

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT,

BY THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS, THE HON. R. J. SEDDON,
8TH SEPTEMBER, 1891.

MR. SPEAKER,—

As my honourable colleague the Colonial Treasurer has already intimated in his Financial Statement that the Government is of opinion that borrowing in the English money-market must cease, and as announcements of intention to borrow large sums of money, together with statements of the manner of its proposed expenditure, have, as a rule, constituted the chief elements of attractiveness in former Public Works Statements, it is evident at the outset that the Statement which I have to make to the House this evening must be considerably less attractive and interesting than some of its predecessors have been. To make it pleasing I have found to be impossible, there being so much work to be done and so little money available to do it with.

With the view of making myself fully acquainted with the requirements of each district, and the works in progress therein, I have, during the brief recess since the last short session of Parliament, visited the several provinces. It is true that the time at my disposal was somewhat limited; but, as a pledge had been given that Parliament should be called together early in June, it was necessary that I should be as expeditious as possible. The result of my personal observations will be disclosed as the several works to be referred to herein are brought under review; but, before dealing with works in detail, it will perhaps be well for me to fully inform honourable members of the condition of the Public Works Fund.

PUBLIC WORKS FUND.

The state of the Public Works Fund on the 31st March last (including an asset of £62,974 due to Part I. of the fund under “The Government Loans to Local Bodies Act, 1886”) was as shown in the following table:—

Parts of Fund.			Unexpended Balances, 31st March, 1890.	Expenditure, Year ended 31st March, 1891.	Balances remaining, 31st March, 1891.	Liabilities existing, 31st March, 1891.	Net Balances available, 31st March, 1891.
			£	£	£	£	£
Part I.	...	...	239,456*	128,811	110,645	96,608	14,037
Part II.	...	...	386,985	30,878	356,107	44,903	311,204
Part III.	...	...	426,806	175,462	251,344	98,876	152,468
Totals	...	...	1,053,247	335,151	718,096	240,387	477,709

As has already been intimated in the Financial Statement, the Government proposes to devote £200,000 of the accumulated sinking funds, set free this year by our loan-conversion operations, to public-works purposes. One hundred and twelve thousand pounds of this amount it is proposed to allocate to Miscellaneous Public Works, under Part I. of the Fund (as shown on Table A appended to

* The actual balance on the 31st March, 1890, was £233,675, but during the year 1890-91 recoveries were made on account of previous years to the amount of £5,781.