

higher portions of which are under snow, I had to recall him in June. His maps, therefore, are not yet complete, and the work will not appear in the returns until next year. Mr. Baber met with considerable obstructions from the natives, owing to misapprehension of the nature of the work, which has, however, been removed by the good offices of Captain W. G. Mair, and no further obstruction is therefore contemplated when he takes the field again next spring.

Minor Triangulation.—Of the 296,941 acres returned, over 80,000 acres were triangulated specially in the interests of Land Transfer Surveys, and 70,000 in the interests of Native Land Court Surveys. The rest is in extension of the meridian to section surveys.

Topographical and Trigonometrical Surveys.—Under this heading 330,405 acres have been completed, incidentally to the “breaking down” of the major triangles for settlement surveys, the cost per acre, $1\frac{2}{10}$ d. is just double that of last year; but the work is of better quality, though far from being what I think it should be. Mr. Newmann has produced the best topographical work, his map being very nicely drawn in sketch contours. It is a matter of regret that the large amount of topographical information now to hand, is not made available to the public, by publishing it in shade on the 80 chain maps.

Rural and Suburban.—The expectation expressed in last year's report, has been realised as to quantity and price of work under this head. As more than three times the acreage at about one-half the cost per acre has been completed, viz., 94,920 acres at $1\frac{7}{10}$ s. per acre, as against 30,320 acres at $2\frac{8}{10}$ s. per acre. This is owing to larger blocks having come in for subdivision, four of them aggregating 53,000 acres. The greatest quantity of work, and at the least cost, has been produced by the younger members of the staff. The reason being, as you are aware, that the senior surveyors are, as a rule, engaged on the intricate and difficult work of surveying applications surrounded by old and inaccurate surveys, where their knowledge and experience are of most service to the Government. Although the efficiency of the public service is best secured by this course, it at the same time operates most unfairly against the surveyors themselves, for, in addition to the unceasing care required to guard against errors involving liabilities on behalf of the Government, and the labor involved in reconciling discordant and inaccurate surveys with an exact system: they find at the end of the year that they produce the least amount of work, and that at the greatest cost. These facts, though recognised by the Department, are not so well understood by the public, and hence the complaints, as to delays in attending to the wants of each particular settler. The cost of these isolated surveys, encumbered as they are by contiguous former surveys, is very high, so much so that Government often realises very little more than the bare cost of preparing them for sale. Under the heading of Rural Lands, must be mentioned the survey of 7596 acres in 44 sections by authorised surveyors, for settlers under the Homestead clauses of the Act; but, as these are paid for by fees deposited prior to survey, they are not included in the return. Native reserves are, however, included, they amount to 7511 acres in 66 sections, costing 0.87 pence per acre. During the period 7,903 acres at a cost of £1,570 6s. 11d have been surveyed, in order that old grants might issue, the data for so doing being previously deficient, and £508 0s 6d has been spent in defining boundaries of lands sold and granted many years ago, but which had not been marked on the ground.

Town Section Surveys.—Two hundred and thirty-five acres, in 373 allotments, at a cost of 13s. each, have been prepared for sale. These are nearly all in villages, laid out in the new blocks surveyed during the year.

Native Land Court Surveys.—A large area has been prepared for the operation of the Native Land Court; but as the Court sat before the largest blocks could be completely surveyed or mapped, an area of over 400,000 acres was shown on sketch maps and sent to the Court, which does not appear in this year's return, but will do so in next. The surveys completed sum up 138,755 acres, in 36 blocks, the larger number having been surveyed by authorized surveyors, at schedule rates, the cost being advanced by Government under the Act, 1880, and secured on the lands, by liens registered in the Native Land Court. The Government staff surveyors are fully employed on other classes of survey, and, therefore, but a small amount (25,260 acres,) has been completed by them. The survey of native blocks executed by private surveyors at the cost of the natives, number 83, containing 303,757 acres, some of which are subdivisions of original blocks which had formerly passed the Court. Instructions for the survey of them, involving sometimes minute directions and often a search of the Native Land Court records, and the supplying of trigonometrical and other data, causes a very large amount of work, which, added to the correspondence with native applicants and agents, takes up fully one-third of my time, and that of some of the draughtsmen. Mr. Barnard, in charge of the Poverty Bay District, has to devote a large part of his time and that of his office assistants to this particular branch. The Act of 1880, which allows the Government to advance the cost of survey if the applicants wish it, is not taken advantage of to the extent it ought to be in the interests of the natives, the principal cause operating against it being the time which elapses between the signature of the applications and the date when they are received by me, approved for survey. During the year, 363 applications for survey have been received from the Court for this district, a large number of which are at present “tied up” through one cause and another.

Land Purchase Surveys.—Only 9,606 acres have been surveyed for the Land Purchase Department in 5 blocks. If this area is added to that of the Native Land Court surveys, an area of 426,858 acres, in 113 blocks, will be found to have been prepared for the issue of titles under the Native Land Act, when the lands shall have been all adjudicated on, besides about 400,000 acres now before the Court on sketch plans.

Roads.—Seventy-four miles, at a cost of £11 4s. per mile, have been marked out; about half of which quantity is in exercise of the road rights under Crown grants, the other half being roads for immediate formation, to open Crown lands before sale, most of which has been done by Mr. Lambert. This mileage bears a very small proportion to the amount that should be undertaken. Unless the Legislature will extend the period for taking roads, the rights in hundreds of cases will either lapse or have already done so. The works of actual construction carried on by the department are referred to in another report.