

through the bush in a central position so as to tap the available land below I have no doubt that, with deferred-payment advantages, at least a considerable area would be taken up. The land in this locality has hitherto been shunned by settlers, and remains in a state of nature. That some of it at least has capabilities for something better will, I think, be shown were the country to be connected with the settled district of Oteramika by means of a passable road-line. Seaward Forest itself, and probably also Longwood Forest, when the respective railways are finished, and after the land has gone through the hands of the saw-miller, will no doubt be gradually coming up for subdivisional survey preparatory to settlement. While these are now the chief localities where Crown lands in bulk are left, there are of course a good many reserves scattered through the district that will sooner or later have to be cut up and offered for sale.

JOHN SPENCE, Chief Surveyor.

HEAD OFFICE.

I have the honour to furnish the annual report of the work of the Head Office of the Survey Department, for the year which ended on the 30th June last.

The correspondence has been of the average quantity, embracing about 8,958 letters, circulars, warrants, descriptions, and such-like, received and despatched, exclusive of minutes and memoranda upon papers.

The accounts passed for payment are, in number, about 8,385, and amount to £214,323 13s. 3d., viz., for Surveys, £136,031 9s. 1d., and for Road formation, to open up the land surveyed, for sale, £78,292 4s. 2d.

The drawings and maps published during the year were—25 district maps, scale 80 chains to an inch; 1 trigonometrical plan, scale 80 chains to an inch; 23 sale plans, chiefly on a scale of 40 chains to an inch; 12 other plans for reports, &c. The time of one draughtsman during the first half of the year was occupied in preparing descriptions and plans in connection with the Counties, Road Boards, and Licensing Acts, but latterly not much of this kind of work has been required.

One draughtsman is required to keep up the record of land sales, &c., on the county maps in this office. Five draughtsmen are now entirely engaged upon the preparation of maps for publication, chiefly 80-chain district plans and maps to illustrate parliamentary papers. One draughtsman is engaged on a geographical map of the northern part of the Middle Island, scale 4 miles equal 1 inch, and one draughtsman is engaged almost entirely in correcting and touching up lithographs and photo-lithographs.

I am glad to call your attention to the excellent drawing and writing of Messrs. Grant and Wilson; to the great improvement made by Messrs. McCardell and Taylor; and to the well-executed hill-work of Mr. Malings. Mr. Flanagan's writing is still the best, but some of his juniors are approaching very closely.

Mr. Hugh Boscawen during the year has drawn on stone and on transfer paper twenty-two pictures of New Zealand scenery, an edition of which, embracing 33 pages, is now in the press.

In the Photographic Gallery 435 plates, 15in. x 15in., have been taken during the year, 208 of which were for the Survey Department, 103 for the Public Works Department, and 124 for other departments.

There have been lithographed from the above plates, and from drawings on stone and on transfer paper, 846 separate plans or other papers, of which 530,478 impressions were printed, viz., 239,955 for the Survey Department, 61,563 for the Public Works and Railway Departments, 47,377 for the Geological Survey, 21,900 for the Mines Department, and 159,683 for other departments. This is equal to about 680 reams of demy paper, or a weight of 8 tons.

A map-mounter is now almost constantly employed in preparing plans for this and other departments, and during the year he mounted 1,345 plans, lithographs, and tracings. In the previous three years the numbers were 1,717, 1,792, and 1,370 respectively.

I submit for your notice the increasing tastefulness of the publications issued from the Survey lithographic press. Efforts are made not only to display on a map, a diagram of what is to be exhibited, but also to give pleasing and striking effects by colours and tints. It is now, indeed, unusual to have a map to illustrate a railway route, report, or statement printed in black only. I notice with pleasure the care and skill of the Master Printer, Mr. Earle, and also the excellent work done and the pains taken in proving by Mr. John Craig, Assistant Printer, whose press comes most directly under my notice. The maps issued with this report will, I think, testify the improvement and art of the publications of the lithographic press.

In the beginning of the present year I visited, by your instructions, the settlements at Martin's Bay and Jackson's Bay, and reported thereon.

In January last two officers assisted for a time with the heliotrope observations across Cook Strait, the calculations of the triangulation and the plan being executed by Mr. Grant.

A. BARRON,
Office Surveyor.