

Native Land Court Survey.—No surveys have been made by staff officers; but eleven blocks, comprising 30,076 acres, surveyed by authorised surveyors at the cost of the owners, have been examined and passed.

Roads.—Of the thirty miles of roads appearing in the return, sixteen and a half were surveyed in the exercise of road rights, principally through Native blocks; the remainder was the traverse of the engineering survey of part of the Napier-Wairoa Road. The cost of the thirty miles was £400 12s. 7d., or £13 10s. 8d. per mile. In addition to the foregoing, fifty-four miles of an engineering survey, with the traverse of about half the distance, has been finished in the field by Messrs. Hallett and Laing, contract surveyors, but, owing to the whole of the maps not having been sent in, it cannot appear in the return as completed work.

Other Work.—Under this head the small sum of £161 1s. 4d. appears. It represents chiefly the outlay in reproducing the boundaries of ancient surveys, which, through being so scattered and disconnected, it was found impossible to return under an acreage rate. £40 have been expended on the standard survey of the Town of Napier. There still remains a considerable amount to be done, and it will be continued during a couple of months of the winter season, when distant country work cannot be advantageously undertaken. The following is a summary of the field-work completed, and that in progress:—

	Completed during the Nine Months.	In Hands of the Surveyor.
Minor triangulation	40,878 acres	25,000 acres.
Topographical surveys for selection under Act of 1887	8,690 "	100,280 "
Rural and suburban	36,551 "	12,270 "
Small grazing-runs	...	40,000 "
Native Land Court blocks (authorised surveyors)	30,076 "	139,663 "
Roads	30 miles	108½ miles.

In addition to the foregoing in hand, 33,000 acres for settlement have not yet been assigned to any particular surveyor.

Office-work.—Sixty-two surveyors' maps of ordinary settlement work, Native Land Court blocks and roads, have been examined and passed; twenty-five block-sheets and seven Crown grant record maps compiled.

The minor triangulation of eight survey districts which, for want of method in the original calculation, was most confusing and misleading, has been recompiled, maps drawn, and tracings prepared for lithographing. Three hundred and ninety-two diagrams have been drawn on Crown grants, 213 on Native titles, 457 on certificates of title, and 233 on leases and licenses. In the clerical branch 6,573 letters and telegrams have been received and despatched, exclusive of notices.

The arrears in the office are very heavy. There is a great lack of lithographs of the portion of the district south of Mahia, about 140 miles in length. There are none of the triangulation of this stretch of country; and, of the thirty-seven survey districts, four only are lithographed on a-mile-to-an-inch scale. It will be my endeavour to remedy this as far as circumstances will permit, as it is not only a great loss and inconvenience to the department, through county and other maps having to be drawn by hand, but to the local bodies and general public. About two hundred block-sheets, and most of the 40in. topographical-sheets, have yet to be drawn; Crown grant record maps of thirty survey districts to compile and complete; a very large number of field surveyors' maps to check and record; and over three hundred Native blocks to be plotted on the block-sheets and reduced for record on the smaller-scale maps. It is not to be expected that much headway can be made in so large a work in one year, unless additional draughtsmen are employed for the special purpose, which is hardly to be hoped for; but every effort will be made to reduce the amount of arrears.

Work for the Ensuing Year.—It is more than probable that, in addition to the six staff surveyors, Messrs. Mountain and Newton, who are now temporarily employed, will have to be re-engaged in the spring, as the work to be taken in hand is considerable. Over 100,000 acres in the Motu, Waikohu, and Nuhaka North Districts are now being prepared by Messrs. Neill and Newton, to be thrown open as unsurveyed land under the Act of 1887. A large area of it will be ready for selection in about three months' time, and it is believed that it will be rapidly taken up, which will bring about the subdivisional work. The 12,270 acres of sectional work on which Messrs. Hay, O. Goldsmith, and Mountain are engaged will be completed in about two months; and it is probable that by that time other demands for this class of work will have sprung up in various parts of the district. I estimate that from 30,000 acres to 40,000 acres of sectional work will be required. Mr. Goldsmith will continue his work of subdivision of 40,000 acres at Hangaroa into small grazing-runs of small size; and Messrs. Armstrong and Gillies's time will for the most part be taken up with surveys of roads in the northern part of the district, to be taken through Native blocks before the rights for doing so expire.

THOMAS HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.

WELLINGTON.

Minor Triangulation.—The only officer on this class of work was Mr. District Surveyor Murray, who is extending the triangulation over the Awarua and Upper Pohangina country, embracing, when complete, an area of over 300,000 acres, eventually connecting the Hawke's Bay and Wellington systems of triangulation. One hundred and twenty thousand acres are now mapped, but plans were not received until after the 31st March, and consequently does not appear in this return. This will enable the sixty miles of river traverse in the Awarua Block to locate the Rangitikei, Moa-whango, and Hautapu Rivers, required by the Judge to make the necessary order in connection with the subdivision of this block, to be plotted on the true meridian, and checked by connection with the new triangulations.