

the whole country, it has been the object of my constant endeavor to push that on as far as practicable with the limited means provided and under the many discouragements I have met with.

The accompanying map shows how limited, as well as desultory and unconnected, the work has had to be.

Provided for out of a small sum voted in each year for contingencies for my department, it has been impossible to create a permanent staff; and since the funds are understood to be by way of advances for carrying out the Native Lands Act, it has been felt to be improper to expend any portion of them except upon Native land required to be surveyed for adjudication before the Native Lands Court. Thus it is clear that the northern triangulations ought to be connected upon Auckland in order to furnish a mutual verification, as well as to make them really useful to the public, for the verification and correction of past surveys and to secure the accuracy of new ones; but this cannot be done because granted, or Crown land, intervenes. And although the wise liberality of the Provincial Government of Auckland, in furnishing funds for portions of the work, the superintendence of which I have with your sanction undertaken, will enable some of those gaps to the north of Auckland to be filled in, still the work must remain imperfect, both in design and in its execution, until it is recognised as a colonial necessity, and its execution permanently provided for.

At the inception of the existing Native land system, the employment of surveyors was left to the land claimants. This plan was then unavoidable, owing to the extreme jealousy of Government surveyors, which had been engendered by the previous system. It has worked disastrously, especially towards the Natives in deference to whose prejudices it was established.

The Native claimants being rarely able to pay a surveyor have been obliged, generally by the help of a Native agent, to get the work done on credit, by promising payments often quite out of all proportion to the real value of the work; they have then, in many instances, been induced to sign legal instruments, on which the surveyor has been enabled to ground actions at law, and so to defeat the sixty-ninth clause of the "Native Lands Act, 1865," which provides that the Native Land Court shall enquire into and decide upon "any dispute which shall arise between any surveyor and his Native employer;" and by this evasion several flagrant instances have occurred in which judgments have been obtained against Natives for survey expenses, without any reference to the quality of the work performed or to the reasonableness of the charges for it; and in some cases arrests of Native chiefs have been attempted, which have endangered the peace of the country; and in others the land has been sold to meet the bare survey expenses. In other instances, surveyors who have executed surveys conscientiously, and made moderate charges for their work, have been involved in ruin by their nonpayment for years.

These evils have become so glaring, and so much discontent has been produced, that it is probable that the legislature will apply some remedy to them; but it seems that the only way to do so effectually must be for the Government to retake the surveys into its own hands, and resume a function which has been always held to be one of the most important in a new country, but which here it has practically abdicated. Should this be so, the necessity for systematic and complete triangulation will become still more immediately pressing.

I beg, therefore, again to recommend that a small permanent geodetic staff should be created, having for its object the complete triangulation of the Island; closing points in the old surveys, so as to reduce them generally to their true position, and furnishing everywhere truly determined points from which all new surveys may start, and the means of checking and of properly recording them. Such a staff, with the necessary officers and other appliances, might be very efficiently organised for about £4,000 per annum on a sufficient scale to meet all pressing demands outside the Province of Wellington. Within that province triangulation has been carried on so well, and considering the means available, so energetically, that I should be sorry to recommend anything that would disturb its continuance under the very efficient direction of Mr. Jackson; the elements which it will furnish will enable closures to be made without any difficulty wherever it becomes conterminal with those executed under my intermediate direction, and the whole will form one continuous work.

The Provincial Government urgently requires that this and other surveys should be largely expanded; unless therefore the Government should be prepared to unite all the surveys in the North Island into one system, and to execute for the provinces any special surveys they might require, which would unquestionably be the most efficient and economical plan, I would repeat the recommendation I have several times made before, that the General Government should pay a rateable contribution towards the Wellington trigonometrical survey, on condition of its being extended over all parts of the province on a concerted scale, and of all its elements being freely imparted to this department for incorporation in the general work, and for the use of surveyors whether for Native or other purposes.

The other survey duties which have come under my direction, are those in relation to the Tauranga District Lands Act, and a number of occasional small surveys and rectifications within the confiscated lands. The surveys under the former head have made very little progress indeed during the past year. Since the Government has undertaken to give Crown Grants for all that extensive area of land, the claims of the individuals entitled will have to be surveyed as they are determined, but so little is now being done in the matter that the services of the very efficient officer who was appointed to execute the surveys have been made available to the Public Works Department, by which half his salary is paid. The remains of the Waikato surveys are in the most unsatisfactory position of all; surveys are from time to time required to fulfil engagements with the Waikato immigrants, occasionally for purchases; and, in the early part of this year, many blocks which were formerly awarded to tribes or hapus of Natives were ordered to be subdivided for individual families. The murder of one of the surveyors engaged has stopped this class of work, and, it is presumed, will prevent it for the future; but constant demands upon the department are made for road maps, for rectification of lines, and for the small surveys I have referred to, and the very bad state of the surveys generally makes these services onerous and most unsatisfactory. As an illustration of the state of these surveys it is sufficient to observe that the relative position of Waikato Heads, of Ngaruawahia, or of any part of Upper