

1893.
NEW ZEALAND.

PUBLIC WORKS STATEMENT, 1892

EXPLANATION MADE BY THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS,
RELATIVE TO A QUESTION ASKED BY THE Hon. Mr. G. F. RICHARDSON, AS TO AN ALTERA-
TION MADE IN THE FIGURES OF THE).

“The Hon. Mr. RICHARDSON to ask the Government, (1) If the expenditure of the Public Works Fund for the financial year 1891–92, as set forth in the concluding paragraph of the Public Works Statement laid upon the Table of this House by the Hon. R. J. Seddon on the 27th day of September, 1892, was a correct statement of such expenditure; (2) Why a document purporting to be the said Public Works Statement, but which is not the document which was laid upon the Table of this House, has been included in the Appendices to the Journals of this House; (3) and if the Government can explain by whose authority such substitution has been made?

Mr. H. J. H. BLOW, Under-Secretary for Public Works, to the Hon. the MINISTER FOR
PUBLIC WORKS.

Public Works Department, Wellington, 27th June, 1893.

Mr. G. F. Richardson's Question (No. 1.) for Friday, 30th June, 1893.

THE total expenditure under the Public Works Fund during 1891–92 was £391,612, as shown in the second column of Table I. in the Appendices to the Public Works Statement, 1892, and as also shown in the General Statement of the position of the Public Works Fund on the 31st March, 1892, printed on page 2 of the Statement, except that the latter Statement includes the £100,000 paid off the floating debt; so that in that Statement the figures appear as £491,612, instead of £391,612 only.

A small sum of £111 was recovered during the year on account of a grant made to a local body in a previous year, and, if this is deducted, the expenditure of the year becomes £391,501, as shown in “Conclusion” paragraph on page 14 of the Public Works Statement, 1892, and in the last column but one of Table C attached to same Statement.

“Receipts in aid” were received during the year to the amount of £95,634, as shown in Table I. in Appendices to Statement. If this amount is deducted from the gross expenditure of £391,612 we get a net amount of £295,978, which is the figure which was originally printed in the “Conclusion” paragraph of the Statement.

It was no doubt incorrect to give this amount as the expenditure of the year; and the error was speedily noticed, and rectified the morning after the Statement was brought down, and when only a very limited number of copies had been printed; so that all the copies bound up in the Appendices, and nearly all the copies circulated through the country, were printed in the correct form.

This mistake was drawn attention to last year, when the Public Works Statement was under discussion in the House, by both Mr. Mitchelson and Mr. Richardson (*vide Hansard*, Vol. 78, pages 665 and 682), so that the present question looks like an attempt to try the department twice over for the same offence.

H. J. H. BLOW,

Under-Secretary for Public Works.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works, Wellington.

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