

Appended to this report are extracts from the annual reports of the Commissioners of Crown Lands, Chief Surveyors, and other officers, which give much useful information relating to their respective districts; these, with the usual tables will, it is hoped, furnish full information as to the transactions of the department for the year ending the 31st March, 1892.

During the past year the following changes have taken place in the department: On the 1st March, 1892, Mr. J. H. Baker was appointed Assistant Surveyor-General; on the 16th April, 1891, Mr. A. Barron was appointed to be Under-Secretary for Lands and Superintending Surveyor; Mr. H. Boscawen, at his own request, was removed to Auckland, Mr. W. S. Short taking his place as Chief Clerk at the Head Office on the 1st April, 1892; the department has lost through death the services of Mr. J. C. Blythe, road surveyor; the following cadets passed their examinations, and have been promoted to be Assistant Surveyors—Mr. W. J. Morpeth and Mr. D. Innes Barron. The permanent staff of the Lands and Survey Department, besides the officers mentioned, consists of 1 Commissioner of Crown Lands, 1 Chief Surveyor, 8 Commissioners of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyors, 22 District Surveyors, 35 Assistant Surveyors, 4 road surveyors, 61 draughtsmen, 7 cadets, 43 clerks, 22 Crown Lands Rangers, 2 officers in charge of hot-spring establishments, 10 photographers and lithographers, and 4 messengers: 232 officers all told, besides several officers on the temporary staff.

HEAD OFFICE.

MR. SHORT, Chief Clerk, reports that:—

During the nine months ended the 31st March, 1892, there were 10,000 letters and papers received and 8,400 letters despatched, or a total in all of 18,400; and there were 2,470 new subjects started in the record-books, which equals one-seventh of all the records in the department.

One thousand eight hundred and four Crown grants, warrants, and certificates of title were checked and issued, dealing with land to the extent of 370,017 acres. In many of these cases the titles were issued in duplicate or triplicate.

In connection with road works and bridges 55 Proclamations and Orders in Council and 24 warrants were issued; and during the year 49 Proclamations, 95 Orders in Council, and 146 warrants, relating to Crown lands or reserves for public purposes, were also issued.

DRAUGHTING BRANCH.

Mr. Flanagan, Chief Draughtsman, reports:—

Plans and specifications of 44 miles of roads and bridges were prepared for contract, lithographed, and issued. The number of plans prepared were 742. A further section of Turangarere-Tokaanu Road, 15 miles in length, is ready for contract, the plans of which were drawn in the office from field notes.

One hundred and six land-sale maps were published, viz.: of Auckland, 22; of Hawke's Bay, 7; of Taranaki, 4; of Wellington, 14; of Nelson, 5; of Marlborough, 5; of Westland, 2; of Canterbury, 8; of Otago, 21; of Southland, 18. These maps were not only distributed in the land districts immediately concerned, but also in the other districts. 62,580 copies were published. This work entails a great deal of labour, for, in addition to the plan of the lands to be disposed of, there are also shown the names of adjoining owners or lessees, and other general information which enable the locality to be identified.

Of tourist-maps, 14,000 were printed and distributed with the aid of the Railway Commissioners. The official publication of the Registrar-General contained the tourist-map. Besides the "Grand tour," two illustrated pamphlets were published and distributed, viz.: "Aorangi" (Mount Cook), and "New Zealand's Lone Lands" (Auckland Islands, &c.).

Very little progress was made with the publication of 80-chain district maps. Several are in hand and almost completed. Owing to the increased demand on the time of the draughtsmen to supply maps for local subjects, no headway is made in this necessary work. The following maps are in progress, viz.: Survey districts of Christchurch, Sumner, Leeston, Kidnapper, Carlyle, Mata, Waipiro, Heretaunga, Clive, Waimate, Mangahao, Makuri, Mangaone, Tararua, Glenomaru, Halswell, and Okura. Of large maps there are in hand: Cook County (part of), Eden County, Rotorua County, West Taupo County, and Kawhia County. Several maps, continually in demand, are out of print, amongst others Auckland (sheet 4), Taranaki, Hutt County, Otago and Southland (lower portion), and Canterbury. The stones containing these maps were destroyed in the late fire, but the work of renewal has now commenced. Of new publications, the principal one is the 40-mile map of the colony, which has been largely used. Macdonald's map is in six large sheets, and, although designed for showing tenure of Native lands, will be useful for other purposes.

For the Representation Commission there were prepared, for the consideration of the Commissioners, maps showing the distribution of population of the colony according to the census of 1891; also lithographed maps of the proposed and defined boundaries of new electoral districts, two sets of descriptions, and 204 hand-coloured maps for the Registrars and others.

Proclamation work in connection with the public works and Native land Acts has entailed the examination of 84 plans and 58 descriptions.

The work required in the describing and recording the boundaries of various districts necessitated the writing of 216 descriptions. There are Resident Magistrates' districts, Supreme Court districts, licensing districts, road districts, mining districts, education districts, factory districts, water-race districts, boroughs, ridings, &c., maps of which must be kept up to date.

The county map-work has been well kept up, in spite of the increased demand on the draughtsman's time in connection with special-settlement work, &c.

Thirty-seven sketches, &c., for the purposes of illustrating the "Grand tour," and pamphlets, were drawn and printed. A large placard advertising the Te Aroha baths was drawn by Mr. Deverell, and printed in three colours, the stonework being done by Mr. Sturtevant, and is a very creditable production.

Correctional and additions were made on 177 stones; 650 maps and tracings were mounted.