

REPORTS BY THE INSPECTOR OF SURVEYS.

The INSPECTOR of SURVEYS to the Hon. the NATIVE MINISTER.

Inspector of Surveys' Office,
Auckland, October, 1869.

SIR,—

As I apprehend I may have failed, during the hurried interview I had with you, to make quite clear what I conceive to be the position and requirements of the Department at the head of which I have been placed, I do myself the honor to submit to you in writing a brief note of the particulars in which it appears to me that the duties imposed upon me by the Legislature have failed to be carried out, and the remedies it seems necessary to apply.

The Act of 1867, which directed the appointment of an Inspector of Surveys, laid down as his duties "the examination of all surveys and plans made under the Native Lands Act," "testing their correctness," and "collating them in general maps and registers," &c.; and to enable these duties to be carried out, sums of money were put upon the Estimates in 1867-8, and now again in 1869, as "Advances to Native Lands Court, Survey Department."

Now, since these moneys could only be legally expended in forwarding the inspection of surveys under the Native Lands Act, and since an Inspector of Surveys was appointed to attend to these duties, I apprehend that all vouchers for their expenditure ought to have been certified by that officer. This, however, has not been done, and the consequence has been that large portions of the money have been paid away for services which do not appear to me to be fairly within the intentions of the Legislature, while the duties which it specially directed to be performed, and which are necessary for the safety of the public, have, in the Provinces of Wellington and Hawke's Bay, been very imperfectly carried out.

The uniform and invariable observance of the rule to lay down every Native land claim on a general map with the best obtainable connections with surveys in the vicinity, before issuing a certificate of title, is the sole condition of safety against trespass or overlap. In my letter of December 1867, suggesting terms for employing the Provincial Survey Department in Wellington and Hawke's Bay to carry out the local portion of the duties of the Inspector of Surveys, this was strongly insisted upon as of the first necessity, and it has invariably been done in Auckland, where the difficulties were many fold greater than anywhere else. It has been neglected in Wellington, and the consequence has been, that although the surveys there are under the management of a most capable and efficient officer, still there have been several cases in which the Provincial Surveyor has certified that claims did not trespass on granted land, which it has subsequently been found included land already granted; and instead of the public being provided with compiled maps of constantly greater completeness, the confusion and difficulty are increasing with the accumulation of unconnected maps.

I understand that the very vague and unsatisfactory arrangement formerly made with the Government at Wellington has happily come to an end, and that there is now no machinery in existence in that Province for carrying out the Act. It is clear that some means must be adopted to enable the certificates required by law to be put on the maps, or the operation of the Native Lands Court must be suspended. Now if the co-operation of the Provincial Government is to be obtained, I can scarcely add anything to the suggestions in my letter of December 1867, except that some specific arrangement must now be adopted for the compilation of the past surveys, which has been neglected; but if that co-operation is not to be had, then it will be necessary to appoint an officer there, belonging to my department, to perform the necessary duties. At Napier, also, it is indispensably necessary that a connected map of all surveys should be made.

Since the accurate triangulation of that Province is very easy, and since it is the necessary link wanting to connect the excellent triangulation made by Mr. Jackson in Wellington with my triangulation in Taupo, and so will afford the means of forming a connected map from Tauranga to Cook Strait, I strongly urge that that work should be undertaken this season, and that the compilation of the past work should be based on it.

However, if the sum placed on the Estimates for surveys in connection with the Native Lands Court is to be expended under my direction, I shall have no difficulty in laying before you a distinct scheme for carrying on the work satisfactorily, and the amount voted will be sufficient for the purpose; but I cannot be responsible for the Native Lands Court surveys if, as heretofore, large portions of the sum voted by the Legislature for their inspection are to be paid away without my knowledge for services which do not appear to me to forward the work.

I have, &c.,

THEOPH. HEALE,
Inspector of Surveys.

The Hon the Native Minister, &c., &c.