

PROGRESS REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE of the House of Representatives, appointed May 8th, 1856, to whom it was referred to consider and report upon the State and Management of the Public Finances, have agreed to the following Progress Report :—

Your Committee have considered the various matters before them, and have taken evidence thereon ; and they now beg leave to report to the House certain Resolutions which they have adopted in reference to the reconstruction of the public accounts, and also to report the evidence taken by them up to the present time.

F. D. BELL, *Chairman.*

*Committee Room, House of Representatives,
June 5, 1856.*

RESOLUTIONS OF THE COMMITTEE.

1. That, in the opinion of the Committee, while time is not afforded before the termination of its sittings for examination of the detailed statements of accounts published by the Auditor-General for the period from 1st January 1853, to 31st December, 1855, it is the duty of the Ministers to direct such examination to be made, in order that they may lay before the House next Session a General Statement, for the correctness whereof they may be held responsible.

2. That it is expedient, for the purpose of taking such account, as the only safe practical rule, to treat all revenues for the periods in question as revenues raised under Acts of the General Assembly, pursuant to the 62nd and 66th clauses of the Constitution Act.

3. That the Appropriation Act of the Legislative Council of 1852 shall be deemed an appropriation under an Act of the General Assembly for the period ending 30th September, 1853.

4. That the authority of an Appropriation Act, in respect of specific items, does not cover any expenditure in respect of such specific items beyond the expiration of the term to which the Appropriation Act extends.

5. That whenever any savings shall be made on any specific votes, the same ought to be treated as distributable Provincial surplus for the periods in which such savings shall have been made.

6. That the Constitution Act ought to be adhered to as regards all moneys paid for Native Land Purchases ; and that such sums are a first charge on the General Land Funds of the Colony, and are not Provincial. That nevertheless regard ought to be had to the following considerations in the application of the above rule.

(a.) That from Sir George Grey's circular minute of December, 1853, and in speeches and financial statements of the Officer Administering the Government, in the first and second Sessions of the