

Figures for other years are:—

—						Surplus.	Interest paid to Consolidated Fund.
						£	£
1945	..	..	..	..	..	29,278	98,100
1944	..	..	..	..	..	57,779	82,851
1943	..	..	..	..	..	19,151	114,172

Cash collections by the Department under each heading showed some variation when compared with the previous year. Receipts from butterfat decreased by 3·6 per cent., while the Department's share of wool proceeds was up by 17·3 per cent. Sales of live-stock brought an additional 11·6 per cent., and the returns from miscellaneous items (including crops) which are grouped under heading "Sundries" rose by 7 per cent. Taken over the whole the collections in cash were 7·8 per cent. above last year's total. The actual amount of the revenue collected under each heading was as follows: butterfat (representing the Department's retention, which averaged 44 per cent., £185,389, compared with £192,484 for the previous season; wool sales, £120,947, as against £103,036 for 1945; live-stock sales, £375,559, in comparison with £336,500 for the previous year; and sundry receipts (crops and farm produce), £32,657, the previous year's receipts being £30,479.

On State-financed schemes the volume of dairy-produce decreased last year from 5,756,591 lb. to 4,920,435 lb. (due in part, no doubt, to the abnormally dry season experienced in the North), while the wool clip of 6,019 bales showed an increase of 94 bales over the 1945 season.

The twenty-one stations financed by the Native Trustee and the Maori Land Boards produced a total of 1,966 bales of wool, as compared with 2,069 bales for the preceding year. On the East Coast Native Trust stations 3,331 bales were shorn, the previous year's clip being 3,653.

The live-stock returns at 31st March, 1946, show a decrease in the number of dairy cows carried, with an increase in the number of breeding-ewes. The tallies (with the previous year's figures shown in parentheses) on the farming schemes financed by the State were as follows: cows milked during the season, 39,044 (43,382); other dairy stock, 23,808 (20,291); run cattle, 31,256 (26,954); breeding-ewes, 169,279 (163,173); dry sheep, 121,979 (116,779). The seventeen Native Trust stations were carrying 7,797 (7,559) run cattle, 30,946 (32,350) breeding-ewes, and 30,987 (30,410) dry sheep, while the figures for the Maori Land Board stations were 3,719 (2,972) run cattle, 15,374 (17,552) breeding-ewes, and 18,031 (14,212) dry sheep.

The average number of employees of the Board during the year was 1,510. This figure excludes farm-managers and foremen directly engaged by the Public Service Commissioner and is again exclusive of the 1,880 settlers now established on unit holdings. High rates of pay being offered in outside industries (a particularly disturbing effect of the war upon pastoral occupations) has set the Department a problem of re-creating, where it has been lost, interest in farming.

Employees on departmental farming activities totalled 1,273, and on Native housing 198.

Grants from the Consolidated Fund to the Land for Settlements Account amounting to £126,673 for the year enabled the Board to undertake the development of land which otherwise could not be economically cultivated. The amount was expended by way of subsidies, which are granted to farms on a percentage basis varying with necessity according to the nature of the country being improved. On schemes in course of development and properties