

NATIVE SURVEYS.

Of Native Land Court surveys completed during the year, 37,456 acres were executed by staff officers and 121,439 acres by licensed surveyors under arrangements with the Native owners. The gross total for the four land districts in the North Island where the surveys were executed was 158,895 acres, of which the Auckland District contributed two-thirds.

Other surveys of Native lands were made by the staff to the extent of 49,193 acres at the request of the Maori Land Boards, to which also reference has been made under heading of "Settlement Surveys."

The survey of Native land now in progress for Land Court orders, Maori Land Boards, and Native Land Commissions, amounts to 210,000 acres, including 24,900 acres for landless Natives in the Southland District.

GOLD-MINING SURVEYS.

Only 73 fresh claims were surveyed, less in number than last year, but the area is somewhat larger. They were distributed among the districts as follow: Auckland, 35; Nelson, 12; Otago, 22; and Southland, 4.

INSPECTION OF SURVEYS.

There are three regular Inspectors in the two districts where the most surveyors—official and private—are engaged; in the other districts this duty is performed by the Chief Surveyors or one or other of the District Surveyors in conjunction with their other regular duties.

Ninety-five independent field checks have been made on various surveyors' work, chiefly those in private practice under the Land Transfer Act. In the very great majority of cases the work has been found to be of the usual high standard, and most creditable to the profession as a whole; but there have been a few exceptions which have proved the necessity for the practice of frequent inspection and field check.

OPERATIONS, 1909-10.

The ensuing year's field-work promises to be very heavy, for the surveys in the hands of the staff for settlement alone, inclusive of the subdivisions of some pastoral runs into small grazing-runs, amount to about a million acres, besides 210,000 acres of Native land, 338 square miles of minor triangulation, and 237 miles of road surveys. Of this, however, about 120,000 acres of settlement survey and over 100 miles of road survey is nearing completion. Full details of the foregoing, both as to position and extent, in relation to the several districts are given in the reports of the Chief Surveyors (Appendix I).

The above will undoubtedly be supplemented by surveys of other land to be thrown open for selection during the year, and numerous duties that the surveyors are invariably required to perform other than purely settlement-work.

In addition, the Department will be called upon to undertake the control of the surveys, whether by contract or otherwise, of Native land that will be set apart for settlement on the recommendations of the Native Land Commission.

The extension of the standard survey of cities and boroughs and their suburbs is very greatly needed, more particularly in the large centres, especially so in Auckland and Wellington, where so much subdivision has taken place in the environs. This is important owing to the fact that the land is now closely built upon and has vastly increased in value; as a consequence, the State's risk and responsibility has become greater, the titles being under the Land Transfer Act, so that, if at all possible, some of the work should be taken in hand during the ensuing year.

From the foregoing it is evident that the field staff will need strengthening to cope with the work required to be done.

SURVEYORS' BOARD.

The Surveyors' Board constituted under the Surveyors' Institute and Board of Examiners Act, of which the Surveyor-General was Chairman, held eleven meetings during the year, and, in conjunction with the Australian Boards, conducted two examinations.

At the September examination two candidates passed with credit, obtaining over 80 per cent. of marks, and three completed their examinations. At the second, in March last, six more completed their examinations, to all of whom licenses have been issued.

The Board also, under the provisions of the Act, issued licenses to four surveyors who held qualifications before the Board was constituted, and letters of recommendation to the Australian Boards were issued to two of the New Zealand licensed surveyors.