

the plotting of block sheets, which are necessary for the proper recording of new work, but hope in the near future to be able to bring them up to date. 551 old plans have been repaired and mounted, all our old plans being now in fair order. We have also had the usual correspondence with surveyors and others *re* surveys in operation.

Miscellaneous.—No changes have been made in the staff during the year, and nothing has occurred to call for special mention.

ERIC C. GOLD SMITH, Chief Surveyor.

TARANAKI.

Minor Triangulation.—This comprised only 16,000 acres in the Upper Tongaporutu, executed by Mr. Laing at a cost of 1.25d. per acre, mainly for the purpose of governing his settlement surveys. In terms of your instruction, triangulation and standard work has had to give place to the more pressing work of preparing new country in a rapid manner for settlement.

Rural and Suburban.—This totals into 60,393 acres, subdivided into 187 sections, at a cost of 1.629s. per acre, and but for the fact of the death of Mr. Oldfield at the beginning of the season, and also the retirement of Messrs. Sladden and Watson at practically the same time, all of them able and energetic surveyors, the output for the year would have been much greater. The settlement surveys comprised generally hilly forest country, the localities being the Ohura country, Upper Tongaporutu, Uruti, Upper Whenuakura, and Patea, and the workmen's-homes settlement near New Plymouth. The bulk of this work was of an arduous character, and the price at which it was done is, I think, reasonable; whilst I trust that you will concur that the average measure of accuracy attained was also satisfactory—viz., 0.916 links per mile on meridian and 1.168 links per mile on perpendicular.

Roads, Railways, and Water-races.—These comprise 19.718 miles surveyed in different parts of the district, at a cost of £14 17s. per mile. These are of a miscellaneous character, including road deviations, roads to give access to Crown lands, or roads to be legalised before the rights in the titles expired. The railway portion is a definition of the Stratford-Kawakawa line in the Ohura country.

Native Land Court.—Of this class of survey an area of only 3,577 acres was defined, in five subdivisions, at a cost of 0.907s. per acre, being Native orders surveyed in connection with the Crown lands surveys in the Ohura district, and call really for no special mention, beyond saying that I found it economical and convenient to have this work done when our surveyors were working on the blocks.

Other Work.—In this list will be found the numerous general class of duties all essential and necessary in their way, but of a character that cannot be included in the ordinary scheduled form of the annual return, such as repairs to trigonometrical stations, explorations in new country, reports and special inspections, making pack-tracks through Crown lands so that the selectors may see the Crown lands and afterwards get to their holdings pending permanent road-construction, subdividing sections previously surveyed, back-pegging, &c., all this incurring a total expenditure of £770 0s. 4d.

Inspections.—During the year I have visited all the staff surveyors, making in all ten inspections of staff surveyors' work, and four inspections of Land Transfer surveyors' work, and duly forwarding to you forty-eight sheets of diagrams showing the results of my checks. All the work executed was, on the whole, exceedingly satisfactory; indeed, only in the case of one private surveyor, and that of a trivial character, has there been any necessity as the result of field inspection to call upon surveyors to either amend their maps or go over their surveys again on the ground. A greater number of technical inspections would have been made but for the fact that since November my energies and that of the entire staff have been devoted to placing lands in the market from provisional surveys, which, although necessitating my visiting the surveyors and seeing that the work was proceeding on rapid and practical lines, did not require testing as to accuracy. Altogether, in connection with inspection of surveys, exploration and examination of new country to be opened, as also visiting the holdings of Crown tenants, and other matters, I have been absent from New Plymouth for 150 days during the past year.

Repairs to Trigonometrical Stations.—Special attention has been devoted to this work, and during the year fifteen permanent trigonometrical pyramids of the more useful stations in the older-settled portions of the district have been erected, and in all 124 stations have been visited, repaired, and reported on. I have started a trigonometrical register, so as to have a complete record and history of each station. The main point I have in view is that these standard points of reference are preserved intact, and will be available not only for ourselves but for those who have to follow us. A number, I regret to say, in this district have been destroyed—sometimes by being ploughed out, in other cases, I fear, through sheer wantonness. But, fortunately, a number of these have served their purpose, and standard lines have taken or will eventually take their place, and in consequence it will not be necessary to re-establish them. A number of others, however, will require replacing. This is a work that will be taken up in the winter months, or as opportunity offers, as I feel that its importance cannot be well overrated.

Field-work in Progress and proposed for Next Year.—I have still in view the completion of the major triangulation round Mount Egnont, as also standard-work in the settled districts. These I am postponing in the meantime, and it is unlikely that they will be touched during the coming year, the reason being, of course, to permit of every available surveyor being employed on settlement-work. This will comprise a total of about 210,000 acres—in the first instance, provisional or selection surveys made for urgent sale purposes; and after the land has been once put in the market the final sectional pegging will be completed. This will include large areas in the King-country, Upper Tongaporutu, and in the neighbourhood of Whangamomona. I also