

In the lithographic office the issue is 553,391 impressions, from 1,138 stones and 621 separate drawings. The Survey Department contributes to this total 96,963 impressions, from 266 stones; the Public Works Department, 98,260 impressions, from 369 stones; the Geological Department, 46,902, from twenty-six stones; the Mines Department, 95,097, from 115 stones; the balance being distributed among twenty-two other departments of the service.

I regret very much that another year has passed without more room being provided for the increasing work required from the photo. and litho. offices. The science and art of photography is developing so rapidly that, unless some effort is made to, at any rate, follow in the steps of experimenters and discoverers in other countries, we shall be unable to work up to the standard of public taste—unable to comply with the reasonable demands which the Government may make on the department. With the splendid atmosphere New Zealand has for the production of sun-pictures, we ought not to be unable to take advantage of the new processes yearly being discovered in Europe and America. Silver-printing, although yet the best for the reproduction of the most delicate details of shade, is such a slow and laborious process as to be practically unfit for books or parliamentary papers. Photo-lithography is applicable to drawings in line only, and for it special drawings have to be made; but in the transfer and multiplication of this class of work it is unsurpassed. We, however, still want a process which could reproduce works of art and pictures of nature equal to wood-engravings, and with equal facility for rapid multiplication in the ordinary or in the lithographic printing-press. If time could be spared, and some further room provided, improvement might be made in the methods or processes now employed, and possibly an advance made in the direction indicated.

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