

thus increase the cost per acre of their surveys by a few pence, in the full knowledge that the saving and advantage to the public in after-times would be incalculable. I consider the work has been done in a professional, workmanlike, and satisfactory manner.

It will be observed that the area of contract surveys paid for by the associations under the special settlement regulations amounts to 38,406 acres, and that the Wellington-Manawatu Railway Company's land-endowment surveys amount to 25,447 acres. I inspected these surveys as well as my other duties permitted, but it was necessary to call in the aid of some of the staff officers to verify the contractor's work. The average cost of these contract surveys, without including expense of inspection and cost of extras, appears to be 2s. 0½d. per acre.

*Town Section Surveys.*—The bulk of the surveys of this class is made up of the villages of Hastwell, Rangiwhia (Pemberton Block), and Mangatainoka Bridge. The contractors referred to above also laid off and surveyed 608½ acres as township sites.

*Native Land Court Surveys.*—Mr. John Annabell executed nearly the whole of the area tabulated. The names of the blocks are Rangitatau and Raitihi. Authorised surveyors surveyed 14,943 acres. The Awarua Block, of about 300,000 acres, in Upper Rangitikei District, is now under survey.

*Native Land Purchase Surveys.*—The work done for the Land Purchase Department was the definition of the western, southern, and eastern boundaries of the Waimarino Block, before referred to. The area allotted to the surveyors specified in the return has been determined on the basis of the sums expended by each. Mr. Thorpe's portion is not given, although he has all but completed the survey of about 92,600 acres.

*Road and Railway Surveys.*—Pressure of other duties did not permit of this class of work being attended to as fully and as promptly as it should have been; nevertheless many miles of road were legalised in the Wanganui and other districts, and land plan surveys were made along the North Island Trunk and Masterton-Woodville Railway-lines.

*Office-work.*—The office-work calls for no special mention on the score of novelty—it was similar in all respects to that performed in former years; but the calls upon the staff continue to exceed the power to satisfy all demands; consequently it was impossible to overtake arrears, to compile necessary and useful maps, to have the ordinary draughting executed in an orderly and neat manner, or to give to the public information (in the form of lithographs, new maps, or fresh editions of those already published) keeping pace with the great advance of the surveys in this district. As instances of what is needed it is only necessary to point to the incomplete Crown-grant record plans, uncopied standard and compiled plans, and unpublished triangulation, topographical, and sectional surveys. Mr. Mackenzie, however, did the best he could under the circumstances.

The office staff's chief duties comprised—the examination and verification of all plans received from the field staff, contract, and private surveyors (this duty has been efficiently performed by Captain Hewitt); the reduction, copying, and recording upon compiled plans, of the verified work; the preparation of plans for photolithographing; and the furnishing of maps, schedules, and other information and data to local bodies, other departments, and the public.

The Accountant and Clerk, Mr. G. Wright, Mr. Bannister, and the cadet have been completely overtaxed with the joint work of the Survey, Crown Lands, and Native Lands Administration Offices, and it is only right to record my obligations to them, and appreciation of their ability and attention.

*Remarks.*—During the year 1886–87 it will be observed that a large staff of surveyors was employed, spread over the whole Wellington Provincial District—(1) engaged mainly in extending triangulation to define the topography and boundaries of blocks of land for the Native Land Court, so as to aid the operations of the Land Purchase Department; (2) in surveying land into suitable-sized farms and homes for the people; (3) in locating, legalising, or defining lines of communication to carry the future traffic of the country; (4) and, with the aid of the office staff, in attending to the miscellaneous requirements of public bodies, Government departments, and the public at large.

*Proposals as to Future Operations.*—It is anticipated that the Waimarino and Rangitaua Blocks will require to be subdivided, the latter for settlement, and the former for Native Land Court purposes and also for settlement.

The Maungakaretu Block, on which Mr. A. D. Wilson, Geodesical Surveyor, has made extensive surveys, will have to be further sectionised and thrown open to selectors.

West Waitapu, which has been thoroughly explored and to a great extent intersected by proposed road-lines by Mr. District Surveyor Dundas, should be cut up and offered for sale at an early date.

The Otamakapua North Block contains some extensive areas on the Upper Kiwitea and Maungawharariki Streams, which should be prepared for occupation by farmers and runholders.

The Crown lands lying between the Oroua and Pohangina Rivers are sufficiently good to warrant that they be treated in like manner.

The Puketoi country should also be cut up for sale.

The Kaiwhata-Rewa, Mikimiki, and Wangaehu (Wairarapa) Blocks should be prepared for the market.

Triangulation should also be extended over the Awarua and adjacent blocks in Upper Rangitikei.

It is well to add that proper provision should be made for roads to open up Crown lands for sale.

J. W. A. MARCHANT, Chief Surveyor.