

Gold-mining Surveys.—The area under this heading is again very small, owing to the continued depression of the mining industry, though there are not wanting signs that a revival is about to take place, owing to new discoveries of payable quartz reefs. The staff surveyed two silver-mining leases at the Great Barrier, of 30 acres, at a cost of 3s. an acre; and authorised surveyors, at schedule rates under the Mining Act, have surveyed fifteen leases, of a total area of 280 acres, at a cost of 10s. an acre.

Roads, Railways, and Water-races.—I have to chronicle a considerable increase this year, as the total surveyed is 196½ miles, at a mean cost of £13 4s. per mile. Of this mileage the staff has surveyed 153½ miles, at a mean cost of £12 4s. per mile; whilst authorised surveyors, at cost of Government, have surveyed 43 miles at a cost of £16 15s. per mile. The mean cost of the work done by the staff has been lowered owing to some fourteen miles of the work being resurvey of portion of the Kaipara railway-line, undertaken to define the actual boundaries of the line as proclaimed, which differed considerably in many places from that which had been fenced in.

Detention by Native Opposition.—A total sum of £300 10s. 6d. is set down as incurred by Native opposition to road and Native block surveys. Of this sum, £121 15s. 6d. was detention of staff officers—namely: £81 7s. 6d. by Mr. Baber when endeavouring to carry out the survey of the Haparapara Block beyond Opotiki; £30 12s. incurred by Mr. Wright for road-stoppages, owing to, in many cases, forcible detention by Maori agitators; and £9 16s. by Mr. N. F. Haszard, near Tairua; the balance of £178 15s. was the expense of detention of Mr. O. M. Creagh, engaged upon the Ruatoke survey, near Whakatane.

Other Work.—Of the sum of £1,116 1s. 5d. set down under head of "Other Work," some £524 3s. 4d. is the cost of inspection of blocks in the Upper Waipa to Mokau, which have been subdivided for Native Land Court purposes. It was necessary to keep Mr. L. Cussen at this work, as the lands were being dealt with in most cases for land-purchase purposes. There is also a sum of £257 4s. 6d. which was incurred in defining the lines of certain timber leases adjoining Crown lands in the Hauraki Mining District, it being necessary to ascertain the exact boundaries and the line of demarcation between the private and Crown forests. The balance of £334 13s. 7d. is principally for road-inspections of contracts, inspections of improvements, and miscellaneous duties.

Land Transfer.—The Land Transfer work shows a great falling-off, as during the year only 132 plans, showing 356 subdivisions, and containing a total area of 20,682 acres, have been examined and approved.

Crown Grants, Certificates of Title, and Native Titles.—The work in the Crown grants branch has been steady, and shows a total of 2,776 acres, at a total cost of £294 13s. including supervision, at a cost per plan of 2s. 1d.

General.—I have shown as completed some 145,565 acres for the past year. I have now in hand and under survey some 132,202 acres of rural lands and some 40,000 acres for which instructions are not yet issued. There are also 261,079 acres of Native Land Court and Native-land-purchase surveys returned as completed during the year past; and there are under the same heading 296,179 acres now in progress, and, in addition to the above, some 200,000 acres of Native Land Court subdivision surveys in the hands of private surveys, the cost of which are paid privately. This, with the 249 miles of roads in hands of surveyors, and quite another 100 miles engineering surveys, will keep the staff fully employed. I have still the two old provincial liabilities to work off untouched—I refer to the Parishes of Tauraroa and Waikiekie, which I hoped to have completed this year; but the resignation of Mr. C. Stevens, through ill health, will again defer this most necessary work.

GERHARD MUELLER, Chief Surveyor.

HAWKE'S BAY.

Minor Triangulation.—The 30,000 acres completed this year was done for the purpose of governing some Native Land Court surveys, and a further 50,000 acres at the East Cape is under contract, and nearly finished, with the same end in view.

Topographical Survey for Selection under "The Land Act, 1892."—None of this class of work has been completed, but two blocks, of an area of 50,000 acres, are now in course of survey—one in the Motu District, midway between Gisborne and Opotiki, and adjoining the land surveyed last year, which went off so successfully, the other in the Hikurangi district, about sixteen miles inland of Waipiro.

Rural and Suburban.—There have been 37,290 acres surveyed, at an average cost of 10d. an acre. Of this, 9,404 acres were in the Hangaroa district, and have since been taken up on settlement conditions. With the exception of eight small holdings, the balance has been the marking-off of selections of unsurveyed land on which 5d. an acre was spent last year in preliminary topographical survey and the laying-off of the road-lines, making a total cost of 1s. 3d. an acre.

Native Land Court Surveys.—There has been considerable activity in this branch of the year's work. Seventeen blocks, with an area of 16,234 acres, at the East Cape have been completed by Mr. Wheeler, staff surveyor, who has been specially set apart for this work; three blocks, of 4,983 acres, in the same locality by a contract surveyor, the cost being advanced by Government; and forty-six blocks, with an aggregate area of 102,699 acres, in different parts of the district by authorised surveyors who are paid by the owners: a grand total for the year of sixty-six blocks, comprising 123,916 acres. Besides these the surveys of 118,630 acres, in fifty blocks, are in hand, and fresh applications are coming in very fast.

Road Surveys.—There have been 33½ miles of road selected, graded, and surveyed, at an average cost of £21 10s. 9d. per mile.

Inspections.—There has not been as much inspection as could have been wished, as the time of