

Maruia North Block. Mr. Fairhall, temporary surveyor, has returned plans of 12,497 acres, the greater portion of which is in the Matiri Block, and was nearly completed at the end of last year; he has also completed the provisional surveys of the Braeburn Settlement and Mangles-Blackwater Block. Mr. Fairhall was granted the services of Mr. Moynihan as an assistant in January, to undertake the provisional survey of the Maruia-Matakitaki Block; this is nearly completed: Mr. Fairhall has to complete the side-pegging of roads and starting of frontage-lines to Braeburn Settlement, and also has the survey of an area of 6,500 acres rural selections and provisional surveys of 12,700 acres in Maruia and Matiri districts to execute. Mr. J. H. Buttress, authorised assistant, will complete an area of 4,390 acres in the Maruia North Block by the end of June, and will then be engaged on rural selections in the Mid Maruia Block. There are 81 applications now in the hands of staff surveyors, containing a total area of 37,239 acres; of this area, 29,555 acres are unsurveyed, the balance being completed or nearly completed in field and partly mapped. The number of unallocated applications is 105, containing 61,162 acres; and in addition to this there are 19 applications, of 13,940 acres, in the Big Bush Block let by contract to Mr. Ledger. Total area of 205 applications, 112,341 acres. In addition, the following areas have been provisionally surveyed, and will be opened for selection during the coming year: Braeburn Settlement, 18,063 acres; Mangles-Blackwater, 8,458 acres; Matakitaki, 6,500; Nuggety Creek, 6,000; Upper Aorere, 3,475; Wangamoa, 12,580 acres; and Dart Block, 7,931 acres: total, 63,007 acres. To control and check the survey of these blocks it will be necessary to break down from the present minor triangulation and extend a series of smaller triangles over the above areas. The present staff of surveyors is quite inadequate to cope with the above surveys, and at least two more active efficient surveyors are urgently required in this district.

Land Transfer Office.—Mr. Curtis, Land Transfer Draughtsman, reports that 86 survey plans have been examined and passed, 177 deeds passed, and 485 diagrams placed on 241 certificates of title in duplicate.

Lands and Survey Department.—Mr. Curtis reports that 323 tracings were made (chiefly for the Valuation Department), 80 reports furnished, and 56 certificates of title in lieu of Crown grants (in triplicate) examined and issued, 7 survey plans examined, and 95 leases, &c., examined for warrants. There are 42 certificates of title in lieu of Crown grants to issue in triplicate in arrear. The cadet assisting Mr. Curtis left during the year, and another is urgently required in his place.

Office-work (Draughting Branch).—During the year 61 plans were examined, containing 46,025 acres in 160 sections; 2 plans of township surveys, 5 gold-mining surveys, and 27 plans of road and railway: total, 95 plans. Traverse sheets checked, 305. Diagrams were placed on 46 Crown titles in quadruplicate, 24 in triplicate, 65 in duplicate, and 4 singly; and on 56 certificates of title in lieu of Crown grants in triplicate, totalling 558. There are in arrear 46 Crown titles in quadruplicate, 23 in triplicate, and 12 in duplicate. There were 7 plans drawn during the year for photo-lithography of blocks of land available for settlement, as well as those for re-Proclamation for disposal on renewable lease under "The Land Laws Amendment Act, 1907." The office-work included the usual tracings for surveyors for settlers and other departments, and 2,300 sale posters were sent out of blocks of land opened for selection. Owing to the large areas of land opened in this district during the last year, nearly the whole time of the staff was taken up with current work, so that tracings for photo-lithography of county maps, new selection maps, and other very necessary work had to remain in abeyance; also, the register of all the plans in the safe is not yet completed, as a great deal of the time of the officer in charge of that work was taken up in looking up and attending to plans required by the draughtsmen, repairing, backing and cutting old plans to size of drawers, backing old Crown grants, and getting ready for re-binding. The cost of making the register is saved in the much less time now taken in finding plans.

ROBERT T. SADD,
For Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Minor Triangulation.—There has been no work done under this heading during the year. Only about 140,000 acres are required to complete the whole land district, and as this is generally along the north boundary, where the land is poor and scarcely suitable for settlement, there is no immediate hurry for the work, and it can well wait until a more convenient time.

Standard Surveys and Inspections.—About 3 miles of this class of work has been done by Mr. District Surveyor Gillies in the Town of Picton, and about 10 miles more of this work will be required during the current year, to enable us to have some proper means of checking subdivisional surveys, &c., for the purpose of the Land Transfer Act. The old surveys in Picton are generally very faulty; in many cases neither true bearings nor distances are given on the old plans. Under such conditions it is not surprising to find that there is considerable confusion and uncertainty as to the absolute extent and position of a property. I may remark that although only 3 miles of standard survey have been returned as completed, much more might properly be included under this heading—work done in extension of the standard marks in the Town of Blenheim and vicinity, to cover recent subdivisions; and also 1.64 miles in the Township of Renwick, to control some Land Transfer surveys there. These extensions have been done by Mr. Greenfield and myself, and, although partly charged against field inspection, is really standard extension. It has been found that when a private surveyor has been employed to cut up a section or sections within or adjacent to the towns, in parts not covered by the standard work, or where these marks are unreliable, instead of requiring the surveyor to lay down standard marks upon which to base his work, it is