

visited the North Cape, Cape Maria van Diemen, and the Three Kings islands. During the period at their disposal they accomplished work of great importance to navigation, and the information thus obtained will be placed on the new chart of that locality to be issued by the Admiralty authorities.

#### TIDAL SURVEY.

The report in connection with the tidal records, &c., will be found fully dealt with in Appendix V by Mr. C. E. Adams, M.Sc., F.R.A.S., Chief Computer, who is in charge of this work.

#### SETTLEMENT SURVEY.

Under settlement surveys a very large area has been completed during the year, which is represented by a total of 495,200 acres classed under the following heads: Rural, 440,184 acres; village and suburban, 1,843 acres; Maori Land Board subdivisions, 53,173 acres. On referring to Table I, these areas will be found divided up into their respective districts. Apart from the above-mentioned total, there is a still further area of 159,281 acres which has been topographically surveyed for the purpose of opening land for selection in the Districts of Auckland, Hawke's Bay, Wellington, Westland, and Canterbury. At the close of the year the area of settlement surveys actually in hand and those proposed to be allotted give a total of 709,096 acres, of which 659,481 acres will be in the hands of the staff surveyors, and the balance of 49,615 acres in those of contract surveyors. This is exclusive of an area of 110 acres of town land.

The lands enumerated above, which also include the pastoral and small grazing-runs, are those upon which the selector will make his home, and from which the Dominion reaps so much of her prosperity. Such being the case, it demands and receives the most careful attention at the hands of the Department, in order that every detail may be considered prior to its ultimate disposal under the different tenures of the Land and other Acts through which they are offered to the public. One feature that calls for special attention is the cutting-up of those private estates acquired from time to time by the Crown under the Land for Settlements Act for the purpose of what is termed closer settlement. After taking into consideration the purchase-price paid, it follows that the scheme of survey has to be carefully gone into in order that the partition of the estate shall be into such areas as are most suitable to the particular locality, and that the settlement shall well repay the cost entailed. It also means that, in order to reap the greatest benefits from the disposal of these lands, the question of having the survey completed at such time as will be best for placing it on the market has also to be considered. This necessitates in some cases the drafting of certain surveyors from one district to another, and this considerably increases the cost, as these surveys are always urgent, and have to be pushed through in the shortest possible time in order to save loss of interest on the capital invested. Owing to the shortage of surveyors at the present time, this throws certain work slightly in arrears, which condition, however, is met in part by the employment of private surveyors under contract.

For many years past so great has the land-hunger been that it was found utterly impossible to make complete surveys dealing with certain areas. All that could be expected was a preliminary survey, while the matter of roading had to be left in abeyance. This entailed severe hardships in the matter of ingress and egress to the selector, although every effort was made to try and cope with these difficulties by roads and tracks as opportunity arose. It can still be said that the desire for land remains unsatisfied, but not to the extreme degree as heretofore. Under these circumstances, the Department has decided that no land shall be placed on the market until it has been fully surveyed. By this means it is hoped to mitigate as far as possible the difficulties of the settlers in the backblocks, and give them better facilities for financing their clearings and for grassing operations, as well as for the provision of better roads. I am also strongly of opinion that in future no remote blocks of dense bush land should be opened up for selection until at least one or more main roads have been formed (even as bridle-roads) to and through the block. This would save an immense amount of hardship and discomfort to the selectors, their wives and families.

#### NATIVE-LAND SURVEY.

During the year the area surveyed was 452,249 acres in 2,135 subdivisions, comprising 399,276 acres of Native Land Court surveys, and 53,173 acres of Maori Land Board surveys.

Of the Native Land Court area, 64,987 acres in 284 subdivisions was surveyed by the staff; while 334,289 acres in 710 subdivisions was surveyed by contract surveyors, which includes an area of 76,407 acres in 409 subdivisions, the survey of which is paid for by the applicants.