

*Rural and Suburban.*—The principal surveys of this class have been extending the subdivision of the northern portion of the Waimarino Block, situated in the Hunua and Kaitieke Districts, for ordinary Crown lands settlement, by Messrs. Thompson, Lowe, and Roberts; also the Hikawera, Mahupuku, and Tawaha Settlements, in the Huangarua District, subdivided by Messrs. Strachan, Girdlestone, and E. A. Marchant, for occupation under the Land for Settlements Act. Mr. M. Carkeek has been engaged completing the subdivisions of the Ohotu Block for the Aotea Maori Council.

*Native Land Court.*—The surveys of 15 blocks, containing 28 subdivisions, with a total of 11,179 acres, in which the Government is interested, having advanced the cost of survey and taken out liens in the Native Land Court, were undertaken by Messrs. J. McKay and J. R. Strachan, staff surveyors, and 2,211 acres by Mr. R. P. Greville, temporary surveyor; and, in addition, 47 Native blocks, comprising 165 subdivisions, containing 38,251 acres, were surveyed by private surveyors for the Natives direct, so that the total surveyed by staff and authorised surveyors is 51,641 acres. The field operations have been much delayed during this season by inclement weather.

*Standard Surveys.*—The Inspecting Surveyor, Mr. Climie, made a revisional survey of part of the City of Wellington, where the standard blocks had in a great many cases been displaced by street operations in the city by traffic, tram-lines, drainage, &c. At the request of the Borough Council, Mr. District Surveyor Thompson readjusted certain standard blocks in Palmerston North.

#### OFFICE-WORK.

*Examination of Plans.*—During the year 170 plans of sectional and Native surveys, containing 87,445 acres, were received, and 160 were approved; 53 statutory plans were received, 200 approved and recorded, 49 examined, and 42 sent for proclamation.

*Compilations.*—Sixteen drawings and tracings were prepared for photo-lithography, 2 new record maps showing net areas, 4 Crown-grant maps were compiled, and 4 40-chains trig. maps.

*Reserves.*—During the year the reserves ledgers have been kept up to date, also index and detail maps of each county posted up. Twenty reserves have been vested, 56 permanently reserved, and 25 sent forward for gazetting.

*Roads and Railways.*—Owing to the staff being principally employed on settlement surveys, only necessary deviations and side pegging have been attended to. Eighteen miles of the North Island Main Trunk Railway have been surveyed, at a cost of £274 10s. 5d., but only 6 miles plotted.

*Other Work.*—This heading comprises many and various duties distinct from the actual cost of subdivision surveys, and includes small surveys for scenic purposes and other Departments, repairing and replacing trig. stations and displaced standard blocks, redefining old boundaries, timber estimates, road-deviations, &c., the character of which cannot be tabulated in the ordinary schedule of work returned. The usual repairs to trig. stations have been effected at a cost of £54 9s. 10d.

*Inspection of Surveys.*—Mr. Inspector Climie inspected 12 surveys during the year, including 9 for the Land Transfer Department, at a cost of £92 4s. 10d., and Mr. Mountfort completed 16 inspections, at a cost of £238 8s. 10d.

The surveyors' work maintains a uniform standard of excellence, regardless of the difficulties obtaining in the rough and remote backblocks in which the surveys are now being carried on.

*"Thirds" and "Fourths."*—The allocation under "The Land Act, 1892," to the credit of the local authorities of the proportions of rent under the various systems of tenure have been made, and £6,486 18s. 6d. has been paid to the local bodies, in accordance with the duly approved proposals and under hypothecation certificates. 357 proposals for expenditure of "thirds" and "fourths" were received, and after thorough examination 332 of these were submitted to the Land Board for consideration and were approved. Two certificates of hypothecation were also approved of by the Land Board and issued under the signature of the Chairman. I regret to have to report that the amount paid to the local bodies on their proposals, &c., as above is over £5,000 less than during the previous twelve months. This is partly due to some of the bodies having made extra proposals last year in order to reduce the large sums standing to their credit. This effort has not been sustained, and there was on the 31st March last £14,816 8s. 8d. in the Receiver of Land Revenue's Deposit Account to the credit of the County Councils and Road Boards. I would mention, however, that payments from newly taken up sections in the Waimarino have increased the credit of that county, while the roads being at present under construction by the Roads Department, I presume that the County Council has not deemed it advisable to expend "thirds" on them. This reason, however, does not apply to other cases, and I regret that some action has not been taken under "The Public Works Act Amendment Act, 1904," as so many settlers are still struggling with the want of better road access, while this large sum of accrued "thirds" is waiting expenditure on the improvement of the roads for the benefit of the sections which have contributed the money.

*Land Transfer Office (Survey Branch).*—Four hundred and thirteen plans were passed, showing an increase of 53 over last year; but this does not include 50 single and 2,960 in duplicate plans indorsed on transfers, &c., all of which have to be examined. Four new record plans have been completed, and 41 Land Transfer plans and tracings have been mounted and repaired.

*Miscellaneous.*—The usual demands were attended to by the office staff. These comprised supplying information to the public generally, data for the execution of surveys by staff surveyors and others, and the preparation of lithographs required for taking the census by the Sub-enumerators. Eighty-six tracings, 51 general plans, 429 lithographs, 29 sale plans, 106 applications, 31 maps repaired, and 7 folding lithographs for pocket were prepared, and a multitude of other duties performed.

*Titles.*—There were 3,095 deeds and other instruments passed, 50 single and 2,960 plans in duplicate were placed on certificates of title, being a considerable increase compared with last year; 20 miscellaneous plans were drawn or compiled, and 4 new record plans were completed.