

During the remainder of the year the work of the Committee has been carried on by a staff which has been built up in order to cope with gradually increasing demands. Extensive research has been undertaken in preparation for the Centennial Atlas, an editorial staff, assisted by voluntary sub-committees, is in charge of the Committee's publications, while other officers are responsible for historical propaganda and reference work. A feature of this work has been the ready co-operation extended by libraries in all parts of the Dominion, by Government Departments, and by individuals. This help is gratefully acknowledged.

The coming year, which will include the opening of the Centennial period, will see the publication of a number of surveys, and the remaining publications will be issued during the course of 1940. As the Centennial approaches, it seems probable that the Committee's work will expand in certain directions, though it is not likely to alter its character in any important respect.

II. CONSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONS.

The general election of European members of the House of Representatives was held on Saturday, 15th October, 1938, the election of Maori members having, as usual, been held on the previous day, 14th October, 1938.

As usual, the Department carried out the necessary preliminary arrangements for the issue of the Proclamation dissolving Parliament and subsequent procedure. In connection with the actual election the Clerk of the Writs (being Under-Secretary of the Department), in pursuance of statutory direction, issued the writs for the election of a member to represent each electoral district. On the return of the writs the names of the persons declared to be elected were duly gazetted.

Other work of a constitutional nature involved the preparation of the instruments in connection with the summoning and proroguing of Parliament and the appointment of Ministers of the Crown.

III. LOCAL GOVERNMENT.

A. GENERAL ORGANIZATION.

(1) *Counties.*

The Councils of the Amuri, Collingwood, Inglewood, Marlborough, Murchison, Oxford, Takaka, and Waimate West Counties passed special orders under the authority of the Counties Amendment Act, 1931, abolishing the system of separate riding finance in their respective counties. This makes a total of sixty-three County Councils to avail themselves of that legislation since it came into force, representing almost half of the counties in the Dominion. The boundaries of Southland and Wallace Counties were altered by the transfer of land from one county to another. The Selwyn County Council was authorized to maintain a monument as a war memorial. In recent years the growth of population in urban areas under the control of County Councils has resulted in considerable activity on the part of such Councils in providing essential public services for the populated areas in their counties. During the present year Orders in Council were issued conferring certain powers of Borough Councils with respect to water-supply, drainage, and sanitation on the Mackenzie, Raglan, Taieri, Waikato, and Waipa County Councils.

(2) *Boroughs.*

Following the presentation of the statutory petition, and public notification thereof, arrangements were made for the taking of a poll in regard to the constitution of Papatoetoe Town District as a borough. The poll was not in favour of the proposal, and accordingly it was not proceeded with. Alterations of the boundaries of boroughs and adjoining districts were made as follows: In one case land previously under the control of the Ashburton County Council was included in the Borough of Ashburton, and in another case land was excluded from the Feilding Borough and included in the Oroua County; certain lands reclaimed from the sea or lands in respect of which there were no electors were included in the City of Auckland and the Boroughs of Lyttleton and Whangarei respectively; a recreation-ground owned by the Newmarket Borough Council was excluded from the City of Auckland and included in the Borough of Newmarket, and certain land formerly part of the Borough of New Lynn was included in the Glen Eden Town District. Consequent on these alterations the boundaries of the local government districts affected were redefined as required by law. Authority to fix water charges according to quantity used was conferred on the Dargaville Borough Council.

The annual Municipal Conference was held at Dunedin and was attended by representatives from City and Borough Councils and Town Boards from every part of the Dominion. The Conference was opened by the Minister of Internal Affairs (Hon. W. E. Parry), and the Department, as usual, was represented throughout the whole of the proceedings. A number of remits were passed seeking amendment to various Acts relating to local government or other administrative changes, and these remits are being considered in the usual way. The Conference again had before it the decisions of the Government on all remits passed at the previous Conference, and this greatly facilitated the proceedings. Mr. T. Jordan, Mayor of Masterton, was again elected President of the Municipal Association.

(3) *Town Districts.*

The Rangataua Town District was abolished and merged in the County of Waimarino. The Raglan Town District was merged in the County of Raglan.