

ROADS ON GOLDFIELDS (MINES DEPARTMENT)

For roads of this class a sum of £30,550 was voted last year. Only £9,795 was actually expended within the year, however, but liabilities existed at the end of the year to the amount of £20,555. In order to encourage the development of the mining industry, and to open up mineral country so as to admit of prospecting operations being systematically carried on, it is proposed to vote this year a sum of £35,755 for roads on goldfields, £20,555 of this is required to cover the liabilities existing at the beginning of the year, and the balance of £15,200 will be available for new works.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS.

The total appropriation for Public Buildings and Domains last year was £137,075, viz., £55,600, under the Consolidated Fund, and £81,475 under the Public Works Fund. The expenditure during the year amounted to £86,921—viz., £52,129 under the former fund, and £34,792 under the latter, while liabilities existed under the two funds at the end of the year to the amounts of £600 and £22,782 respectively.

The principal new works executed out of the Consolidated Fund vote were school buildings, which are carried out through the agency of the several Education Boards. The principal works constructed out of the Public Works Fund vote during the year were the new Lunatic Asylum at Porirua, the additions to the Asylum at Sunnyside, the enlargement of the Post Offices at Christchurch and Invercargill, and the completion of the Dunedin Judicial and Police Buildings.

This year a total appropriation of £103,687 is asked for—namely, £49,900, under the Consolidated Fund, and £53,787, under the Public Works Fund.

About one-half of the Consolidated Fund Vote is for school buildings, the other half being principally for ordinary repairs and maintenance. The proposed vote under the Public Works Fund is for the purpose of completing the asylum at Porirua, new hospital building at Dunedin (grant-in-aid), enlargements and improvements at the asylums at Sunnyside and Seacliff, the completion of the enlargements of the Christchurch and Invercargill Post-offices, new gaol at Dunedin, new Courthouses at Stratford, Palmerston North, and Rangiora, new Customhouse at Westport, new police-stations at Dargaville, Wellington (Mount Cook), Westport, Greymouth, Temuka, Naseby, and Waikaia, and connecting the Government Buildings at Christchurch with the drainage system.

HARBOUR DEFENCES.

Last year a vote of £7,000 was passed for works and *materiel* of war coming under the head of Harbour Defences. The expenditure out of this vote during the year amounted to £7,347, or an excess of £347.

The total expenditure out of both Consolidated and Public Works Funds on harbour defences up to the 31st March last, together with the liabilities at that date, amount to, in round numbers, £478,000, of which £239,000 represents cost of *materiel* of war from England and miscellaneous charges connected therewith, and £239,000 the cost of the works in the colony. Of this latter sum about £36,500 represents cost of land, and the balance, £202,500, the cost of forts, batteries, submarine defences, steam-launches, and all other charges.

A return giving in tabular form particulars of the total expenditure upon the harbour defences of the colony, from the first steps taken up to the present date, has been laid before Parliament.

MISCELLANEOUS CHARGES ON LOAN FUNDS

PURCHASE OF NATIVE LANDS.

A return recently presented to Parliament by command of His Excellency the Governor shows the results of the operations of the Native Land-purchase