

ROADS NORTH OF AUCKLAND, MAIN ROADS, MISCELLANEOUS ROADS AND BRIDGES, AND GRANTS IN AID.

ROADS NORTH OF AUCKLAND.

On roads north of Auckland the expenditure for the year ending the 31st March last was £3,138, leaving a balance then available, out of the amounts provided for this class of works, to the extent of only £732. Of this sum £40 is due to counties under grants already made, leaving £692 available for further undertakings.

The vote proposed for this year is £300, leaving £432 for next year.

MAIN ROADS.

Under the head of "Main Roads" the work required to be done, which practically means the maintenance of arterial lines of communication passing through uninhabited districts, is being gradually reduced to the lowest possible limits. This is the more necessary as the funds available for such purposes out of Public Works Loans are very nearly at an end. After next year, therefore, it will be necessary to provide out of Consolidated Fund for the maintenance of such of these roads as cannot reasonably be handed over to the local bodies.

Under the votes of last year twelve of these roads were provided for, but in the votes proposed for this year the number is reduced to six. Those still retained are: Oxford to Rotorua, Tauranga to Napier *via* Taupo, Nelson to Tophouse and Tarndale, Nelson to Westport Greymouth and Hokitika, Haast Pass Track, and Hokitika to Christchurch; and one new item has been added, namely, for the maintenance, during the present year, of the roads recently constructed along the North Island Trunk Railway.

The amount voted under this heading last year was £18,650, of which £13,756 was expended; and, for this year, with liabilities at end of March last amounting to £5,311, we ask for a vote of £15,100, the whole of which, however, will not probably be expended.

MISCELLANEOUS ROADS AND BRIDGES.

For Miscellaneous Roads and Bridges the amount voted last year was £34,500, of which £25,989 was expended; and, for this year, with liabilities at the end of March last amounting to £12,642, we propose to ask for a vote for £34,354.

The principal items for which provision is being made this year are: Main road from Warkworth to Kawakawa; completion of roads Bay of Plenty; restoration of Mangare Bridge; completion of road Napier to Murimotu; restoration of road Lyell to Westport; bridges on road Nelson to Reefton and Greymouth; completion of road through Pelorus District and Rai Valley; continuation of road Kaikoura to Clarence; improvements in road Christchurch to Hokitika; and bridge over the Clutha at Cromwell.

GRANTS IN AID,

Including Roads under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act; Subsidies to local bodies under Finance and Powers Act; and Provision for work for unemployed.

Roads under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act.—Under the general heading of Grants in Aid, and the subheading of Roads under the Roads and Bridges Construction Act, we voted last year the sum of £10,520, with probable credits to accrue £3,000, making the net vote £7,520; and, as against this, we expended in all £8,658, and received in the shape of credits £3,206, leaving net expenditure £5,452. No new grants have, of course, been made for a long time past, so that the liability of £3,104, existing at end of March last, is the only claim which we have to meet.