

VILLAGE SETTLEMENTS.

For village settlements the amount voted for expenditure last year was £26,000, and of this amount £10,770 was expended. For the current year we ask for a vote for £19,173. A detailed report on this subject will shortly be laid before the House.

ROADS ON GOLDFIELDS.

For roads on the goldfields, including subsidies to local bodies, and also direct grants for the construction of roads and tracks for the development of the mineral resources of the colony, the expenditure last year was £7,015.

For the present year, with liabilities amounting to £25,168, we ask for a vote of £30,000. The amount asked for this year in excess of the existing liabilities is for the purpose of completing roads on which large sums have been from time to time expended, but which cannot be utilised until the whole distance is constructed.

EXPENDITURE ON ROADS OF ALL CLASSES.

On account of roads of all classes, with liabilities at the end of March, 1888, amounting to £119,121, the amount voted for expenditure during the year ending March last was £186,504, and of this amount £104,632 was expended within the year. For the current year, with liabilities at the end of March last amounting to £120,858, we ask for a vote of £145,127.

WATERWORKS ON GOLDFIELDS.

Under the heading of waterworks on the goldfields the balance remaining on loan allocation is only £929, and the works have consequently come to an end. It may, therefore, be interesting to state the total expenditure on this class of works up to 31st March last, which has been £509,996. For the current year authority is asked for the balance of the allocation (£929) to cover the cost of some small additions to existing water-races, which it is anticipated will increase the sale of water.

PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS, NORTH ISLAND.

In the North Island generally.—Under the heading of purchase of Native lands in the North Island generally, as distinct from purchases out of the loan for the North Island Trunk Railway, the expenditure during the year ending the 31st March last was £5,089, and the area finally acquired during the same period was 37,000 acres.

Negotiations for further blocks of land have been pushed forward during the year, and within a few months an additional area of considerable extent will be in the hands of the Government.

The efforts of the department during the past year have been principally in the direction of completing old negotiations, and acquiring land for old advances. There is still much important and difficult work to be done in this direction.

The balance of loan allocation in Part I. of the Public Works Fund available for these purchases is only £9,396, but a sum of £20,285 is still due to the General Land Purchase Fund from the fund for the purchase of land along the North Island Trunk Railway, on account of purchases made out of the general fund within the railway area; and, assuming that arrangements will be made for further sums to be available for land purchase along the North Island Trunk Railway, and that this amount of £20,285 will consequently come in for credit, there will be available for general land purchases the sum of £29,681.

Along North Island Main Trunk Railway.—Coming now to the land purchases out of the allocation of £100,000 under the North Island Trunk Railway Loan, the amount expended last year was £3,983, and the area finally acquired during the same period was 29,900 acres. The total expenditure to the 31st March last was £98,491, thus leaving a balance available for further purchases of