

superior position under the Government of Western Australia. The Government does not intend to make any fresh appointment to this position, as it is considered that the duties of the office can very well be combined with those of the Engineer-in-Chiefship.

It is also proposed, with the view of effecting economy, to shortly amalgamate the Marine Department, so far at least as regards the construction and maintenance of lighthouses and harbour works and the inspection of machinery, with the Public Works Department.

ROADS.

The total appropriation for the construction and improvement of roads last year was £181,112, and the expenditure thereon has been £71,683, while the liabilities existing at the close of the year amounted to £79,397, as follows:—

Classes of Work.	Appropriation.	Expenditure.	Liabilities.
	£	£	£
Main roads	14,130	9,904	3,590
Miscellaneous roads and bridges	18,733	12,489	4,687
Grants-in-aid	3,146	1,586	1,213
Roads to open up Crown lands before sale	46,570	24,285	24,676
Village special settlements	31,033	4,884	16,949
Roads to give access to North Island Main Trunk Railway	40,500	5,848	18,800
Roads on goldfields	27,000	12,687	9,482
Totals	£181,112	£71,683	79,397

MAIN ROADS.

The expenditure on this class of roads has been devoted principally to maintenance purposes, although improvements of a permanent character have been made on some of them as far as the limited means at the disposal of the Government would permit.

In addition to the liability of £3,590, it is proposed to vote a sum of £11,160 for the current year, as the Government cannot at present hand over all these roads to the local bodies to maintain out of their own funds; but the time is not far distant when the whole amount required for their upkeep will have to be provided by the local authorities through whose districts they pass.

MISCELLANEOUS ROADS AND BRIDGES.

Under this heading is included the Lyell Bridge, which is now finished; also the bridge over the Clutha at Cromwell, which is being constructed by the Clutha County Council under a £1 for £1 subsidy.

Further improvements have been made to the Pelorus, Rai Valley, and other arterial roads. Details of the expenditure and liabilities on these roads will be found in the report of the Surveyor-General and in the tables attached to this Statement. A vote of £15,200 is proposed for this class of roads.

GRANTS-IN-AID.

The expenditure of £1,586 under this class was incurred wholly to provide work for the "unemployed." From January, 1889, to July, 1890, the Government was not called upon to provide relief work; but at the latter time it became necessary to start works in Canterbury and Otago, and the extension of road-works at Bealey Valley and at Catlin's River were therefore put in hand. Further works have recently been arranged for on roads near Pahiatua, in Wellington, and at Maruwhenua Pass, in Otago.

In view of the success that attended the adoption of the co-operative system on the Ngakawau Railway-works, it was decided to adopt the same system with the road-works at the Bealey. Previously the Government were paying 4s. 6d. per day to the men, and the result was that the State received but a poor return for its pittance, as no interest of course was taken in the work. Now the men—some seventy in number—are paid so much per chain for the work, and the