

Nine schedules and sixteen plans have been examined for the Public Works Department.

Fifty-eight schedules and 110 plans of lands taken under the Public Works Acts have been examined and recorded.

Seventeen plans of towns for which Governor's approval is necessary have been examined.

Six schedules of Local Bills have been revised for Local Bills Committee of the House of Representatives.

Twenty-seven wash-drawings of landscape scenery have been made.

For tinting, etching, sets-off, corrections, touching up, &c., 360 lithographic stones have been worked on.

The out-turn of the lithographic machines and presses amounted to 1,098,503 impressions. The complete copies printed were 716,944, showing an increase of 16,541 on last year's return. Of these, the hand-presses contributed 52,241 copies. 1,012 subjects were taken in hand. Forty-six plate transfers were pulled. The two litho-machines have been constantly running under conditions as regards housing in every respect unfavourable to their due preservation. Had not precautions been taken to prevent the wear-and-tear from exceeding safe limits, numerous stoppages would have occurred. To enable the office to meet the increasing work, and to relieve the large and small machines, it will be advantageous to obtain a new machine capable of bedding a stone 26 in. by 36 in.

The photographic gallery, which has been specially built, was completed and handed over to the department on the 19th October, 1896. With the greatly-improved accommodation, suitable fittings, &c., Mr. Ross has kept pace with his work, the new arrangements enabling two cameras to be used simultaneously. As was anticipated, improved results in the quality of the work and greater economy in its production have followed the introduction of the double-anastigmat wide-angle lens, which has been applied successfully to the reproduction of the geographical map of Wellington, Hawke's Bay, and Taranaki on one 30 in. by 30 in. plate. Mr. Ross took a splendid negative, which he transferred to stone, the proof showing sharpness, and no distortion at the extremities. The number of wash-drawings and photographs reproduced shows how popular the "process" work has become. The demands from other departments have greatly increased in this respect. In many instances the photographs which have to be operated upon are such as to make failure inevitable. Sunlight pictures, which throw dense shadows, render reticulation almost impossible, even though the coarsest screen be employed. 71,750 process pictures have been printed.

Attention has been given to the photo-trichromatic or three-colour work, and its adaptability to lithography. By this process all of the colours and tints of an original painting or drawing are said to be produced in three printings. The difficulty of obtaining pure colour-filters and inks of the proper relative strengths and transparency has not yet been overcome. Eventually this process will lend itself more to lithographic than to letterpress printing, as there is greater certainty in registering colours accurately from stone.

LITHOGRAPHIC PRINTING and PHOTOGRAPHING from 1st April, 1896, to 31st March, 1897.

Department.	Number of Separate Printings.	Printing.		Photographing.	
		Number of Impressions taken		Number of Plates.	Silver Prints.
		By Machine.	By Hand.		
Lands and Survey	1,139	639,285	43,233	614	70
Public Works	87	28,395	4,061	38	..
Mines	36	72,950	68	83	..
Marine	19	2,050	1,150	3	16
Agricultural and Stock	22	28,500	34	12	..
Railways	32	147,000	89	88	..
Native Land Purchase	2	..	1,950	..	..
Government Insurance	15	20,400	1,003	1	..
Registrar-General's	11	40,500	10	10	..
Premier's	4	2,400	480	..	..
General Assembly Library	1	..	2,500	..	..
Postal and Telegraph	18	13,340	470	29	..
Education	2	6,420	..	..	..
Government Printer	1	520	..	3	..
Public Trust	9	3,600	..	7	..
Agent-General	5	35,300	..	..	..
Treasury	1	2,795	..	..	..
Totals	1,404	1,043,455	55,048	888	86