

anticipate laying out perhaps 200 acres in township lots in Ohura and Mokau-iti, chiefly to meet the wants of business people erecting stores, &c., for trading in the new districts being opened. In addition to this, I estimate that something like sixty-six miles of roads will be located, partly to give access to Crown lands being dealt with, and also roads taken under Warrant and the Public Works Act, and possibly a few road-deviations. These, I anticipate, will generally be done by staff surveyors when laying out our own Crown lands. Altogether the coming season bids fair to become a brisk one from a settlement point of view, and I shall be well pleased if something approaching the work now outlined has, twelve months hence, been accomplished.

#### *Office-work.*

From the figures of the Chief Draughtsman, Mr. J. Langmuir, the following is the general statement of the year's operations:—

*Examination of Plans.*—Mr. Carrington, the officer in charge of this work, reports having checked twenty-eight plans of settlement surveys, comprising ninety-nine sections of an area of 53,250 acres; two trigonometrical plans, 28,900 acres; twenty-six plans defining  $28\frac{3}{4}$  miles of lands taken for and roads closed under the Public Works and Land Acts; thirteen plans of  $13\frac{3}{4}$  miles of railway under the Public Works Act were verified and checked, and in the case of the road final action has also been taken for legalisation; one Native plan of four sections, comprising 191 acres; and sixteen miscellaneous plans of nineteen sections, comprising 1,114 acres; making a total of eighty-six plans embracing a gross area of 54,555 acres sectional, 28,900 acres trigonometrical, and about forty-two miles of roads and railways. The traverse reduction sheets for the whole work numbered 257; the entire work was recomputed.

*Compilations, Publications, &c.*—All Crown-grant record-maps have been brought up to date. Five new road record-maps were constructed, and all others also brought up to date where transactions had occurred. Of the four Land Transfer record-maps required for the town of New Plymouth, two have been completed and one is half finished. Maps have also been started of the Towns of Hawera and Eltham, and an index-map of the suburban townships round New Plymouth was compiled. Fifteen tracings of sale-plans were prepared by Messrs. Gordon and Covil for reproduction by the photo-lithographic process; seventeen block sheets were plotted and completed, leaving 190 still to do, but in about 110 of these there is yet no sectional work. This estimate is based on the assumption of one sheet only to each block, but in many cases there may be several sheets. In every case where the block sheet had been started all current recording has been kept up on the same to date.

*Native Land Court Plans.*—One plan was dealt with, ten duplicates were prepared for the Native Land Court, five plans were indorsed on Native Land Court orders, and four nominations under the Act were prepared.

*Land Transfer Work.*—Mr. Skinner, Land Transfer Draughtsman, reports that during the year 207 Land Transfer plans, comprising 1,455 sections and subdivisions of an area of 7,184 acres 2 roods 26 perches, were checked and approved. Mr. Skinner was assisted during periods of extra pressure by Messrs. Cook and Carrington, the former during the present year having checked fifty-five and the latter four plans.

*Standard and Trigonometrical Maps.*—Owing to excess of other work no progress was made with these, but as it is possible that within a reasonable period a new base line will be measured agreeable to a common standard for the colony, it will probably be better to defer any further action as regards this class of work until such is completed.

*Reserves.*—During the year the work of compiling schedules of reserves, consisting of about 2,700 sections, preparatory to having them entered up in the reserves ledger, and also the preparation of seven county and forty-seven supplementary maps to illustrate same, has been dealt with and is now practically completed. The writing-up of the ledger from the schedules is now in hand. This has been a very laborious work, necessitating as it did the searching of all *Gazettes* and Statutes both of the Provincial and General Governments from the year 1854 to date, the examination of all record and other maps, and also a considerable amount of searching in the Land Transfer and Deeds Office to verify ownerships and clear up doubtful cases. In justice to the officers undertaking this work, I should explain that the reserves in Taranaki, particularly in the older-settled districts, were a perfect maze; there are numerous provincial and general statutes authorising their sale, exchange, subdivision, change of purpose, &c., and, no clear record having been kept, it really involved an entire search of the early history of Taranaki to bring about the result that has now been arrived at. Special maps and schedules have been prepared, and the whole will be entered in a special ledger prepared for the purpose.

*Titles.*—Mr. Cook, Crown Grant Draughtsman, reports the preparation and issue of 667 leases, licenses, and freehold titles. The arrears on the 31st March amounted to sixteen titles.

*"Thirds" and "Fourths" to Local Bodies.*—Under this heading I have to report the preparation of seven county maps, showing all leases and licenses from which "thirds" and "fourths" accrue, the state of construction of all public roads, and other information necessary in connection with the expenditure of the moneys; twenty-five proposals, amounting to £2,269 15s. 8d., for expenditure on roads and bridges, &c., were made by the local bodies, and nineteen were submitted to and approved by the Land Board during the year for a total sum of £1,087 11s. 11d. The amount of "thirds" and "fourths" to the credit of the local bodies in the Receiver-General's Deposit Account and the Receiver of Land Revenue's Deposit Account at the 31st March was £6,071 10s. 1d. Although the maps to illustrate this very important branch of our operations have been completed, a considerable amount of manuscript-work is still necessary, so as to give clear files and schedules for the different local bodies and roads. You will, I feel sure, quite appreciate that this and other matters of a like nature will take time to bring to a state of perfection.