

in the Land Transfer Branch, 236 in the General Computing Branch (being a record), and 92 in the Statutory Plans Branch. A total of 528 plans were approved, being 222 in the Land Transfer Branch, 218 in the General, and 88 in the Statutory Plans Branches. The new plans in the General Branch covered 26,000 acres in 106 sections, and 144,776 acres of Native land in 658 subdivisions.

Land Transfer Branch.—In addition to the above plans, this branch dealt with 77 applications, 1,686 transfers, 224 leases, 155 mortgages, 42 Orders in Council, 76 Proclamations, 135 Native Land Court orders, 372 balance certificates, 64 caveats, 100 other dealings, and 4,505 plans were put on titles. An unpleasant feature of the year's work of this branch has been the unduly great waste of time and delay in examination caused by the plan-work and field-work of some two or three surveyors holding licenses under the Act, which has become much too serious to be dealt with leniently.

Native Land Court Work.—This work has continued to increase, 169 authorities having been issued for 597 subdivisions, totalling 118,354 acres, at an estimated cost of £9,259, of which the sum of £6,773 14s. 2d. has been paid on completed surveys. The liens repaid the Department on account of these and prior surveys amounted to £2,267 7s. 9d., the payment of which enabled 159 Court orders to be indorsed. Plans to the number of 183 passed through the branch, showing 829 subdivisions, containing 146,689 acres; 433 applications for charging-orders were made, and 143 notices of release issued.

General Drafting-work.—The staff of this branch has been kept busy and very fully occupied, owing to the larger number of plans passing through the office. This latter circumstance, combined with a shortage of staff referred to previously, made it necessary to confine the work chiefly to actual routine and attention to the daily income and outgo, relaxing work on the preparation of new standard records, replacing outworn maps and records, &c. The volume of work is of a kind requiring much and careful checking in details, this most essential part of the work constituting the principal difficulty in maintaining the output at a high level of quality and quantity. The officer in charge, Mr. Caldwell, is deserving of special mention in this respect, he being responsible for these characteristics. 1,502 tracings were made, 176 plans were reduced and recorded, 30 new block sheets were laid down, 53 tracings were made for photo-lithography, and 5 plans were compiled. In addition to the above, the Statutory Plans Branch made 12 tracings, 8 plans, and 1 new road-record map, and recorded 43 dedications, and amended 2 statutory local-body district maps, besides a large quantity of minor additions to records and amendments of plans.

Miscellaneous.—The general classes of work have been accompanied, as is invariable, by a cloud of small searches, minor works, amendments of plans, registers, plans of deeds-orders, attendances on public, correspondence, and other matters.

Changes of Staff.—In the field Messrs. W. M. Gray and H. L. P. Dyett left the district staff, Mr. Gray under temporary transfer to Hawke's Bay and Mr. Dyett retiring from the Department to private practice; Mr. Olsen, unlicensed assistant, also being transferred to Hawke's Bay. Owing to the exigencies of settlement survey, Mr. H. E. Girdlestone returned to the staff from triangulation work, and has been engaged in the South Wairarapa. Two cadets, Messrs. L. W. B. Hall and N. A. Middlemas, left the office and entered the field in another district, and Cadet Mr. R. F. Burgess joined the district field staff from Canterbury. In the office one draughtsman has been absent a great part of the year owing to serious illness, and there have been several changes among the cadets and officers. Mr. R. F. W. Mackenzie passed his authorized surveyor's examination and took the field in the Auckland District.

General Remarks.—Since my appointment to this office on the 1st June last the field surveyors have been chiefly occupied in continuing the work begun by them in the previous season. Much preliminary work in exploring large blocks of Crown and Native land has been done, and it will be the end of next season before the full results of their operations will be apparent. They are now busy on the straightforward subdivision of the blocks, and henceforward their progress will be more apparent.

I have much pleasure in reporting that I have found all the officers of this branch of your Department most obliging and willing to push forward the work allotted to them, and in this connection I desire especially to acknowledge the capable and energetic assistance I have received ever since I came here from Mr. Maurice C. Smith, the Chief Draughtsman.

T. N. BRODRICK,
Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Triangulation.—The work under this heading completed during the year is 10,385 acres, of which 7,985 acres are on the north bank of the Motueka River and 2,400 acres in the Surrey Districts of Waitakere and Aorere.

Standard Survey.—The standard survey of the Township of Murchison, some 4½ miles, was completed during the year. The much-needed survey of the City of Nelson is in progress, and is well advanced. This is being carried out by Mr. C. A. Mountfort, acting under the control of the Head Office.

Topographical Survey for Selection.—Only a small area of 2,708 acres at the head of the Pokororo River was completed, at a cost of 1 35d. per acre.

Rural.—Under this head a total area of 60,365 acres, at an average cost of 2 68s. per acre, is returned, out of which the staff surveyors executed 33,626 acres, at an average cost of 2 66s.