

*Other Work.*—This includes several blocks of large areas which are in progress, the chief of which are the Piripiri Block (near Dannevirke), upon which Mr. Brook is engaged; the subdivision of Pastoral Run No. 47, in the Ngatapa district, in the hand of Mr. J. Roddick; the Waipuka, Okaihau, and Waimarama lands, upon which Mr. J. G. Wilson is engaged; the Mohaka Native blocks, under survey by Mr. T. W. Hughes; and the Waipaoa Block, in Mr. E. H. Farnie's hands. The gross area of these several blocks amounts to some 100,000 acres. There are also miscellaneous items such as sketch surveys for the Te Rawhiti Maori Land Board, comprising some 2,562 acres, and about 4,500 acres of private lands, of which sketch surveys and special reports were required by the Department, and several other minor surveys.

*Inspections.*—Mr. Brook (District Surveyor, Napier) carried out 4 of these during the year, 3 of which were Land Transfer surveys at Waipukurau and Hastings respectively, and a rural survey in the Matapiri District; while Mr. Brodrick (District Surveyor at Gisborne) made 8 others, the results of which have been sent forward, with the exception of those that are not quite complete as regards reports, but will be forwarded at an early date. This important class of work is greatly retarded owing to the services of the inspecting officers being so fully occupied upon urgent surveys, thereby affording very rare opportunities for such work.

*Proposed Operations for 1908-9.*—In the Hawke's Bay portion of the district the following surveys are in progress: The subdivision of the Piripiri Block for settlement, by Mr. Brook, and the surveys of the Crown awards and Native Land Court partitions of the Waipuka, Okaihau, and Waimarama Blocks, upon which Messrs. Wilson, Walshe, and Cagney are engaged, while Mr. Hughes is carrying out the subdivisional survey of Mohaka Blocks 1 and 2, comprising some 24,500 acres in the Poverty Bay portion; Mr. Farnie has the Waipaoa Block, of 11,623 acres, nearly finished; and Mr. Roddick is pushing on the survey of the subdivision of Pastoral Run No. 47, containing 19,649 acres. The survey of the Tapuwaeroa Block of Crown lands, containing 2,357 acres, has been placed in the hands of Mr. O'Ryan (private surveyor) under special engagement. There is also the subdivisional survey of the country now held under the small-grazing-run tenures, but which, on the expiration of the existing leases, is to be cut up for disposal under Part III of "The Land Act, 1892." Several of these will need survey during the ensuing ten months, while about a dozen others will have to be similarly dealt with during 1910. In view of this, and considering the urgency of the work, the services of two smart young surveyors are required before next spring, when these blocks should be surveyed in order to complete them by the time the leases fall in, and it is hoped that provision will be made to fill the vacancies existing through the resignation of Messrs. Wall and Davis.

*Office-work.*—The following report has been handed in by Mr. H. G. Price, Chief Draughtsman: During the year 378 plans have been examined and approved, representing an area of 319,905 acres; these divided into their several classes give the following figures: Land Transfer, 206 plans, representing 986 allotments, with an area of 140,844 acres; Public Works, 95 plans, with an area of 1,892 acres; Native Land Court, 43 plans, with an area of 133,917 acres; and departmental plans numbered 34, with an area of 43,252 acres. In addition to the foregoing, 546 instruments of transfer, lease, mortgage, &c., have been examined and reported upon; 297 tracings were prepared for settlers, surveyors, local bodies, &c. The year's work shows a substantial increase in all branches, and as the work of keeping up block sheets and record-maps is falling behind, owing to the many calls upon the present staff, the services of two additional draughtsmen, for the Napier and Gisborne offices respectively, are greatly needed. These maps should be always posted up to date, otherwise much time is lost in searching for information which would be available at all times were this the case, and it would fully engage the time of a special draughtsman to attain the desired end. To this I would add the following remarks: The alterations and additions to the strong-room and offices at Gisborne, which were sanctioned in the early part of the year, have been satisfactorily carried out, and, with the new system of map-drawers, pigeon-holes, &c., have effected a great improvement in every way, and much labour in searching for plans and documents is now saved. There has been an extra iron door fitted to the strong-room, which necessarily adds to its fire-resisting condition. The draughting-tables have been renovated; pigeon-holes for letter-files, and alterations to counters in the public room and Receiver's office have also very materially improved the conveniences and appearance of the offices generally. The local land officer has had the county litho maps coloured to show land-tenures, &c., and these are now hung on spring rollers, so that the general public may have access to them, and are found to supply a long-felt want.

*Miscellaneous.*—During the year there have again been several changes in the staff. Messrs. W. C. Wall and G. H. Davis, both of whom had but recently joined the ranks of assistant surveyors, resigned from the service in order to take up private practice, and their loss is to be much regretted as they were both excellent officers. Mr. H. E. Walshe has been appointed to succeed the former, and a successor to the latter is much needed. It is with sincere regret that I have to report that, after a most protracted illness, extending over many months, our respected Chief Draughtsman (Mr. James Hay) was advised to relinquish work, and his resignation was accepted in January. It is understood that his place will be filled by Mr. H. G. Price early in April, and, having been deprived of Mr. Hay's valuable help for some ten months, this gentleman's arrival will relieve several of the officers of extra duties they have necessarily had to fulfil in the interim. Mr. D. Nelson, draughting cadet in the Gisborne office, was transferred to the field staff in the Auckland District; and Mr. D. M. Yeates removed from Napier to take up his duties; while Miss M. Cooper was transferred from the Head Office to fill Mr. Yeates's place as shorthand clerk and typiste. Mr. W. T. Neill, who was temporarily transferred from the Dunedin office as Office Computer at Gisborne, returned to take up his former position at Dunedin, at Christmas. Mr. W. G. Harding, lately attached to the New Plymouth staff, exchanged positions with Mr. T. V. McKay in December last, while Mr. W. J. Brooke joined the Napier office as clerical cadet in September.