

INCOME-TAX.

The receipts for 1912-13 as compared with 1911-12 were—

					£
1912-13	..	..	..	..	462,994
1911-12	..	..	..	..	448,935
An increase of					<u>£14,059</u>

No alteration was made in the rates of tax charged, so the above figures are an indication of the increased prosperity of the Dominion.

The following figures give the increases in the net assessed income, the yield of income-tax, and the number of taxpayers, in the last four years :—

Year.		Net Assessed Income. £	Tax. £	Number of Taxpayers.
1908-9		10,225,346	321,044	10,839
1912-13		12,939,338	462,994	13,167
Increases		<u>£2,713,992</u>	<u>£141,950</u>	<u>2,328</u>

The rates of income-tax were increased in 1910-11.

REMARKS AS TO CURRENT YEAR'S REVENUE.

LAND AND INCOME TAX.

I estimate the receipts for the current year as—

					£
Land-tax	..	..	..	..	750,000
Income-tax	..	..	..	..	470,000
Total	..	..	..	..	<u>£1,220,000</u>

It is intended during the present session to submit to honourable members a proposal for graduating the income-tax on a more equitable basis than the present system. The new scale will be prepared on the same principle as the graduated land-tax of last session, which provides that the increase in the rate will be uniform with the increase in value, so that for each pound of increase in taxable income there shall be a corresponding increase in rate. The smaller incomes will pay slightly less, but this loss will be made up by an increase in the tax charged on the larger incomes.

Legislation has already been introduced with the object of granting additional exemption from income-tax to parents who have children under sixteen years of age dependent upon them.

This legislation will, I hope, meet the objections so frequently made—viz., that the present system of taxation presses more severely on taxpayers who are bringing up families than it does on those with few or no children.

AGRICULTURE.

The rural industries, and the preparation of their products for export, are among the most important factors in the material prosperity of New Zealand. It is consequently a matter of satisfaction that the past year has been one of prosperity for these industries. The wool-clip has been good; dairying has continued to expand, especially in the manufacture of cheese; commercial fruitgrowing is now beginning to take its true place as a means of utilizing much land that is of comparatively small value for other purposes; the hemp industry has, owing largely to a period of high prices, shown a remarkable revival; and poultry-raising and beekeeping are exhibiting signs of a forward movement.

The Government has under consideration a proposal to introduce legislation this session which will enable financial assistance to be granted to associations of fruitgrowers for the purpose of erecting canning-factories and providing cold storage.