

cost of which is defrayed by the "thirds" from the deferred-payment land sales, the thirds of rents of perpetual-lease lands, and "fourths" from small grazing-run rents. The total amount paid over by the department to the local bodies for the twelve months was £25,739 15s. 5d.; and before any expenditure takes place the Land Boards of the various districts have to approve the works on which the money has to be spent. The smallest land district of the ten into which the colony is divided received one-third of the total amount. The money in all cases has to be spent in forming or improving the means of communication to the lands from which the revenue is derived, and it forms a useful addition to the rates raised by local Boards.

DEPARTMENTAL.

In the month of April the following changes were made in the stations of Chief Surveyors in charge of districts: Mr. T. Humphries from Auckland to Hawke's Bay, Mr. G. Mueller from Westland to Auckland, Mr. G. W. Williams from Hawke's Bay to Southland, Mr. J. W. A. Marchant from Wellington to Canterbury, Mr. J. H. Baker from Canterbury to Wellington; Mr. J. Spence, of Southland, retired; and Mr. J. Strauchon was promoted from senior District Surveyor to be Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands at Westland. At the same time the Lands and Survey Departments were amalgamated more closely all through the colony, and the name of Department of Lands and Survey adopted for the whole, the late Under-Secretary for Lands, H. J. H. Elliott, Esq., being transferred to the Mines Department.

During the year the department lost the services of Mr. F. H. Edgecumbe, one of the best surveyors in the service. Mr. Edgecumbe died on the 16th May. Mr. J. A. Cullen, another excellent young officer, died during the year. Mr. H. Lakeman, for many years Chief Clerk of the Survey Department, retired in February last, Mr. H. Boscawen being promoted to fill his place. Under the direction of the Government a considerable reduction took place in April last, two of the staff draughtsmen and a number of the draughtsmen temporarily employed were dispensed with. One of the cadets, Mr. J. D. Thomson, passed on to the grade of assistant surveyor.

The strength of the department was on the 30th June, 55 surveyors, 6 road surveyors, 62 draughtsmen, 13 cadets, 11 clerks, 1 accountant, 1 photographer, 5 litho-printers, all on the permanent staff, besides several surveyors and draughtsmen temporarily employed.

The department and the colony suffered a most severe loss during the year in the destruction by fire of the lithographic office, a loss which it will take many years to make good, and which has thrown us seriously back in the work of the publication of maps of the colony.

Mr. Barron's report on the photolithographic and other branches of the department is appended hereto.

I have, &c.,

S. PERCY SMITH,
Surveyor-General.

The Hon. J. McKenzie, Minister of Lands.

HEAD OFFICE.

THE work in this office has increased very much during the past year, and the quantity and variety of complex subjects is very great. It has been found desirable to administer some of the road construction in the North and South Islands directly from Wellington, instead of through the Chief Surveyors as hitherto. This has entailed the preparation of plans and contracts in this office, and the letting and dealing with such contracts. The amalgamation of the Lands and Survey Departments in April last immediately increased the duties of the Head Office by the addition thereto of the whole of the administrative work of the Lands Department.

The correspondence amounted to 9,788 letters and papers received, and 5,640 despatched, or a total of 15,428, as against 13,700 last year. The increase in the work consequent upon the amalgamation mentioned is clearly shown by the fact that, whereas there were only 915 letters despatched from the 1st of April to the 30th of June last year, there were 2,974 during a corresponding period this year.

Sixty-seven Proclamations and Orders in Council were issued, taking land for roads and other public works for local bodies, and 35 warrants were issued to take land for roads under Native Land Court Act, &c.

The number of vouchers for expenditure on survey and road works amounted to 9,110, representing an expenditure of £149,275, as against 8,882 for £155,549 last year. In addition to these vouchers a great many small accounts, amounting in all to £3,500 for Crown lands services, were passed between April and June.

There were 80 agreements with local bodies for road works prepared during the year, representing grants to the extent in all of £17,782.

The publication of maps and plans of all sorts has largely increased. Of maps on 80-chain scale, 2 district maps and 3 sheets of Cook and Wairoa Counties were published, and 10 maps are awaiting completion. Twenty sale plans were published, 849 census maps were prepared, mounted and attached to 745 sub-enumerators' books; 98 descriptions of boundaries of districts, &c., were prepared, 57 schedules and 61 plans of land to be taken under Public Works Acts have been checked, 502 plans of roads to open up North Island Main Trunk Railway were traced, and specifications of works prepared, and of this number plans representing 19 miles of road were wholly prepared in this office from the Engineer's notes.

A map of the colony on a scale of 40 miles to an inch has been drawn on stone, and progress has been made with the republication of the geographical maps of Canterbury and Otago, the previous work having been completed on stone at great expense just before the fire occurred in the litho. office.