

have been most ably seconded by Mr. W. Horace Baker, an old and trained officer of this department, who under your sanction was appointed District Surveyor.

Many surveys had been exceedingly negligently performed, and Mr. Baker encountered at first considerable opposition; but this has been completely subdued, and the surveys are now being carried on with a rapidity, accuracy, and economy not surpassed in any part of New Zealand.

The work Mr. Baker has had to perform, of simultaneously carrying on the triangulation and directing and controlling the block surveys under seventeen field surveyors, has been inordinately heavy; but, as the pressure of the work is likely to be temporary only, it was undesirable to increase either the field or the office staff. So much of the district is now completed that the survey work will now, I trust, lose the character of feverish haste by which it has been marked during the past year.

5. *Wairoa, North Shore of Hawke's Bay.*

A number of surveys of very various kinds were urgently required in this district; and as a triangulation over it would connect those of Hawke's Bay and Poverty Bay, I found it necessary to send my chief assistant, Mr. S. Percy Smith, to superintend the whole. The work is now nearly completed, and in the most satisfactory manner, and the closure of the triangulations has served to verify both. It has, as might have been expected, effected a considerable reform in the geography of Hawke's Bay, the north shore of which had previously been displaced on the provincial map by about a mile and a half to the southward.

The surveys now made embrace the Nuhaka Block, purchased some years ago, and several large blocks under recent negotiation, extending back to Waikaremoana.

A large number of Native reserves had also to be laid off, and a block formerly appropriated to military settlers had to be subdivided.

6. *Province of Wellington.*

This work has been only indirectly under my supervision, my deputy at Wellington, Mr. Marchant, having immediately superintended it. It has consisted of extensive surveys of various kinds in the confiscated lands at Patea, conducted by Mr. Williams, District Surveyor; of large blocks of land for investigation before the Native Lands Court, between Whanganui and Taupo, carried on under Mr. Munro; and in the subdivision into small sections of a block of 25,000 acres at Mangaone, to the north of Masterton and Eketahuna. But the most important work has been carrying a triangulation over the Otaki district, in order to enable the numerous surveys there, which have been adjudicated on during the last few years by the Native Lands Court, to be properly collocated and mapped.

The imperative necessity of this work has been constantly urged by me, ever since the formation of this department, and has been repeatedly dwelt upon in former reports.

It was thought desirable that all the necessary survey work in the Province of Wellington should be done through the Provincial Survey Department, and the Provincial Surveyor was appointed Deputy Inspector of Surveys with that object. From the first I insisted on the absolute necessity of invariably collating every Native land claim on a district map before issuing certificate of title, and to enable this to be done a considerable sum was for several years paid to the provincial department; but it was at length found necessary to take it into our own hands, and the work has at last been fairly commenced; but a great confusion has arisen from its delay, and, now that the surveys come for the first time to be collated together, they prove to be in many cases discordant, and considerable time and labour will be required to eliminate all the discrepancies.

Several large blocks of land in the Province of Taranaki have been under negotiation for purchase, and maps of them were produced before the Native Lands Court, and the claims were adjudicated on. These maps were not made by a surveyor under the control of this department, and on their reaching this office two of them proved to be mere sketches, purporting to embrace upwards of 70,000 acres of land, but the boundaries of which had not been in any way marked on the ground, or even visited or approached within many miles, and which consequently could not be called surveys. I have not therefore included these blocks in the area of land surveyed. A surveyor has, I believe, been retained by the Land Purchase Agent through the year, but I cannot learn that he has surveyed any land: at all events, no map or field-book representing any work done by him in the year has reached this office, or that of my very efficient Deputy at New Plymouth, Mr. Humphries.

It is unnecessary for me to enter again into any detailed description of the course of triangulation pursued by me, as it has been fully explained in several publications, and as it has been admitted by the most competent authority to come fully up to the degree of accuracy claimed for it—namely, a maximum error of 1 foot in a mile. I need only remark that it now covers so large a portion of the island, and that it has proved so efficient and so economical, that the desirability and even the necessity of extending it as fast as possible over the comparatively small accessible parts which remain untouched by it, or by the equally trustworthy Wellington triangulations, cannot be doubted. The only point upon which, as far as I am aware, its conduct or results can be improved, is in the more systematic record of the connection of all detail surveys with it, and in the publication of the resulting map.

I have long been anxious to carry out these improvements; but as I was informed in October last, and several times since, that my department would be immediately removed to Wellington, it would have been manifestly improper to commence any expansion of the office work, until after that change was effected. Looking to this early removal, I have laboured to carry on the enormously increased business of the department without any alteration in the office staff or any new organization of the work, thus an expenditure during the year of upwards of £15,000 has been made by means of Imprest without having any accountant in the office; and every item in the numerous vouchers for that sum has been checked, and the great correspondence which necessarily arises out of such accounts has been conducted, by myself and the draftsman of this office, in the intervals of the innumerable questions of survey, of computations, and of checking maps and field-books, which necessarily arise out of the block survey of a million of acres and the trigonometrical survey of two millions, and which form the proper business of a Survey Department.