

As the plans of certificates of title are in duplicate, and those of Crown-grant certificates in triplicate, it will be seen that during the year, in connection with this branch of the work, 2,653 plans have been prepared. The number of deposited plans passed in connection with the Land Transfer Office was thirty-seven. These dealt with 310 original sections, which were subdivided into 1,058 allotments, embracing 78,810 acres. In addition to the checking of these plans, eighty-four ordinary Land Transfer application plans, including descriptions, were checked. In regard to maps prepared for lithography and photo-lithography, I have to report that several important maps were prepared and forwarded to Wellington to undergo the latter process. These include maps of Longwood District, Makarewa Township, subdivision of educational reserves, Waimea Plains, pastoral runs near Athol, &c. A draft map of Lindhurst District was also forwarded, and a map of Waiau District is now being prepared. Nearly all the survey districts in Southland have now been lithographed on the prescribed scale of a mile to an inch, and both the department and the public have found their publication to be of immense utility. In addition to the maps prepared for photo-lithography, we have prepared a considerable number of maps for ordinary and local lithographing. These comprise twelve original drawings; the total number of lithographs struck off being 1,750. The maps in question are of rural deferred-payment blocks, village settlements, &c.; one of their main objects being to guide the public in selection. In concluding my remarks under this head I may state that during the year the office has had exceptional work thrown upon it owing to the necessity for preparing tracings for runs about to be re-leased, duplicate diagrams on licenses for Land Office, additional maps and tracings, &c., for Property-Tax Department, Government valuers, and statistic collectors, &c.

General.—There are still a good many reserves scattered over the district, the ultimate subdivision of which will be rendered necessary by the requirements of small settlers. The various deferred-payment blocks in the vicinity of railways have now been almost entirely surveyed, and during the coming year the at present somewhat outlying blocks in the Districts of Centre Hill, Wairaki, and Takitimo will, to a considerable extent, be operated upon by the department. As mentioned in my previous reports, Longwood and Seaward Forests each comprise a large and compact mass of Crown land, the edges of which merely have been touched by surveys; and in a short time, with the progress of roads, railways, and population, the necessity will, no doubt, gradually arise to have the land cut up partly for saw-mill purposes and partly for settlement. The reconnaissance work in Fiord County, executed by Mr. John Hay, belongs to the Otago District, and was only, under your instructions, undertaken by us on account of our proximity to the country. In summarizing the results, however, I may say that, while the survey reveals some interesting and peculiar topographical features, there is little, except perhaps the belt of flattish-timbered land along the coast-line, which would give any commercial value to the country explored. The further extension of the survey northwards might be interesting from a geographical point of view; but it seems clear, from the ever-narrowing nature of the country west of Waiau and Lake Te Anau, from the high and abrupt mountain-peaks that fringe both Te Anau and the coast-line, and the short distance between, and also from the northward prospect, obtained by Mr. Hay, that the unexplored country is somewhat similar to, but evidently rougher than, that explored, and that the discovery of any extent of pastoral, much less of agricultural, land becomes almost impossible. I forward a separate report, giving a more detailed summary of Mr. Hay's explorations.

JOHN SPENCE, Chief Surveyor.

HEAD OFFICE.

DURING the year which ended on the 30th June last the business of the Survey Department has been quite equal to that of any previous year. The correspondence has taxed the diligence and capacity of Mr. Lakeman and his assistants; and the accounts, although numerous, because of the expenditure on roads to open lands for sale, have been put through expeditiously, so that no complaints of delay in their payment have been due to want of expertness in dealing with them here. The letters received and despatched amount to about 9,583, and the sum represented by the accounts passed for payment is £212,111 16s. 5d.

The tedious labour of writing or revising descriptions of counties, ridings, road districts, municipalities, and such like, and the work of preparing maps showing them, has engaged the time of two draughtsmen nearly continuously for nine months of the past year. The number of road districts, ridings, and counties exceed seven hundred, all of which had to be most carefully described and revised.

In the publication of maps the progress, although considerable, has not been very great, bearing in mind the work to be done, and its usefulness. Sixteen districts have been drawn on the 40-chain scale, and reduced and printed on the mile scale. Thirty-one sale-maps were prepared, besides additions to maps partly done in district offices: some of these being of large size, and most of them were printed in one or more colours. Twenty-nine geographical and general maps have been drawn and printed.

The map of the Middle Island, on the scale of twenty-five miles to an inch, which was in hand by Mr. Spreat, was completed during the year. It has been executed in four colours, in the same style as the map of the North Island, published in 1881, and is an excellent specimen of lithographic art, quite equal to the best of the publications of the Royal Geographical Society.

Mr. Boscawen has lithographed, from photographs and sketches, some of the scenery of the Hot Lakes and of the country in the North Island, and of the Alpine scenery in the Middle Island. A book of sixteen drawings was published in 1882, and seven more are ready for printing.

The work done, and the work on hand in the litho-printing office, it will be seen by the statement annexed, is very great, considering the appliances for its performance. At the present time the machine-room is full for months in advance. No doubt the excellent printing done, and the efforts which have been made to improve the style of the publications, have created the demand for them; so