

returned from the front, most of them towards the close of the year, several being still on departmental leave of absence. At the close of the year there are still absent with the Expeditionary Forces five surveyors, five field cadets, two surveyor's assistants, eighteen draughtsmen, and two draughting cadets—in all thirty-two. It is anticipated that these will all return during the next six months.

During the coming year there will be numerous retirements of officers who have reached the age-limit, and of superannuated officers who have been kept on during the war, and it will be necessary to provide for bringing the staff up to normal by appointing a considerable number of cadets, both field and draughting, and by the appointment to permanent positions of certain temporary officers who have proved themselves capable men. It will also be necessary to employ temporary men during the year. In all appointments it is desirable that where practicable preference shall be given to returned soldiers.

It has appeared to me for some time past that a reorganizing of our office staff is very desirable, and accordingly I submitted a scheme which would in my opinion secure greater economy and efficiency, and, while not depriving the field staff of their recognized right to have a chance of rising to the higher positions in the Department, would permit of draughtsmen also rising to positions of responsibility and consequent adequate remuneration. Though the scheme was approved by the Public Service Commissioner, it has not been deemed feasible that it should be brought into operation while the war conditions still prevail, but I hope that as soon as things become comparatively normal it will be given a trial.

In conclusion, I am pleased to place on record the appreciation by the various Chief Surveyors of the manner in which their officers, both permanent and temporary, have carried out their duties during the year, and I desire to convey my thanks to the whole of the Survey staff for their good work during a very trying period.

Table 1.—RETURN OF FIELD-WORK EXECUTED BY HEAD OFFICE STAFF FROM 1ST APRIL, 1918, TO 31ST MARCH, 1919.

Land District.	Standard Surveys.				Rural Standard Surveys.				Other Work.
	Completed.		In Progress.		Completed.		In Progress.		
	Miles.	Cost per Mile.	Miles.	Cost per Mile.	Miles.	Cost per Mile.	Miles.	Cost per Mile.	
Auckland	..	..	69	£ 39·48	..	..	..	£ ..	£ s. d. 169 15 5
Hawke's Bay	..	..	38	50·86	..	..	43	30	43 15 10
Otago	..	..	40	48·24	..	..	..	..	..

NOTE.—The average cost of the standard surveys is about £44 10s. per mile.