

Wairarapa district, with a view to their being finally dedicated to the public use. Mr. J. M. Morice will now complete the sectional survey of 6,000 acres in Awarua, 4c No. 2 Block, and the definition of all the adjacent Native Land Court subdivisions, besides miscellaneous road surveys. Mr. H. I. Biggs will bring to a conclusion the whole of the North-east Awarua Native Land Court subdivisions, and the surveys of the necessary roads therein, which are well advanced.

"Thirds" and "Fourths."—There were 188 different proposals for expenditure examined during the year and laid before the Land Board for approval or otherwise. In several districts, notably Mangawhero and Akitio Road Districts and Rangitikei County, where a large extent of country has been recently settled, the roads are still in the hands of the Survey Department's engineers, under construction out of loans, and the "thirds" are in some cases handed over by the local body to these engineers for expenditure in conjunction with loan money, or are accruing in our hands until the local body takes over the works. There were also nineteen different proposals for hypothecation of "thirds" in payment of interest upon loans, or as ordinary revenue where the roads are completed.

In conclusion, I have to express my thanks to the staff, field and office, for their loyal and zealous co-operation and assistance during the busy season's work now under review.

J. W. A. MARCHANT, Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Triangulation and Topography.—None of this class of work has been completed during the year, though an extension of the triangulation at Motueka and Takaka, westward towards the coast, has been commenced, and the stations, covering 190,000 acres, have been selected and cleared, and the observations taken at some of them. In this district there are 4,400 square miles of country, representing three-sevenths of the whole area, with no triangulation, and the topography of it is necessarily of the most meagre kind, and at the same time unreliable and misleading. There is one large tract of country of 1,850 square miles in this condition, which extends sixty miles from Mokihinui to Kahurangi Point, and stretches back from the coast about thirty miles. It is the north-eastern part of this that Messrs. Sadd and Thomson are triangulating, and Mr. Snodgrass has instructions to extend the Mokihinui series to connect the settlement surveys at Little Wanganui and Karamea. A second large area of 1,400 square miles, with no triangulation or topography, extends westward from the St. Arnaud and Spencer Ranges to within ten miles of the Inangahua River, its northern limit being the Buller River Valley; but it is proposed to triangulate only some 150 square miles this year, between Reefton and Maruia, where a large number of mining claims have been lately taken up, and a good deal of prospecting is likely to be done next season. A third block is a narrow strip of 300 square miles stretching back from Ahaura Township for about forty miles, embracing the water-parting of the Grey and Ahaura Rivers and the head-waters of the former, but this is not a matter of urgency. The fourth large area of untriangulated country, 350 square miles in extent, lies to the westward of the Inangahua River, from Reefton to the Buller River, and extends towards the coast for a distance of twenty miles. There is no immediate necessity for this to be done, though, should the reefs on the Paparoa Range, which were booming last season, be found to extend further northward, a moderate extension of the triangulation in that direction would be needed. The remaining 500 square miles is in four distinct areas—three of them in the Amuri County, the other between Tophouse and the Rai Saddle, against the district boundary—but none of this is pressing work.

Settlement Surveys.—The amount of rural sectional work completed was 12,961 acres, in ninety-three sections, at an average rate of 1s. 38 an acre. The explanation of the apparently high rate of twenty-four of the sections is their having been in every instance isolated lots, which in some cases involved much extra survey, on account of the abutments being ancient unreliable work. Seventeen allotments in the Township of Clifton were surveyed, but here again old work had to be contended with, which increased the cost.

Mining Surveys.—Six claims were surveyed by staff officers and ninety-four by contract surveyors, all at the ordinary schedule rates, and there are a considerable number in course of survey at the present time. The requisite survey for several amalgamation claims was done by an officer of the staff, and twenty reapplications were reviewed, passed, and in some instances inspected on the ground. During the year there has been considerable activity in mining enterprise, more especially at the Reefton end, largely due to the new finds at Kirwan's Hill, a spur of the Victoria Range, where thirty-six claims have been granted, and at the Paparoa Range, where a still larger number have been taken up, which has made the staff at Reefton particularly busy.

Road Surveys.—A total length of thirty-two miles, the greater part of it in rough forest country, was surveyed at a cost of £11 10s. 7d. per mile, twelve miles and a half of which consisted of engineering surveys for road-construction.

Other Work.—Included in the sum of £1,404 9s. appearing in the tables is the cost of field inspection of contract surveyors' work, amounting to £535; inspection of roadworks and settlement holdings; surveys in connection with amalgamated mining claims; office-work at Reefton and Westport; and miscellaneous duties in the field.

Inspection Surveys.—A very large number of inspections have been made of private surveyors' work, and I regret to say that in the majority of cases bad work has been disclosed—in fact, it is the prevalence of utterly useless surveys, made in one particular district, that has created the necessity for so much inspection. It is, however, only fair to state that, with a few exceptions, it is not the work of the surveyors themselves, but that of chainmen and unauthorised persons employed by them, who were left to follow their own devices, without any supervision on the ground on the part of the surveyors who were responsible for its proper performance. The expense