

Under the Land for Settlements Act, 1925, a warrant was issued closing an unformed and unused road intersecting or adjoining land acquired under the Act, in order that the area comprised therein could be incorporated in the allotment available for disposal.

Under the Land Transfer Act, 1915, 236 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.

Desiderata.—(1) Further equipment is required at the Magnetic Observatory for field instruments in order that repeat observations may be made at selected stations throughout the Dominion.

(2) Three component-recording seismographs should be installed at the Magnetic Observatory in place of the old Milne instrument, which is now nearly thirty years old.

(3) Lines of precise levelling should be run to connect up the tidal stations and main centres.

(4) The importance of a gravity survey is again brought to your notice.

(5) Further accommodation for the storage of litho stocks is required, the present attic being very congested.

International Geodetic and Geophysical Union.—The Department, although a member of the union, is not yet represented on the Permanent Committee of the Section of Geodesy, but it is anticipated that this representation will be arranged shortly.

International Geographical Union.—The Department became a member of this union in July last, and it will consequently be necessary to take in hand the formation of the national committee for working in co-operation with the other members of the union.

STAFF.

Retirements.—W. T. Neill, Surveyor-General: Mr. Neill joined the Service in 1883 as a survey cadet, passing the examination of entry into his chosen profession as a surveyor five years later, his duties taking him into the roughest and most inaccessible districts of Otago, meeting with the difficult transport and living conditions which are invariably associated with the pioneers of surveying. He carried out many important surveys with meticulous care and accuracy, notably the detailed topographical survey of the country around Dunedin and the standard survey of Dunedin City. In 1918 he was appointed to the position of Chief Inspector of Surveys and Head Office computer, and two years later was appointed to the high office of Surveyor-General for the Dominion. Mr. Neill has been a keen student of surveying and kindred matters, and has kept in touch with the latest scientific methods of his work, besides contributing many highly technical papers for the benefit of the Department and the profession generally which will ever remain a monument to his profound knowledge and skill as a mathematician. It can be said, in conclusion, that by tact, courtesy, and fairness Mr. Neill endeared himself to the officers of the Department under him, and left a record that he can in his retirement look upon with pride and satisfaction.

John Stevenson, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor, Marlborough: Mr. Stevenson joined the Department in 1892 as assistant surveyor, and was appointed District Surveyor in 1908, carrying out extensive and important surveys in Canterbury, Hawke's Bay, and Wellington Districts. In 1919 Mr. Stevenson was appointed to the position of Chief Draughtsman, Hokitika, and was promoted to the Blenheim office as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Chief Surveyor in 1923. Mr. Stevenson's work as Chairman of the Revaluation Board operating in the Nelson District is fully recognized, and his work generally in the Department has been of a high order of efficiency and loyalty.

R. R. Percival: Mr. Percival joined the Service in 1899 as a draughtsman in the Wellington District Office, and in 1917 was appointed to the position of draughtsman in charge of Native-land surveys, but owing to private reasons had to decline the appointment. Mr. Percival's duties as computing draughtsman and as secretary to the South Island Representative Commissioner were characterized by the capable and efficient manner in which they were at all times carried out.

Resignations.—Mr. J. Fletcher, surveyor, resigned to take up a position as surveyor in New Guinea, and Messrs. Armstrong, Welch, Tait, and Lowe, draughtsmen, left the Service for positions in Western Australia. Other draughtsmen who left during the year to take up other work were Messrs. Harkness, O'Brien, Stevens, Wilkins, and Mrs. Bramley.

Appreciation.—In conclusion, I wish to bring under your notice the appreciation of the various Chief Surveyors of the manner in which their officers have carried out their duties during the year, and I desire to convey my thanks to the whole of the technical staff, both indoors and field, for their good work.

H. E. WALSHE, Surveyor-General.

Table 1.—RETURN OF FIELD-WORK EXECUTED BY HEAD OFFICE STAFF FROM 1ST APRIL, 1928, TO 31ST MARCH, 1929.

District.	Standard Surveys.				Geodetic Triangulation.				Other Work.
	Completed.		In Progress.		Completed.		In Progress.		
	Miles.	Cost.	Miles.	Cost.	Square Miles.	Cost.	Square Miles.	Cost.	
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Auckland ..	}								
Gisborne ..									
Hawke's Bay ..		..	..	..	..	..	27,000	7,268 11 6	74 16 0
Wellington ..									
North Auckland ..	..	..	36	1,355 14 6	..	..	..	..	299 16 4
Taranaki ..	60	6,098 14 1	..	..	..	..	..	..	161 16 10
Southland ..	..	..	60	7,520 13 9	..	..	..	..	..