

SESS. II.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT

BY THE HON. W. HALL-JONES, MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS.

14TH DECEMBER, 1897.

MR. SPEAKER,—

Since laying before honourable members the Public Works Statement of last year a large number of applications have been received by the Government for the execution of works which would have involved an expenditure much greater than the means at our disposal would permit.

Considering how necessary it is that facilities should be provided to assist those who are developing the natural resources of the colony, I have keenly felt my inability, owing to want of means, to meet the numerous demands that have been made.

In the matter of railway-construction, I would draw attention to the fact that the Government have had to deal with works started many years ago, and for which the present Administration is not responsible. Due consideration was given to the question as to whether these works should stop at a point where there would be little or no return for past expenditure, or whether they should be continued to a point where not only would there be a fair return from the money to be spent, but also a greater return from the money already expended. The latter course being decided upon, it became a difficult matter to allocate the moneys at our disposal so as to admit of each line being proceeded with and also to insure that a fair rate of progress should be made.

Since the 24th January, 1891, 224 miles of railways have been completed, made up as follows:—

Line.	Section.	Length.	
		Miles.	Chains.
Whangarei-Kamo Extension	Kamo-Whakapara	11	25
Kaihu Valley	Opanake-Booms	...	55
Helensville Northwards	Kanohi-Makarau	3	6
Waikato-Thames	Te Aroha-Paeroa	12	63
Thames Valley-Rotorua	Putaruru-Rotorua	31	56
North Island Main Trunk	Mokau-Poro-o-tarao	12	43
North Island Main Trunk	Rangatira-Mangaonoho	3	70
Woodville-Palmerston	Woodville-Palmerston	17	21
Wellington-Napier	Eketahuna-Woodville	26	58
Wellington-Napier	Te Aro Extension	1	15
Picton-Hurunui	Blenheim-Omaka	2	43
Westport-Ngakawau Extension	Ngakawau-Mokihinui	7	12
Greymouth-Hokitika	Greymouth-Hokitika	24	37
Otago Central	Hindon-Kokonga	51	2
Catlin's River	Glencoamaru-Owaka	11	43
Seaward Bush	Mokotua-Gorge Road	6	62
	Total	224	51