

The cost includes seventy-six drawings of plans, cross and longitudinal sections, and the computation of quantities and preparation of specifications, &c. Of the forty-three miles which is not returned, but of which the field-work is completed, twenty-six has been surveyed by Mr. Brook, to open up a portion of the Ngapaeruru Block for settlement, and seventeen miles, by Mr. Roddick, is a portion of the Ruakituri and Gisborne-Waikaremoana Roads. District Surveyor Llewellyn Smith has during the year completed the exploration of the Ngatapa-Ruatahuna Stock-track, which he has located and cut out. It goes through some very rough forest country, where transport of provisions, &c., is difficult and expensive. Mr. Hovell has been engaged exploring for roads to give access to isolated Crown lands in Poverty Bay. Under this heading, but which do not show in the schedule of work executed, are the necessary engineering surveys in connection with the co-operative road-works. Messrs. L. Smith, J. Mouat, H. M. Smith, and T. B. Marshall have been employed on them, and considerable extra work is thrown on the office in preparing specifications, keeping accounts, forwarding half-pay to wives, &c.

Other Work.—Under this heading are included field-inspections and works of a miscellaneous nature which cannot be classed under any of the usual headings, and the cost of surveys of which the field-work is completed, but, not being mapped, cannot be returned, so its cost—£1,358 17s. 10d.—is carried forward to next year.

Field-inspections.—Owing to pressure of other work, only twelve field-inspections have been made by District Surveyors L. Smith and James Hay, Mr. Smith's generally being large blocks, one of 3,974 acres. The work generally has been fairly accurate, but in some cases faulty work was found necessitating correction.

Summary of Year's Operations.—Of the 86,760 acres of rural and suburban surveys returned for the year, the field-work of about 10,000 acres of the Ngapaeruru Block was completed by Mr. Hay last year and the cost brought forward. In the town-section surveys the field-work of Te Puia Native Township, of 503 acres, was completed by Mr. Wheeler last year, and its cost carried forward. Of the 71·5 miles of road, the field-work of twenty-six miles engineering survey of the Gisborne-Waikaremoana Road was completed by Mr. Mouat last year, and the field-work of twelve miles of the engineering survey of the Norsewood-Apiti Road by Mr. Stevenson, in both cases the cost being carried forward. Native Land Court surveys comprised 146,904 acres, and of this area the field-work of 119,000 acres of Tahora No. 2 Block was completed by Mr. Roddick last year and its cost carried forward. Surveys completed in the field but not returned owing to the plans not being finished are about forty-three miles of road surveyed by Messrs. Roddick and Brook in connection with the opening-up of Crown land for sale, while Mr. Dalziel has explored and located roads in Nuhaka No. 2 Block, and Mr. Wheeler completed the survey of four Crown awards in Native blocks in the Waiapu district, of a total area of 3,628 acres, the plans of which are in hand; and, in addition, Mr. Hovell has surveyed portion of Tautini Native Township at Tokomaru. Our officers during the year have also been employed inspecting co-operative works grading, and making any engineering surveys found necessary throughout the district.

Proposed Operations for 1899-1900.—The principal work for the coming year will be the survey for settlement of the Crown awards surveyed during this year and other Crown lands, the total being about 190,000 acres, which will require roading and subdividing for settlement. Of this area 30,000 acres are in the Waiapu district, and are under survey by District Surveyor Wheeler; 120,000 acres, portions of Tahora No. 2 Block, to be surveyed by Mr. Roddick; 20,500 acres of Nuhaka No. 2 Block, now under survey by Mr. Dalziel; and 20,000 acres, being part of Waikopiro and Ngapaeruru Blocks, now under survey by Messrs. Stevenson and Brook. There are likely also to be some large blocks acquired shortly, which will need roading and subdividing for settlement. District Surveyor Hay, I propose, should be employed on field-inspecting in the Hawke's Bay portion of the land district, as, up to the present, no systematic check has been carried out, and I think that it is necessary to appoint an officer to carry out this important work. If any large blocks are acquired and it is necessary to survey them for settlement within a reasonable time, more surveyors will have to be employed.

Office-work.—Office-work in all its branches shows a steady increase. One hundred and ninety-four plans, representing an area of 306,367 acres, have been received, duly examined, and recorded; 1,504 plans have been indorsed upon certificates of title, Court orders, leases, and Validation Court decrees; and 680 tracings made for the Land- and Income-tax Department. Good progress has been made in bringing our records up to date, 244 skeleton block-sheets having been prepared, and forty-three Land Transfer record-maps plotted, on which 534 surveys have been recorded. The Chief Draughtsman has had a large quantity of work to do in connection with co-operative contracts and accounts, but a draughtsman having been lately appointed to assist him in this work, he will now have more time to attend to his ordinary duties. To keep the ordinary work of the department up to date occupies all the time of the present office staff, and to bring up the back work we require another draughtsman, Mr. Percival, who was engaged on this work, having resigned.

ERIC C. GOLD-SMITH, Chief Surveyor.

TARANAKI.

Triangulation and Topography.—H. M. Skeet, District Surveyor, who has the completion of the major triangulation of the district in hand, has this year, when doing the topographical survey of Mount Egmont, been able to get several fresh points, further checking previous work, but the systematic continuance of this work was put off in consequence of more pressing matters. A considerable amount of subsidiary triangulation (breaking-down from the major sides) has been done by Messrs. Sladden and Laing. Mr. Skeet has taken a series of photographs around the mountain in conjunction with his topographical work, and by the aid of these several matters have been more