

So much land has been thrown open for application as "unsurveyed" and selected during the past few years that, notwithstanding extra surveyors having been put on to this particular work, it has been found impossible, until lately, to keep pace with it. The very large accumulation of these selections has been reduced during the past year, but at the present time there are still outstanding 321 applications, amounting to 207,567 acres, though about two-thirds are now under survey, and a considerable number of them nearly completed.

A number of contracts were given to licensed surveyors, and it will be advisable during the coming year to continue this course to a greater extent, so that selectors may be early put in possession.

Of town-section surveys, there have been about 2,000 acres in different districts subdivided into 1,530 sections. The greater part—some 1,560 acres in 864 sections—was the survey of the new Townships of Rangitaua, Ohakune, and Horopito Extension, on the Main North Trunk line, between Karioi and the Waimarino Plains.

#### NATIVE SURVEYS.

A total area of 220,061 acres has been surveyed into 570 blocks or subdivisions, the whole of which, with the exception of two blocks of 4,638 acres surveyed for the Maori Land Board, was Native Land Court survey. There is also in the hands of staff, in progress, an area of 98,189 acres of Native Land Court surveys, 102,028 acres for Maori Land Boards, 24,507 acres for the Native Land Commission, and 20,000 acres for landless Natives in Southland: a grand total of 224,724 acres.

Two hundred and four authorities, covering an area of 144,767 acres, have been issued to licensed surveyors during the year.

The Maori Land Boards have made considerable requisitions for surveys and reports, principally in the Auckland and Wellington Districts, the surveys of which are well forward, and the land will before long be ready for disposal. Full details will be found in the accompanying reports of the Chief Surveyors.

#### GOLD-MINING SURVEYS.

The claims surveyed number eighty, distributed as follows: Otago, 44; Auckland, 20; Nelson, 6; Westland, 6; and Southland, 4.

#### ROADS AND WATER-RACES.

The survey of 317½ miles are returned under this heading as completed; as a matter of fact, with the exception of six miles of water-race, it represents roads.

The experience of the Roads Department in connection with its expenditure of grants is that numberless roads in use have not been legalised, and, to secure the titles to these in cases where Government grants are to be expended, it is found necessary to have surveys made. This is specially noticeable in the Sounds County, where scores of miles of formed tracks were made through holdings to give settlers access, which is one of the reasons for so much road survey. A surveyor has been specially engaged on this work in the Sounds, and twenty-eight miles have been traversed this year, to enable steps to be taken to legalise them, and a great deal more remains to be done.

#### INSPECTION OF SURVEYS.

Seventy-six field checks have been made of different surveyors' work, principally of licensed surveyors, and it is very pleasing to have to report that, with one or two exceptions, the surveys have been found faithfully and excellently performed, and both staff and unofficial members of the profession are to be complimented on the high standard of proficiency maintained. Closures of less than 2 links to a mile are usually attained, notwithstanding that much of the work is in rough forest country, and, with the exceptions already mentioned, a discrepancy of 4 links to a mile is an extremely rare occurrence. The instrumental work was found to be equally good.

As might be expected in so large a number of surveyors engaged, there are one or two whose work is not what it should be, but an endeavour is made to compel them to come into line and modernise their old methods and practices. The suspension of one license by the Surveyors' Board during the year will doubtless assist to bring this about.