

ROADS, ETC.

ROADS AND OTHER WORKS UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE MINISTER OF LANDS.

The total amount authorised for the construction and maintenance of roads, bridges, and other works for the past year was £646,272, and the sum voted for expenditure £337,643. The net expenditure amounted to £335,347, with which sum 409 miles of engineering survey was made; 471 miles of dray-road, 206 miles of bridle-track, and 127 bridges, of a total length of 12,808 ft., were constructed; 785 miles of dray-road and 80 miles of bridle-road were improved; and 2,535 miles of dray-road and 1,047 miles of bridle-road were maintained. It will be seen from the above figures that the Department expended within £2,296 of the amount voted; but, as this small balance was more than covered by accounts in course of liquidation, the vote was practically exhausted, and if works had not been reduced in December and January last it would have been largely exceeded.

The total amount authorised and voted under the Government Loans to Local Bodies Account was £46,577, and the net expenditure was £31,978, for which 170 miles of engineering survey was made, and 42 miles of dray-road, 61 miles of bridle-road, and 5 bridges, of a length of 201 ft., were constructed. There were also 63 miles of dray-road and 203 miles of bridle-road improved or maintained. It will be seen that the balance unspent on this vote was £14,599; but the moneys under it cannot be expended until they have first been raised under the Government Loans to Local Bodies Act, and it is not possible to do this until the lands have been set apart for settlement and other formalities observed.

Taking these two accounts together, there was expended £62,611 more than in the previous year. The greatest expenditure was in the Auckland district, amounting to £97,920. Wellington district came next with £94,939; then Hawke's Bay, £39,357; Taranaki, £35,785; Southland, £27,196; Otago, £22,878; Marlborough, £17,474; Westland, £14,235; Nelson, £12,098; and Canterbury, £5,444.

The expenditure has mostly been upon a very large number of small scattered works, the items on the appropriations representing 2,257 different works.

The authorisations submitted for the current year (including £49,900 under Government Loans to Local Bodies Account) total to £598,612, on account of which votes are proposed as under:—

Roads, Departmental...	...	..	...	...	...	24,265
Roads, bridges, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	325,000
Tourist roads	...	...	...	...	...	10,000
Government Loans to Local Bodies Account	...	...	...	...	...	45,000
Making a total of						£404,265

Votes for £4,995 and £5,612 are also proposed for Improved Farm Settlements and Lands, Miscellaneous, under Class XXXII.

ROADS ON GOLDFIELDS, MINES DEPARTMENT.

The vote last year under this head amounted to £84,783, the expenditure being £47,573, with liabilities at the end of the year amounting to £37,864.

The sum proposed to be authorised for the current year is £120,719, on account of which a vote of £84,000 is asked for.

DEVELOPMENT OF GOLDFIELDS AND MINING.

As anticipated in the Statement of last year, the gold exported during the year 1901 exceeded that of the previous year, and was the highest for any corresponding period since 1873.

The value of gold entered for export during 1901 was £1,753,783, being an increase on the previous year of £314,181.