

of £1,037 15s. was spent in defining the boundaries of lands sold and granted many years previously. These two items represent provincial liabilities. In addition to the area shown in the return, twenty-six sections, containing 3,061 acres, were surveyed, under the fee-deposit system, by authorized surveyors under the homestead clauses of the Land Act.

*Town Section Survey.*—No new town or village has been laid out during the past season. The items shown are additions to existing towns.

*Native Land Court Surveys.*—Engaged as the official staff of surveyors is on settlement and on other more strictly speaking Government surveys, we have done but little under this heading. Mr. Goldsmith made the only survey of any size, and that was one of Mayor Island. His interesting descriptive report of the island has been forwarded to you. To insure the correct position of this survey with respect to the other surveys of the colony, he, with the aid of Messrs. Cheal and Turner, observed angles of a triangle whose sides are 32.7 and 26.2 miles respectively, the heliostats being used to sight on. To meet the wants of Native applicants to have their claims surveyed and the requirements of the Native Land Court the aid of the authorized surveyors was obtained for the survey of 137 blocks containing 355,384 acres, the cost of which was advanced by Government, on the application of the Natives, to the amount of £5,006 4s., all of which is secured by registered lien on the land. The average size of these blocks is 2,430 acres, and they were surveyed at an average cost of 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per acre, a price which will bear favourable comparison with that which the Natives ordinarily have to pay to private surveyors. In addition to the blocks above mentioned, there were 294 other blocks, with an area of 720,896 acres, the surveys of which were paid for by Natives or private individuals, received during the year, and are now ready for the operations of the Native Land Court. A considerable portion of these areas are of course subdivisions of old blocks, made in pursuance of the orders of the Court. Of the above area, 457,009 acres on ninety-three plans have been received at the Gisborne office, representing mostly subdivision orders. Mr. Barnard speaks in high terms of the general excellence of the work of the authorized surveyors engaged on this kind of work. At the Native meeting held at Kihikihi in December last, already referred to, arrangements were completed for the survey of the external boundaries of the Aotea Block, comprising the greater part of the so-called King country, and early in January Mr. F. H. Edgecumbe and Mr. W. C. Spencer proceeded to undertake the work. The former started from the Whanganui River near the 39th parallel, and ran the line south-easterly till he connected on to surveys lying immediately at the west base of Ruapehu; whilst the latter, starting from the same place on the Whanganui, worked westwards until he effected a junction with the confiscation-line east of the White Cliffs, which had been defined by Mr. Skeet, of the Taranaki staff. Mr. Edgecumbe had a good deal of trouble with some of the Natives on more than one occasion, but effected the purpose for which he was sent. Mr. Spencer is now defining another portion of the boundary running from a point on the coast between Kawhia and Aotea to the confiscation-line south of Pirongia. On the completion of this, and Mr. Skeet's work at Mokau, a plan can be made to enable the Court to deal with this large block, which is roughly estimated to contain 3,200,000 acres. It will be seen from the above that 377 blocks, containing 1,082,866 acres, have been surveyed for the Native Land Court, though much of it is not new country now for the first time to be brought under the Act, but old blocks subdivided and the title individualized.

*Land-purchase Surveys.*—The department has directed several surveys for the above purpose, principally in the Ohinemuri Gold Field Block, where the work consisted in defining the reserves made by the Natives at the time of sale to the Government. The work has proved to be very difficult and tedious, but has been well done by Mr. Nepean Kenny. The other surveys are blocks and Native reserves in purchased blocks in the Bay of Plenty and other districts. The cost has been defrayed by the Land Purchase Department, with the exception of that for a block of about 12,000 acres at Aotea the survey of which is in hand by Mr. Haszard.

*Roads, Railways, &c.*—Of the 234 miles of road laid out, nearly 200 miles were in exercise of the reserved rights in Native grants. The exercise of these rights is a matter which requires very careful handling and will yet give the department an immense deal of trouble. As a rule the Natives are all bitterly opposed to the roads, and look upon the taking of them as unwarrantable proceedings on behalf of the Government, a feeling which has become much intensified by their having acquired a knowledge of the provisions of the Crown and Native Lands Rating Act. During the past year we have been reluctantly obliged to proceed against the Natives on three occasions for obstructing surveyors laying out roads, and, though successful so far as obtaining verdicts against them, this cannot be looked at as a satisfactory way of carrying out the provisions of the Act. A difficulty of another kind, which is inherent in the Native Lands Act, under which these road rights are exercised, is likely also to occur wherever the lands are so valuable or so situated as to induce the owners to subdivide into small blocks, thus rendering the 5 per cent. taken from each of no value as a road, or, on the other hand, it has the effect of forcing the roads into such positions as to render them useless. Immediately these small divisions fall into the hands of Europeans they naturally require roads. In addition to the roads shown in the return, 29 $\frac{1}{2}$  miles of railway have been surveyed under the direction of the department for purposes of Proclamation, at the cost of the Public Works Department.

*Detention by Native Opposition, &c.*—The principal item under this heading was due to a temporary stoppage of the triangulation in the King country, which has already been reported. Two of the others are the equivalent of time lost through the obstruction referred to in the preceding paragraph.

*Other Works, &c.*—The column headed as above includes items which cannot be included in the preceding ones, such as cost of field inspection, supervision of road works, connecting old surveys, standard surveys, leave of absence of surveyors, surveying King country boundaries, exploration for roads, value of work on hand, survey of foreshore, &c.

*Standard Survey of Towns.*—Mr. Williams has made a further extension of this very necessary work in the suburbs of Auckland, the results of which are all published and in the hands of