

road is constructed as a cart-road to Kawakawa, 112 miles from Stratford, and where the road joins the central trunk railway-line. From Kawakawa to the tunnel—to which place a weekly goods train runs—a fair cart-road exists. The railway-station, at north side of tunnel, is 129 miles from Stratford and 146 miles from Auckland. The country through which the road has yet to be made up to Mangaroa is all of good quality, so much so that it appears certain that it will all be settled so soon as the road is through and the Native title is extinguished. There will then be over 80 miles of continuous settlement northwards of Stratford. Northward of Mangaroa the land becomes more patchy, and settlement will consequently be more detached.

PUBLICATIONS.

The report of the Chief Draughtsman gives the extent of the map and other publications of the department. The principal work is the production of maps showing the lands for disposal by the Crown, of which 112,550 impressions of 221 maps were printed. Of geographical maps the only new one is that of Wellington, Hawke's Bay, and Taranaki, printed on the eight-mile-to-an-inch scale.

An interesting pamphlet on Tuhoe-land, written by Mr. Elsdon Best, at present employed on the road-works in the Urewera country, was published; 5,000 copies were printed, and a portion circulated to the principal public places in Australia. The illustrations are good examples of the process-work of the Lithographic Office.

A pamphlet by Mrs. Bullock describing Rotorua was also published and illustrated during the year.

A series of guides for tourists is now in the printer's hands for publication. It is intended by these pamphlets to further describe how places of interest may be visited, and to give full details of distances, time required to perform journeys, and cost. There will be a general guide for the whole colony, and local guides in greater detail for the most interesting sections, illustrated by maps and photo-process pictures of many of the best scenes.

The information has been compiled by the Chief Surveyors and other officers of the districts, or under their direction, and will therefore be correct and up to the most recent date.

The new photographic gallery is now supplied with first-rate appliances for map and photo-process work. The 30 in. by 30 in. photo-litho. plates now being worked give excellent results, the anastigmatic lens supplied by Ross last year producing splendid work.

When the printing plant is placed in the new building still better and more economical work can be done.

DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES.

The retirement during the year of Mr. J. H. Baker, Assistant Surveyor-General, and Commissioner of Crown Lands, Wellington; of Mr. J. S. Browning, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor, Nelson; and the sad death of Mr. G. W. Williams, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor at Southland, involved several changes amongst the senior officers of the department. Mr. A. Barron, Superintending Surveyor, was appointed Assistant Surveyor-General; Mr. J. W. A. Marchant, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor, Canterbury, has taken up similar duties at Wellington; Mr. T. Humphries, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor of Hawke's Bay, has been removed to Nelson; Mr. Weetman, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor of Marlborough, to Canterbury; Mr. David Barron, Commissioner and Chief Surveyor at Westland, to Southland; Mr. C. W. Adams, Chief Surveyor of Otago, has become Commissioner and Chief Surveyor at Marlborough; Mr. E. C. Gold-Smith, District Surveyor, Gisborne, has become Commissioner and Chief Surveyor of Hawke's Bay; Mr. W. G. Murray, District Surveyor, has become Commissioner and Chief Surveyor of Westland; and District Surveyor John Hay has become Chief Surveyor of Otago; whilst Mr. Llewellyn Smith, Inspector in the Wellington District, has become Inspector and District Surveyor at Gisborne.

Brief notices of the official careers of Messrs. Baker, Browning, and Williams are given in the Appendices hereto. By the retirement of the two former and the death of the latter the department lost the services of gentlemen who had been connected with the land and survey operations of the colony for over the third of a century, and who had filled their respective offices with credit to themselves and profit to the country.

In addition to the gentlemen named above, the department lost the services of Mr. C. O'Hara Smith, the Auditor of Land Revenue, who died at Sydney on the 10th September, 1896, whilst on sick-leave; Mr. C. Malfroy, who died at Rotorua on the 6th January, 1897; Mr. W. C. Wright, draughtsman in the Nelson office, who died on the 4th August, 1896; and Mr. Angus Macgregor, M.A., of the Head Office, who died on the 1st November, 1896; whilst Mr. Assistant Surveyor J. I. Philips left the service on the 30th June last.

HEAD OFFICE.

MAPS, ETC.

Mr. F. W. FLANAGAN, the Chief Draughtsman, reports:—

Although the duties of the draughtsmen are primarily the compilation and drawing of maps and plans, yet more than a moderate share of their time has been devoted to work of a miscellaneous and semi-clerical nature, which, by reason of the technical knowledge requisite for its proper performance, may be regarded as amongst the routine of the office. The miscellaneous work done during the year would not admit of delay, and frequently it has been necessary to employ nearly all of the staff in working it off. While, however, there are no arrears under this head, the progress made with the 80-chain district maps has been considerably retarded in consequence. This points to the necessity of obtaining the services of a first-class draughtsman, whose whole time will be engaged in