

In the Appendix will be found reports by the Chief Surveyors on the various works executed or in progress in their respective districts. Although the works are under their direction, acknowledgment must be made of the valuable assistance of the officers of the Public Works Department and of the local bodies.

The works which are now more urgently required in the interests of future settlement have been already reported. Unless they are put in hand soon the area under sectional survey may be curtailed, because it is simply impossible for the ordinary class of settlers to obtain a footing on land until it has been made in some degree accessible. Further, the cost of survey is greatly enhanced in bush land if pushed much in advance of the road clearings. It would be more economical, and in every way better, to have the principal road-lines opened out before entering on the sectional survey.

PUBLICATION OF MAPS.

The main effort of the department in this branch has been devoted to the production, by photo-lithography, of survey district maps to the one-inch scale. The maps of twenty-five districts have been issued, but, as the sectional surveys in many unpublished districts have been completed for some time, it is desirable that the out-turn of district maps should be at a more rapid rate than twenty-five per year. Hitherto, the one-inch scale has been confined to survey districts subdivided into sections, but, recognizing the great convenience that the publication of the topographical features of some of the survey districts would be, a beginning was made this year by the issue of four of that class of maps on the one-inch scale.

The supply of geographical, land tenure, and sale maps has been regulated by the demand.

The publication of the plans and graphic illustrations for the other departments of the public service are also undertaken by this branch; the whole being under the able direction of Mr. Barron, from whose report in the Appendix it will be seen that, for the Survey Department, 169 maps were put to the stone and 127,127 copies struck off; for the other departments, 564 plans or subjects, and 195,107 copies. The inconvenience of restricted room and restricted mechanical appliances, referred to in former reports, still continues, and cannot be remedied until a new printing office is built.

MISCELLANEOUS.

The Government, charged as it is with the settlement of a population over an extensive territory, and undertaking the conduct of so many great national services—railways, telegraph, education, defence, also the oversight of mines, hospitals, asylums, local government, and generally maintaining a close connection with the public in many other ways—is necessarily almost continually in want of some survey service which does not come within the ordinary category of Crown or Native lands: such as supervision and grading of road-works; levels for drainage; railway land surveys; exploration of railway routes; definition of boundaries of Native and other reserves; standard surveys for purposes of land transfer; back-pegging of former land purchases; surveys of foreshores, of compensation awards, of school, cemetery, and other sites; Native Land Court attendance; plans for evidence in Courts of justice; valuations of improvements on runs; descriptions of districts; reports; and other works that need not be further enumerated, but in all of which the department has been engaged during the year.

FUTURE DEPARTMENTAL OPERATIONS.

The trigonometrical and topographical surveys will be continued in the King country, in the Urewera and other districts, for the purpose of the Native Land Court, unless prevented by Native opposition, which is not likely. Extension of minor triangulation is also required in several districts of the North Island, for the control of settlement and Land Transfer surveys. In the Middle Island this class of survey will, for the current year, be chiefly confined to the Westland, Nelson, and Marlborough Districts.