

the various purposes authorized by the Public Works and Immigration Acts during the current year, in addition to £100,522 13s. previously expended there was a balance in hand on 30th June of £75,684 1s. 4d. This explains the position of the Public Works Account to the end of the financial year.

It will now be my object to state what has been done to give effect to the Public Works Policy; and I will refer first to

ROADS, NORTH ISLAND.

NORTH OF AUCKLAND.

The House provided last Session for an expenditure in the district North of Auckland, to be spread over a period of four years, of £60,000. But little had heretofore been done for this district, and but little was known of its road requirements, its wants having been almost entirely supplied by means of the magnificent water communication which exists in all directions. Before entering upon a system of road works in such a district, it was requisite in the first place to decide upon a general plan of operations, the collection of the necessary information for which occupied a considerable time. The main road determined on starts from a point on the Kaipara, near the junction of the Wairoa and Mangakahia, which point will shortly be connected with Auckland by steamer to Helensville, and thence by railway to the Waitemata at Riverhead. Returning thence to the point at which the main road will leave the Kaipara waters, it will go northwards by way of the Mangakahia Valley to Kaikohe, about thirty miles, and thence to Waimate, joining the main cross road leading from the Bay of Islands to Hokianga. A considerable portion of both these lines of road is in course of construction, and will be pushed on as rapidly as circumstances will permit, and they may undoubtedly be classed as the two great roads of the Northern District.

Another line of road, to connect Port Albert with Mahurangi, is surveyed, and will be proceeded with as soon as contracts can be arranged. It is stated this road will be the means of opening a considerable extent of new country, and it is intended to extend it to Mangapai by way of Arapawa, the survey being now in progress. When completed, this road will connect the Kaipara waters with Wangarei.

Roads connecting the Victoria Valley with Mongonui, the Kawakawa with Waimate, and several other minor roads connecting inland districts with the nearest harbour, are either under survey or will shortly be surveyed, whilst in some places, as in the Victoria Valley, works are in course of construction.

Considering the very short time that has elapsed since road works in the Northern District were commenced, and that everything had to be done, the progress made has been considerable, and in a few months more very material results will be produced.

WAIKATO.

A useful piece of road has been opened, connecting Rangiaohia with Cambridge, through the Moana Tua Tua Swamp; this work has been done by the Armed Constabulary working with the Road Boards of the district. Bridges over streams on the left bank of the Waipa, on the road to Raglan, have been constructed. A ferry punt is in course of construction to ply across the Waikato at Ngaruawahia. A road to connect the Waikato with the Thames, and also a road from Waipa to Raglan, have been sanctioned, but difficulties raised have prevented their being carried out.

BAY OF PLENTY.

A very considerable extent of roads has been opened in this district, the chief work being the main road from Tauranga to Taupo, about 92 miles in length. Of this, about 71 miles are now formed and opened, and 21 in progress. Great delay in opening a portion of the road has arisen from some difficult rock-work in the Maungarewa Bush let to Native contractors not having been completed, but arrangements have now been concluded which will ensure the road at these points