

SESS. II.—1887.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT,

BY THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. EDWIN MITCHELSON,
12TH DECEMBER, 1887.

MR. SPEAKER,—

In the Statement which I am about to make this evening I shall not attempt, in describing the various works, to go into minute details; as I find that all essential particulars, as regards the progress of the construction of the railways and other works, are more completely given in the reports of the Engineers, which have already been laid on the table of the House, than I could hope to give them in any Statement of reasonable length. In the case of the several railways which I shall have to treat upon, therefore, I shall merely endeavour to state as shortly as possible: The present condition of the various lines: The funds already available, and now proposed to be provided for them: The rate at which we propose to expend these funds: and The condition into which the several railways will probably be brought when these funds are expended.

RAILWAYS IN COURSE OF CONSTRUCTION AND PROPOSED, INCLUDING ADDITIONS TO OPENED RAILWAYS.

To commence, therefore, with the railways—as I find it has been usual to commence with that class of works—I find that the total length of railways opened on the 31st March last was: In the North Island, 632 miles; and in the South Island, 1,090 miles: total, 1,722 miles. On the 31st October last there were opened for traffic 1,734 miles, of which 632 were in the North Island, and 1,102 in the South Island. There were also at that date 176 miles of railway in course of construction, of which 87 were in the North Island and 89 in the South Island. The total expenditure on railways, including cost of provincial lines, and purchase of district railways, up to the 31st March last, was £14,082,711; and the liabilities on the 31st March were £486,376, making in all £14,569,087.

HELENSVILLE NORTHWARDS.

On the railway from Helensville Northwards a contract is in progress for the formation of 4 miles, and is expected to be finished during the present month.

Until the line is completed to Kaukapakapa, a distance of 7 miles from Helensville, it will not carry much traffic, and it is therefore proposed to complete it to that extent as soon as practicable, but it is not intended to put a terminal station at Kaukapakapa, as it can be worked as a branch from Helensville until further extended. The funds already provided, with addition of £25,000 now proposed, will complete the railway for traffic for 7 miles, up to Kaukapakapa, and will also enable the formation to be extended for a further