

GENERAL.

Map-publication.—The total publications under this heading were 99, and the cost of printing was £1,880.

The maps comprised survey districts on a scale of 40 chains to an inch (12); survey districts on the 80-chain scale (39); counties, 1 mile to an inch (7); towns, on a scale of 8 to 10 chains to an inch (23); territorial maps on the 4-mile scale (5); general maps (10); and miscellaneous maps (3).

Although it will be noticed the printing-costs show a slight increase over last year's figures, it must be remembered that there were a greater number of the more expensive maps published, and it is fully anticipated the sales will justify the expenditure.

The cash sales of lithos from all districts amounted to £1,450, an increase of £340, or 30 per cent., on the previous year. This increase, while satisfactory, is in a large measure due to the special town maps, for which there is, and will be, a larger public demand.

Town Subdivisional Schemes.—The town schemes approved during the year numbered 316, a falling-off of twenty-four from last year's figures. The North Auckland district contributes the bulk of these, 56 per cent. being from this district; while Canterbury (18 per cent.), Wellington (12 per cent.), and Auckland (5 per cent.) are responsible for the greater portion of the remainder.

An analysis of the figures supplied shows that 4,539 acres was subdivided into residential lots outside of boroughs and town districts. Of this area, new roads account for 346 acres; road and access reserves, 31 acres; recreation and other public reserves, 305 acres; and area of lots, 3,857 acres.

Proclamation of Roads, &c.—During the past year a number of applications for the proclamation of road-lines laid out by the Native Land Court under sections 48, 49, 50, and 52 of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1913, were considered and dealt with. The statutory notices under section 15 of the Native Land Amendment Act, 1914, were forwarded to the local authorities of the districts concerned, and in the majority of cases no objections were raised to the proclamation of the road-lines as public highways.

Under the Land for Settlements Act, 1925 (section 106), five warrants were issued closing unformed and unused roads intersecting or adjoining land acquired under the Act, in order that the areas comprised therein could be incorporated in the allotments available for disposal.

Under the Land Transfer Act, 196 warrants for the issue of certificates of title were examined and certified to in terms of section 13 of the Act. A number of applications to bring land under the Land Transfer Act were also considered and approved in pursuance of section 19 of the Act.

The Survey Bill.—A Bill to consolidate the laws relating to surveyors and surveys generally has been drafted, and will shortly be printed. Besides the consolidation of existing laws, it provides for the constitution of a Geographic Board, whose function will be to determine the naming of places within the Dominion, and of an Alignment Board to fix the true alignment of streets and frontages. Provisions dealing with town surveys are also more clearly laid down than at present, and the functions of the Survey Branch of the Department are clearly set forth.

Office Accommodation.—Accommodation for the increasing number of lithographs stocked in the Head Office is very badly needed, and with the present congested room not sufficient oversight can be done. This is bound to result in a want of efficiency and waste unless quickly remedied.

Magnetic Survey.—A repeat magnetic survey, especially of the important seaports, should receive early attention.

STAFF.

Retirements.—Mr. H. J. Lowe, Chief Surveyor, North Auckland, who was born in 1862, joined the Public Service in the year 1880, entering the office of the then Prime Minister (the late Sir John Hall) as a cadet. Desiring to follow the profession of a surveyor, he applied and was appointed to a cadetship in the Survey Department in 1882. Passing his examination as a surveyor, he soon made his mark in his chosen profession, and was recognized as a keen, painstaking officer of marked ability. He executed many important settlement surveys in the hinterland of the Wellington District, his work very often being carried out under most trying and difficult conditions. Mr. Lowe's triangulation surveys were of commendable accuracy, and to-day stand as a monument to his professional skill and an example to others. In respect to town-planning he has shown a keen interest and perception of the requirements of this important branch of the Department's activities. His far-seeing wisdom in setting apart suitable areas in town subdivisions for children's playing-grounds will be appreciated more and more as time advances. It may be said, in conclusion, that Mr. Lowe ever held the high encomiums of his staff, and by assiduous and tactful attention to his official duties he has shown marked ability and powers of discrimination.

Mr. D'Arcy Irvine joined the Department as a survey cadet at Napier in the year 1878. Passing his examination, he was appointed Government Surveyor, Napier, in 1881, and was engaged in field practice in the Hawke's Bay District for six and a half years. Resigning from the service, he journeyed to Australia, where he passed further examinations in his profession. Returning to New Zealand, he was reappointed to the permanent staff of the Department and carried out further surveys with credit and distinction. In 1917 Mr. Irvine was appointed to the office staff as draughtsman and computer, a position he held at the time of his retirement.

Mr. J. G. Wilson joined the Department, in 1903, as a survey cadet in the Napier Office. As a surveyor he carried out many surveys in the Hawke's Bay District. About fifteen years ago he was transferred to Christchurch as draughtsman and computer, a position he held at the time of his retirement. Mr. Wilson was a careful and industrious officer whose work was outstanding for meticulous care and accuracy.