

1880.

NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT,

BY THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. RICHARD OLIVER,
FRIDAY, 6TH AUGUST, 1880.

SIR,—

Following the usual course, I propose to begin by briefly reporting the operations of the Public Works Department for the seven months which have elapsed since I had a like honor last December.

I shall condense this part of my statement as much as possible, as I do not wish to weary the House with a multiplicity of details, and because it will, when printed, be accompanied by full reports from various heads of departments, by copious tables, and by maps, which I hope honorable members will find useful, as exhibiting the progress we have made in the construction of the railways already authorized.

NORTH ISLAND RAILWAYS.

Kawakawa Railway.—Beginning with railway construction in the north of this Island, the work on the Kawakawa coal line has been continued. A bridge—which is the most important work, except the terminal wharf—is in course of construction.

Whangarei-Kamo Railway.—The works let on the Kamo Contract of the Whangarei Railway have been much delayed by the contractor, and are not yet finished, although the contract time has expired.

The delay has seriously interfered with the development of the coal trade of the district; and, with a view of assisting this industry, I have sanctioned the laying of a branch to connect the main line with a shipping place in the Borough of Whangarei, the local authorities having permitted the use of the streets for that purpose.

An exploratory survey between Helensville and Whangarei has been made for the purpose of ascertaining the practicability of constructing a railway through that country.

Another survey of a similar character has been made of the district between Whangarei and Kawakawa. Reports on these routes, with explanatory maps, will be placed in the hands of honorable members.

Kaipara-Waikato Railway.—The wharf at Helensville, on the Kaipara-Waikato Railway, has been finished satisfactorily, and the station buildings are nearly completed.

The line between Newmarket Junction and Waikomiti has been finished and opened for traffic. The gap, however, between Helensville and Auckland, caused by the non-completion of the Waitakerei Contract, still remains, and the condition of the work at the summit tunnel gives no promise that it will be finished in the contract time, which ends in September next.

The workshop-site contract at Newmarket is being pushed on energetically.

The contractor for the reclamation in Auckland having failed to carry out his contract, it was taken out of his hands, and a portion of it has been relet to another contractor.