

The larger claims were defined by Mr. J. A. Thorpe, authorized surveyor, being the Murimotu, Ngarukehu, and Te Kapua Blocks. Messrs. Llewellyn Smith, John Annabell, and Ashcroft surveyed the Taumatakaihuka, Waipuna, and Otamoa Blocks. The remaining unsurveyed Native lands include the great central territory between the Wanganui River and the Ruahine Ranges, and a few tracts in the Wairarapa District.

Road- and Railway-line Surveys.—You will observe that the mileage of these important surveys exceeds that of any previous year; credit has been taken for Mr. J. A. Robertson's work in the Chatham Islands, which amounts to ninety-two miles. Messrs. Annabell, Sicely, and Tone were the other chief contributors to the total.

Miscellaneous Surveys.—The amount expended in compliance with the demands of public departments, County Councils, and Road Boards amounted to £3,747. You are fully conversant with the practical utility and importance of the services thus rendered by this office.

Office.—Mr. Mackenzie, the Chief Draughtsman, and the office staff made such headway with the arrears of mapping that, after attending to the ordinary routine duties of recording, reducing, and compiling the plans received from the field officers, some time was devoted to preparing maps for publication. Plans of several of the survey districts about Wanganui were finished, the standard plan of Marton was published, and an excellent map of the Tuhirangi and Upper Wanganui districts was constructed. The land-transfer branch, under Mr. Mason's charge, had a reduced amount of work to attend to, due no doubt to the general depression; but what had to be done was efficiently performed. The correspondence and accounts were managed by Mr. Wright in a satisfactory manner: exclusive of enclosures, ordinary returns, &c., the number of letters received and despatched amounted to 4,183; in addition, much of the Land Office business devolved upon him, and was well and promptly attended to and kept under by working overtime.

Inspection.—In the course of my visits to the field I found that the surveyors were conforming closely to the principles of survey set forth in the regulations, and that they worked with evident zeal, care, and ability, with a close attention to thoroughness and completeness in every detail. Several members of the staff, including Mr. Dundas, gave me valuable assistance in inspecting the work of authorized surveyors.

Proposed Operations for 1884-85.—Subject to your approval it is proposed to extend triangulation and topographical surveys inland of Wanganui, Otairi, and Otamakapua on the West Coast, through the agency of Messrs. Dundas and Annabell; and in the Porirua, Maungaraki, Kaiwhata, and Makuri districts by utilizing the services of Messrs. J. D. Climie, Greville, and Crombie: it is also intended to obtain data for completing topographical plans of the settled districts near Wanganui, Porirua, and Masterton. It is proposed, with regard to settlement surveys, to employ Mr. John Annabell on West Tokomaru; Mr. Ashcroft on Otairi; Mr. Dundas on Waitapu; Mr. Greville on the Makuri-Puketoi Block; Mr. Llewellyn Smith on the Crown lands between Mangaone Block and Mauriceville, and, with assistance, upon sectionizing the Alfredton Education Reserve, the Wangachu-Rangitumau Block, and the hills west of Masterton and Carterton. Mr. Climie will cut up any suitable lands west of Greytown and Featherston which would be likely to be occupied if put up to competition; Mr. Crombie will continue the subdivision of the Kaiwhata and Wainuioru Crown lands, which surveys are already well advanced. The completion of these settlement surveys depends upon the appropriation and prompt expenditure of funds in road construction, and in some instances upon the location of the railway-lines. Messrs. Smith and Climie have also to cut and peg some back lines for settlers in the Kopuaranga and Mungaroa Blocks. Townships or village settlements will have to be laid off sooner or later at Pahiatua, Makuri, Otairi, and in the Upper Pohangina district. It is probable that Messrs. Dundas, Llewellyn Smith, Climie, Annabell, and Crombie will be called upon to define Native land claims in the Waitotara, Upper Rangitikei, Taueru, Kaiwhata, and South-east Wairarapa districts. Standard surveys of Palmerston North and Masterton suburbs have to be completed, important lines of traffic have to be surveyed, and lines of road have to be laid off and legalized in various localities by the surveyors in charge of the districts, as empowered by warrants which have been issued to them. The usual amount of miscellaneous surveys must be anticipated on requisitions from the Public Works, Native Land Purchase, and Education Departments.

J. W. A. MARCHANT, Chief Surveyor.

TABLE showing TRAVERSE CLOSURES, 1883-84, Wellington.

Surveyor.	District.	Number of Closures.	Number of Traverse Lines	Total Length of Closed Traverse Miles.	Mean Ratio of Error per Mile.		Class of Country.
					Mer.	Perp.	
J. Annabell ..	Waipakura, Ikitara, Wairoa ..	24	407	28.5	1.6	1.3	Mostly open and hilly.
A. E. Ashcroft ..	Waipakura, Mangawhero ..	23	923	33.4	2.8	1.7	Mostly bush hills.
J. D. Climie ..	Wellington Town ..	2	67	3.2	0.7	1.2	Open hills.
C. Crombie ..	Port Nicholson ..	3	436	4.3	6.25	..	Rough bush hills.
R. Greville ..	Wainuioru, Kaiwhata ..	8	378	15.5	2.4	2.0	Rough bush hills.
H. J. Lowe ..	Port Nicholson, Kopuaranga, Mangaone ..	14	567	20.5	4.1	2.9	Fair bush country.
G. Northcroft ..	Otahoua ..	3	280	18.0	1.4	2.5	Fair bush country.
L. Smith ..	Kopuaranga ..	13	667	22.1	1.8	1.3	Rough bush country.
N. J. Tone ..	Kopuaranga, Mangaone ..	2	53	9.7	1.2	1.6	Fair bush country.
	Otahoua, Tiffin ..	16	186	46.2	1.6	2.1	Mostly open country.
	Totals ..	108	3,964	201.4	1.9	1.9	
	Mean ..	..	..	..	..	..	