissioner during the financial year; of this amount £8,000 were due as instalments on former purchases, and the balance for land recently acquired at Wairarapa and Ahuriri. The pursuits of the inhabitants of this Province being chiefly of a pastoral nature, requiring a greater surface of land for their flocks and herds than would be requisite in an agricultural district, together with the disposition of the chiefs to transfer their lands which they might at a future time

*This sum excludes the advance made to the Provincial Chest at Canterbury out of the Receipts of the nine months ending 30th June, 1854.