

1943.

NEW ZEALAND.

DEPARTMENT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS

(ANNUAL REPORT OF THE) FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1943.

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

Department of Internal Affairs, Wellington, 17th May, 1943.

SIR,—

I have the honour to submit herewith the annual report of the Department for the year ended 31st March, 1943.

I have, &c.,
J. W. HEENAN,
Under-Secretary.

The Hon. W. E. Parry,
Minister of Internal Affairs.

REPORT.

I. TASMAN TERCENTENNIAL.

THE Tercentennial of Tasman's discovery of New Zealand fell in December, 1942, and various celebrations were organized in connection therewith. A strong delegation of Netherlanders, headed by Dr. Charles van der Plas, visited New Zealand in connection with the Tercentennial and were present at all the celebrations. The first celebration to mark the 300th anniversary of Tasman's sighting New Zealand was originally planned to be held on the 12th December at Okarito, where a memorial had been previously erected by the Westland County Council to mark that part of the coast first sighted by Tasman. Owing to floods the celebrations could not be held at Okarito, but were held at Hokitika. The Netherlands delegation subsequently visited Okarito. At Tarakohe a memorial was erected to mark the spot nearest to which Tasman approached land during his visit to the New Zealand coast. This was unveiled on the 18th December. The third celebration was the dedication of the Abel Tasman National Park, a reserve of some 38,000 acres fronting Tasman Bay, which had been set aside as a permanent memorial to Abel Tasman. It was originally proposed to hold the celebration at Torrent Bay, in the heart of the National Park, but weather conditions proving unfavourable for the boat trip, the celebrations were held at Kaiteiteri, at which place His Excellency the Governor-General declared the National Park open. The Netherlands delegation also visited many of the West Coast and Nelson towns and districts and were accorded civic receptions in a number of places.

II. HISTORICAL BRANCH.

The main work of research on which the staff is now engaged is the Centennial Historical Atlas, the preparation of which is still going forward slowly, with post-war publication in view.

The Branch took charge of the typographical preparation and publication of a new edition of N. R. McKenzie's "The Gael Fares Forth." It also produced for publicity among the American forces a booklet entitled "Meet New Zealand," of which thousands of copies have been distributed locally, and which was reprinted and circulated in the United States by the New Zealand Legation.

Much work was done in connection with the monument raised at Golden Bay as part of the Tasman Tercentennial Celebrations. The branch also supervised the production of a commemorative booklet entitled "Abel Janszoon Tasman and the Discovery of New Zealand," as well as programmes for the main functions involved.

The design and production of commemorative wooden plaques for erection in new Maori meeting-houses at Rotorua has also been part of the Branch's work, with a programme of the ceremonies.

Pompallier House, at Russell, Bay of Islands, the residence of the first Catholic Bishop of New Zealand, and headquarters of his missionary work, was inspected and its purchase by the Government recommended as a historical monument.

The Branch has co-operated with the Archives Branch of Army Headquarters in the production of the Second New Zealand Expeditionary Force surveys.

A good deal of work has been done in taking photographs of important aspects of the New Zealand war effort, both in industry and in the forces. Copies of these have been released for publicity overseas.

During the year the Branch has continued to act as a clearing-house of historical information relating to New Zealand.

Sales of the Department's Centennial publications have continued steadily. Several of the series of book surveys are now out of print. Reprintings of several of the earlier numbers of the pictorial surveys "Making New Zealand" were made to replenish stocks.