

Against the total amount of revenue collected by the department, £359,086, may be placed the total cost of the Lands and Survey Department, amounting to £128,568, in which sum is included the cost of administration of the lands, surveys, forests, lands for settlement (the estates handed over), Cheviot Estate, endowments, thermal-springs, miscellaneous, and, in addition, a considerable portion of the administration expenses connected with the roads of the colony.

The number of selectors on the books of the department on the 31st March last was 16,365.

ARREARS.

The following table illustrates the total number and amount of arrears due to the Crown at the date specified for the last ten years; they include the arrears under all headings:—

				£	
31st March, 1889	...	...	...	3,862 selectors were owing	44,533
" 1890	...	...	...	3,755	52,891
" 1891	...	...	...	3,548	37,341
" 1892	...	...	...	2,612	25,256
" 1893	...	...	...	3,382	28,875
" 1894	...	...	...	3,104	32,205
" 1895	...	...	...	3,594	37,514
" 1896	...	...	...	1,673	15,708
" 1897	...	...	...	1,464	12,807
" 1898	...	...	...	1,546	14,437

A noticeable decrease in the number and amount of arrears is apparent during the last three years. In 1890 (the year of largest arrears) the average sum owing by selectors was £14 each; in 1898 it was £9 5s. 3d. each. The arrears for last year amount to 3·8 per cent. on the total amount of revenue receivable, or 4·4 per cent. on that actually received. Of these arrears, the principal items are:—

				£ s. d.	
120 Deferred-payment selectors, owing	...	...	...	940	3 10
333 Perpetual-lease	"	...	...	2,132	2 6
161 Occupation with right of purchase,	"	...	...	1,041	8 7
207 Lease in perpetuity	"	...	...	1,920	0 0
178 Village-homestead special settlers,	"	...	...	1,841	19 6
137 Special-settlement associations,	"	...	...	1,251	18 1
125 Miscellaneous,	"	...	...	1,482	13 7
47 Lease-in-perpetuity (Land for Settlements), owing	...	...	...	1,279	1 5

SURVEYS.

The following table summarises the transactions of the department, so far as surveys are concerned, for the twelve months ending the 31st March, 1898:—

				Acres.	Average Cost per Acre.	Total Cost. £ s. d.	
Major triangulation	...	...	...	512,000	0·22d.	478	15 9
Minor triangulation and topography	...	...	...	1,081,148	0·60d.	2,720	19 10
Topographical surveys prior to selection	...	...	...	29,864	3·72d.	462	16 7
Rural and suburban section surveys (1,616 sections)	...	...	...	491,000	1·01s.	24,913	14 3
Town section surveys (1,337 sections), cost per section	...	...	...	1,926	17·13s.	1,145	14 3
Native Land Court surveys (175 divisions)	...	...	...	266,824*	5·56d.	6,185	19 2
Mining surveys (571 sections)	...	...	...	31,751	5·31s.	8,429	8 11
Roads (716·23 miles), per mile	...	...	...	...	£12·99	9,303	12 6
Miscellaneous surveys, inspections, &c.	...	...	...	...	...	12,307	11 2

Total cost of the above field-work for the year £65,948 12 5

The total cost of surveys, as shown above, is about £46,292 less than for the previous period, which is accounted for by the decrease in the number of mining surveys made, those for the previous year having cost £56,579, as against £8,429 this year.

TRIGONOMETRICAL AND TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEYS.

The 512,000 acres of major triangulation was executed by Messrs. Cussen and Spencer on the Cape Colville Peninsula, and was undertaken especially in the interests of the large number of mining surveys lately made there, the opportunity being taken to incorporate some isolated portions of minor triangulation previously existing, and to bring them all into uniformity with the general system. In the centre of the North Island, Mr. Lowe has extended his work of the previous season for the purpose of completing a connection with the Auckland work, but as the maps, &c., are not yet complete, the results do not appear in this year's returns. Work is also in hand in the western part of the Nelson District for triangulating the country between Tasman's Bay and the West Coast, in order to connect surveys going on there. In Marlborough a considerable area at the heads of the Awatere and Waihopai Rivers has been finished, the work having been undertaken primarily to

*Out of this total, 9,245 acres were surveyed for landless Natives, Middle Island.