

The balance of the area under this heading is made up of the Townships of Wharangi, 20 acres; Torere, 105 acres; Pongaroa, 21 acres; and Ohakune, $3\frac{1}{4}$ acres.

Native Land Court Surveys.—The staff undertook but little of this class of work, but Mr. McKay defined the Awarua 3B No. 2 Block, of 2,864 acres. Nearly the whole of the balance is comprised in Messrs. Richardson and Reardon's surveys on both sides of the Wanganui River—about 35,000 acres. In addition to the above, the plans of 261,033 acres were received from private surveyors, and represented surveys of new blocks or subdivision areas defined for the purposes of the Native Land Court. The principal blocks so surveyed are Owhaoko, Oruamatua-Kaimanawa, and Nga-Waka-a-Kupe.

Roads.—The surveys scheduled were chiefly of roads in use in the Wairarapa and Rangitikei districts—the Toka-anu, Wai-o-uru, and the Waimarino-Ohakune-Wai-o-uru Roads, which it had been decided to take and legalise as public roads in terms of section 100 of "The Public Works Act, 1894."

Other Work.—The principal items in this class are: (1) Mr. L. Smith's services as Inspector and valuator; (2) Mr. J. D. Climie's standard surveys of Feilding, and the establishment of 5 chain standards at Wanganui, Marton, and Feilding; (3) Mr. Lewis's Wanganui River survey; and (4) Rangers' duties performed by staff surveyors.

Inspections.—Mr. L. Smith reports having made twenty-five inspections of the surveys of sixteen private surveyors. In some cases the work was excellent; with others, however, defective more or less seriously, and somewhat of the following nature, viz.: The work of three surveyors was bad, and carelessly done; whilst in other cases it was found that pegs had not been inserted; lines were shown as cut and pegged on the maps, but not actually done on the ground; work altered on maps but not rectified on the ground. There were cases, also, of lines badly cut, and occasional mistakes in bearings and distances, &c. The Inspector's lists and report show the necessity for continued attention to this important duty. Mr. J. D. Climie, who succeeds Mr. L. Smith, is now actually engaged checking fieldwork, and has instructions to visit all staff and private surveyors. I also visited the following surveyors, and conferred with them as to their past and future operations: Mr. Littlejohn, at Aohanga; Mr. Morice, at Mangaweka and Kawatau; Mr. Maitland, at Otaihape; Mr. Biggs, on Awarua, between the Rangitikei and Moawhango; Mr. McKay, on his Rangiwaia Block, at the head of the Turakina; and Mr. Dalziell, on his Kaitieke Block, Waimarino. I also met Messrs. Lewis and Thompson. I travelled over three thousand miles in sixty-two days in the Wellington District, principally in the back country, since I took charge last November. Captain Turner, Road Surveyor, showed me over the whole of the roads under his charge.

Land-valuation Maps.—This work consisted of the preparation of maps and section-lists upon which are to be based the valuations made under "The Valuation of Land Act, 1896," on which it was necessary to show all subdivisions of land down to the most minute, and the tenures under which they were held. The original maps of the Tax Department were sent to be revised, corrected, supplemented, and replaced where necessary, the searching of private subdivisions by officers of the District Land Registry Office being limited to the period from July, 1891, to date, in order to save expense. The work is intended to be more thorough and complete than previous revisions, and is so; but, as the errors prior to 1891 are incorporated, the result is an attempt to put a good superstructure on a defective foundation. Three extra draughtsmen have been employed solely in making enlarged tracings required by the extension of settlement and subdivision of private and Native lands; three more at the preparation of the primary index or key-maps, a work which requires knowledge of the survey system; two, and latterly three, clerks at the preparation of section-lists; and, for different periods of time, fourteen of the office staff have been employed at night-time, principally upon the key-maps.

The compilation of county and district maps is very much in arrear, but when the present pressure, due to the preparation of returns, land-valuation maps, and other work, is disposed of, and the vacancies in the office staff filled up, good headway should be made with the ordinary but very necessary current work.

Land Transfer Surveys.—The work is well up to date, except seven hundred certificates issuing on warrant, which have to be prepared by an officer specially appointed and employed by the District Land Registrar, and for which work the Survey Department is not responsible. During the year six Land Transfer survey inspections were made.

Native Land Court Surveys.—Of the 103,000 acres on hand, over 96,000 acres comprise the Native orders in Awarua Block, which it is proposed, with your approval, to allot to Messrs. Morice, Biggs, and Mountfort.

Road Surveys.—The 141 miles are chiefly roads in use in settled districts, and roads to provide access through Native to Crown lands blocks. It is proposed to allot this work to the staff surveyors, as may be found convenient.

Township Surveys.—The only area actually in hand is that of Otaihape.

There is a considerable amount of miscellaneous survey-work which also will generally have to be effected by the staff, and in some cases by contract.

Staff.—Mr. Llewellyn Smith, the Inspecting Surveyor, after serving twenty-six years in the Wellington District, was promoted to the charge of the Poverty Bay District on the 1st April, 1897. Mr. Smith has left a record in this district of his capabilities in the art of surveying, and, by his example, zeal, and devotion to duty, and kindness of character, he was most deservedly respected and highly regarded.

Proposals for 1897-98.—The current year opened with the following work on hand: 750 square miles of triangulation, about 210,000 acres settlement survey, about 103,000 acres Native Land Court survey, about 141 miles of road survey, and about 331 acres of township survey.

It is proposed that Mr. H. J. Lowe continue the triangulation of Murimutu-Taupo districts, closing on to Mr. Cussen's work, and measuring a base of verification, and that the settlement