

of candidates who have passed or have had new certificates granted to them: Under section 9 (1): (a) J. R. Strachan, W. F. Robinson, T. Lilliecrona; (b) W. S. Charlsworth, J. R. Morgan, C. H. Morison; (c) J. Chisholm. Under section 21 (1): (a) W. D. Wilkins; (b) J. W. Johnston; (c) D. M. Wilson, J. H. Jennings, J. S. Browning, T. Oldfield, T. W. Kenny, G. A. Jackson.

The date mentioned in section 21 (2) of the regulations (*i.e.*, 1st March, 1898), and after which no application for a certificate or for permission to sit for examination under subsection (c) could be granted, having passed, it is now necessary for any applicant for examination to have previously served a regular indentureship or qualified at a recognised university, and had eighteen months' actual practice. Holders of an authorisation under "The Land Act, 1877," can, of course, exchange for the Board's certificate; and licensed surveyors of Australia and Tasmania can obtain a certificate after six months' practice in New Zealand, and on satisfying the Board as to their familiarity with the survey regulations.

#### ROAD CONSTRUCTION.

Under the appropriations chargeable on the Public Work Fund, the separate items under the control of the Minister of Lands numbered 1,037, representing so many different roads and bridges, &c., in various parts of the colony, a larger number of separate works than has ever appeared on the appropriations before. These items represent a sum of £297,521 appropriated for roads, bridges, land-purchase surveys, and other works, out of which £263,956 was expended. In addition, £10,868 for the Mines Department and £6,175 under the Land for Settlements Acts have been expended during the financial year, making a total expenditure on roads and bridges of £280,999. Out of the total above, £55,585 has been spent by local bodies under agreement with the Government.

The roadworks were distributed as follows:—

District.					Constructed	Widened and improved.	Maintained.	Cost.		
					Miles.	Miles.	Miles.	£	s.	d.
Auckland	...	...	...	...	223	205	1,272	70,285	0	0
Hawke's Bay	...	...	...	...	61	6	155	19,175	0	0
Taranaki	...	...	...	...	91	27	254	38,622	0	0
Wellington	...	...	...	...	165	72	686	63,146	0	0
Nelson	...	...	...	...	24	18	120	13,180	0	0
Marlborough	...	...	...	...	61	2	69	12,743	0	0
Westland	...	...	...	...	28	42	190	13,455	0	0
Canterbury	...	...	...	...	21	28	50	9,358	0	0
Otago	...	...	...	...	72	57	52	23,656	0	0
Southland	...	...	...	...	69	29	9	13,923	0	0
Totals—Dray-roads	...	...	...	...	448	383	1,875	...		
"     Bridle-roads	...	...	...	...	367	103	982	...		
Grand totals	...	...	...	...	815	486	2,857	£277,543	0	0

There are included in the above cost the engineering survey of 486 miles of new roads, and the construction of ninety-three bridges, each over 30 ft. span.

The work done for the Mines Department is also included, and consists of the maintenance of forty-eight miles of road, the construction of forty-three miles, and the erection of four bridges, costing £10,868.

The amount spent on Native surveys was £3,456.

The year's work is considerably greater than last season. In roads constructed the excess is 316 miles; in roads maintained it is 813 miles. Of bridges over 30 ft. span thirteen more were built. Engineering surveys of new roads is, however, 100 miles less than 1896–97.

The great bulk of the works conducted by the department have been on the co-operative contract system, reports on the working of which will be found in the appendix, where also will be seen extracts from the reports of the officers in charge dealing with most of the items on the appropriations, a few of the more important of which may be noticed here. The average wage earned last year was 6s. 4d. by a mean number of 1,519 men.

In Auckland, the Great North Road, extending from Auckland through the northern peninsula, has been improved and maintained for a considerable portion of its length by the department. There are parts of this road which are not yet available for wheeled traffic; the great want is that of metal, which is difficult to procure. The main road, south of Auckland, has also had some needed repairs effected, but a great deal requires to be done to make it a really good road.

The road leading from Opanake Railway Terminus to Hokianga, running through the new settlements on the plateau, is constructed throughout, a distance of thirty-one miles, and on the completion of some bridge-work and repairs to the older constructed portion will be open for wheeled traffic.

South of Auckland, the Tuakau–Raglan Road still requires some eight miles of construction, besides bridges, including one over the Waikato River, to open it for wheeled traffic, about sixteen miles having been made during the year. This road runs through the heart of fairly good country, most of which has been taken up during recent years.