

RETIREMENT: JOHN STRAUCHON, ESQ., I.S.O.

The retirement of the head of the Department on the 31st March last calls for a special paragraph. He was born at Swinton, Berwickshire, Scotland, on the 29th March, 1848; educated at Kilmarnock Academy, Ayrshire, at Pryde's Private Academy, Normal School and School of Arts, Edinburgh; and came to New Zealand in September, 1861, where he was employed in the office of the Otago Daily Times and Witness Company for a short time, afterwards entering the Otago Provincial Engineers' Department in February, 1862, and being transferred to the Survey Department in August, 1865. He passed the Surveyors Examination in 1868, and joined the then Head Office in Dunedin as draughtsman, and later acted as Office Surveyor. In the beginning of 1870 he was sent to Martin's Bay as Draughtsman and Surveyor in charge of the Land Office, and on returning in August, 1871, was employed on miscellaneous surveys around Dunedin, and appointed District Surveyor at Maitāwhiri in November, 1871. He held that position until May, 1891, with a short break, May to December, in 1877, when he occupied the position of Acting Chief Surveyor at Nelson. In 1891 he was promoted Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands for Westland, and from 1893 to 1901 was Chief Surveyor and Commissioner of Crown Lands for Taranaki District, also being the local member of the Land Purchase Board, School Commissioners, and member of North Island Electoral Representation Commission. He was also Chairman of the Mount Egmont Reserves Board, and afterwards also of the Mount Egmont National Park Board. From 1902 to 1908 he was Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the Wellington District, and also a member of the Land Purchase Board, Scenery Board, School Commissioners, and the Surveyors Board. In 1908 and 1909 he was Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor for the Auckland District, and from 1909 to 1912 Surveyor-General, being also a member of the Land Purchase Board, Government Insurance Board, Public Trust Board, Chairman of Surveyors Board and of Scenery Preservation Board. In addition, he was a member of the Board of Examiners under the Mining Acts and under the Coal-mines Act. He was also Chairman of the Representation Commissioners, and represented the New Zealand Government at a conference of Surveyors-General in Australia in 1911. He was appointed a Companion of the Imperial Service Order in June, 1912. From 1912 to 1914 he was Under-Secretary for Crown Lands, also for Immigration (until the latter was created a separate Department in 1913), member of Board of Land Purchase Commissioners, Public Service Superannuation Board, State Advances Board, and Native Land Purchase Board. He finally retired on superannuation on the 31st March, 1914, after continuous and meritorious service of fifty-two years and two months, carrying with him the respect and esteem of the many officers with whom, from first to last, he has been associated.

DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES, PROMOTIONS, TRANSFERS, ETC.

The retirement of Mr. John Strauchon, I.S.O., from the position of Under-Secretary resulted in the following promotions, which, however, did not take effect until after the end of the year under review: Mr. James Mackenzie, Surveyor-General, to be Under-Secretary; Mr. E. H. Wilmot, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Otago, to be Surveyor-General; Mr. R. T. Sadd, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Hawke's Bay, promoted to Otago in similar capacity; Mr. W. H. Skinner, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Marlborough, promoted to Hawke's Bay District; Mr. H. G. Price, Chief Draughtsman, Christchurch, to be Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Marlborough.

Mr. M. C. Smith, Chief Draughtsman, Wellington District Office, was appointed Chief Draughtsman, Head Office; Mr. W. F. Marsh, Chief Draughtsman, Dunedin, succeeding as Chief Draughtsman, Wellington; Mr. D. M. Calder, Chief Draughtsman, Hokitika, was promoted to be Chief Draughtsman at Dunedin; Mr. R. P. Greville was appointed to be District Inspecting Surveyor at Hamilton; Mr. F. J. Harrop, Land Transfer Draughtsman, New Plymouth, owing to ill health, was transferred to Auckland Survey Office; Mr. J. R. Vaile, Land Transfer Draughtsman, Dunedin, succeeding him.

The following Survey cadets were promoted to be Assistant Surveyors: L. T. Seddon and B. C. A. McCabe, Nelson; G. Pirratt, F. W. Watson, and C. V. Blake, Auckland.

Messrs. H. T. McCardell, Chief Draughtsman, Head Office; H. J. Lewis, Land Transfer Draughtsman, Gisborne; C. E. O. Smith, Draughtsman, Auckland; J. Forrester, Crown Lands Ranger, Canterbury; and J. W. Liddell, Clerk, Head Office, retired on superannuation. Mr. A. A. S. Danby, Immigration Officer, also retired from the service.

Messrs. W. Wilson, District Surveyor, Westland, H. M. Thompson and D. Nelson, Assistant Surveyors, Southland and Nelson respectively, resigned from the service to enter into business.

It is with great regret that I have to record the death of Mr. C. St. G. Gore, Clerk, District Office, Wellington, an officer who was universally respected.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I desire to place on record my appreciation of the zealous and painstaking services rendered by the officers of this Department in both the clerical and professional divisions. The past year has been more than usually arduous, largely on account of the initiation of the recent land legislation, and it is gratifying to me to make the above acknowledgment.