

For the current year an appropriation of £15,000 is asked for, of which again by far the larger portion is for grants for infectious-diseases hospitals and annexes for consumptives—Auckland, Waihi, Palmerston North, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Invercargill all participating.

ROADS, BRIDGES, ETC.

The particulars of the appropriations administered by the Department of Roads, and the expenditure thereunder for the year 1905-6, are shown in the following table:—

Vote.	Number of Items.	Amount voted by Parliament for Expenditure.	Net Amount of Expenditure, 1905-6.	Liabilities at 31st March, 1906.
Public Works Fund—		£	£	£
Roads, Departmental	11	18,815	18,599	153
Roads, &c.	2,089	446,038	248,480	99,246
Maintenance of main roads	10	28,000	24,745	1,174
Tourist roads, &c.	126	28,216	15,226	4,986
Unauthorised Account	16	...
Total	2,236	521,069	307,066	105,559
Land for Settlements Account	36	...	18,692	4,052
Loans to Local Bodies Account	149	35,000	38,801	6,087
Grand totals	2,421	556,069	364,559	115,698

Of the total amount provided for expenditure on works under the control of the Roads Department, therefore, the net sum expended was £364,559. If to this be added the liabilities incurred and outstanding in respect of uncompleted works at the 31st March, 1906, it will be seen that the actual value of work undertaken during the year was £480,257.

In addition to this, the Department supervised expenditure on kindred works on behalf of the Mines, the Native, the Lands and Survey, and other Departments to the amount of £11,777.

In view of the large appropriation for road-works, it was hoped that more work would have been done. That larger results were not achieved is due entirely to causes over which the officers of the Department had no control, for, notwithstanding their efforts, the extreme wetness of the spring and summer, combined with a scarcity of suitable labour just at the time when such labour was most required, greatly hampered operations. It is to be borne in mind, also, that most of the roads now being constructed are in forest country, and it is obvious that this renders construction-work more costly than in former times. Moreover, the country, as a rule, is very broken, is remote from centres of supply, and is difficult of access.

The outdoor work undertaken and completed during the year may be summarised as follows:—

Engineering surveys	633 miles.
Dray-roads constructed	538 "
Bridle-roads constructed	461 "
Bridges over 30 ft. span (162) totalling	16,083 feet.
Dray-roads improved (including metalling)	689 miles.
Bridle-roads improved	161 "
Dray-roads maintained	2,446 "
Bridle-roads maintained	1,388 "

The appropriations proposed are as under:—

Roads, Departmental	£ 18,830
Roads generally	396,807
Tourist roads	30,896
Government Loans to Local Bodies Account	50,000
Total	496,533