

STANDARD SURVEYS.

Work on these useful surveys has been continued by Messrs. C. A. Mountfort, W. T. Neill, and H. M. Kensington in Napier, Dunedin, and Auckland respectively. The high standard of accuracy which is essential in the performance of this work has been maintained, as shown by the closing-error being well under one-tenth of a link per mile. In Auckland 40·23 miles of streets have been completed at an average cost of £48·42 per mile. A certain amount of rural standard traverse has been done in Hawke's Bay by Mr. C. A. Mountfort.

SETTLEMENT SURVEYS.

Of these, which comprise Crown lands, land for settlements, and land for discharged soldiers, the bulk appears under the heading of "Rural" in Table A, the acreage there shown being 343,525 acres, while the remainder includes village and suburban and town lands totalling 1,260 acres. In Table B the rural acreage has been allocated to the various land districts.

NATIVE SURVEYS.

During the year staff surveyors completed the survey of 14,377 acres, while 257,104 acres was surveyed by private surveyors. The area surveyed in each land district is given in Table B. The surveys under this head have mostly been subdivision surveys of blocks of which the periphery surveys had been already completed.

GOLD-MINING SURVEYS.

The area returned under this heading is very small, being only 788 acres. The surveys were all in Auckland or Westland, and were made by private surveyors, the fees being paid by applicants. The cost per acre cannot therefore be given.

COAL-MINING SURVEYS.

The Chief Surveyor of Southland reports an increased activity in this class of mining, three areas totalling 209 acres having been surveyed for applicants.

INSPECTIONS.

There being only one Inspector, the work of inspection has been carried on by Chief Draughtsmen and staff surveyors. In consequence there has not been so much of this very necessary work done as I could have wished. As pointed out in previous reports, absence of inspection has a tendency to induce carelessness in some surveyors, the more so as it is difficult for them to get good field hands. Generally speaking, I am pleased to note that the result of the inspections made has been to show that satisfactory work is being done, though in one district in particular it has made evident the carelessness alluded to.

PROPOSED OPERATIONS FOR 1918-19.

Triangulation.—The depletion of our field staff and the urgent necessity for economy will preclude any triangulation work being undertaken except such as must be done in connection with settlement surveys.

Standard Surveys.—These will be restricted to Auckland, Dunedin, and Napier, and in respect of Dunedin and Napier will probably be discontinued early in the year. Rural standard surveys will be undertaken in the neighbourhood of Feilding.

Settlement Surveys.—At the close of the year there were in the hands of the staff and temporary surveyors 731,112 acres of settlement lands and 60,813 acres of Native lands, while in the hands of private surveyors there were 3,620 acres and 277,900 acres respectively. The allocation of this work among the several land districts is shown in Table 4. As is always the case, and more particularly so at the end of last year, for reasons already given, these figures include a large acreage of which the field-work has been completed, but of which the mapping will not be finished till July or August, during which months many of the surveyors will be called in from the field to the office. This work now in hand, together with the survey of estates that from time to time will be acquired for soldiers' settlements and for ordinary settlements, and of Crown lands to be offered for settlement, will occupy the staff surveyors fully for the ensuing year. As the urgency of providing land for discharged soldiers increases it will probably be necessary to supplement the efforts of the staff by placing contracts in the hands of private surveyors.

HEAD OFFICE DRAUGHTING STAFF.

Probably the most outstanding feature of the year's work was the number of calls upon this staff for work for other Departments in the preparation of maps, descriptions, and in several similar kinds of assistance. The Representation Commission's work entailed the preparation of a very large number of detail foundation maps of the whole of New Zealand as well as of the originals for publication, and large-scale detail maps of the new electorates, over 250 copies of which alone were made. The town plans received are still much below pre-war conditions as to number and importance. The ten-mile map of New Zealand was issued during the year; and a