

## NATIVE LAND COURT.

The particulars of surveys of this class show that a gross area of 317,418 acres was defined in 157 blocks or sections. Auckland leads the way with 115 blocks, aggregating 249,842 acres, principally in the King-country. An area of 45,347 acres, chiefly in Poverty Bay, was subdivided under the direction of the Chief Surveyor, Hawke's Bay. In Wellington Land District, 247,383 acres were defined. The Middle Island necessarily offers little opportunity for surveys of this class.

## MINING SURVEYS.

Surveys of 127 claims, representing 9,473 acres, were completed during the year. In Auckland twenty-six claims, representing 2,029 acres, were surveyed. None were called for in any other North Island land district. In Nelson very little work of this nature was undertaken; twenty-five out of twenty-seven claims were defined by staff surveyors. The Chief Surveyor reports that many dredges were at work, and that the average weekly yield of gold was 26 oz., which materially assisted to repay the cost of the dredges, which amounts to some £8,000 or £10,000 each. In Marlborough eleven claims were pegged off by contract. The Westland licensed surveyors marked off fifty-three special claims. There was a large decrease of claim surveys in Otago; only sixty-five sections or claims were surveyed, as against 367 the previous year. The work was undertaken principally by licensed surveyors. In Southland also only eight claims were surveyed, indicating, it is stated, a reaction in dredging.

## ROADS AND RAILWAYS.

The summation of the several returns gives a total of 432½ miles, executed at a cost of £14.41 per mile, which, compared with previous years, indicates a slight increase in the cost. As usual, the work included railways, existing roads, deviations, and new roads. Advantage is taken by the surveyors engaged upon the work to mark their traverses, so that the stations shall remain as standards of reference for future surveys.

## COMPARISON.

On comparison with last year it will be seen that the minor triangulation executed is greater in area to the extent of 2,236,203 acres, and the cost is 0.34d. less per acre. Topographical survey is also greater to the extent of 156,016 acres, and the average cost 1.25d. per acre lower. Rural and suburban section surveys to the extent of 242,367 acres were executed last year above that completed in the previous year, and the average cost is lower, being 1.21s. against 1.33s. Town section surveys were 1,375 acres, as against 637 acres for the previous year, the cost being slightly greater. Native Land Court surveys are 85,345 acres larger than in the previous year, and the cost 5d. per acre less. The mining surveys completed were 32,428 acres less in area than in the previous year, and the cost per acre 0.12s. more per acre. The road surveys executed fell short of the previous year's total by 165 miles, the increase in cost being £0.56 per mile. The number of surveyors constantly employed throughout the year was eighty-four, an increase of ten.

## OTHER WORK.

Some of the most useful services rendered by the Department fall under this head. These embrace inspections and reports upon estates, improvements, forests, and timber valuations, disputed boundaries, information for goldfields Wardens and other Departments, work in hand, and other miscellaneous surveys and duties. The total cost for the year was £11,795 11s. 8d.

## INSPECTION.

The importance of constant and active supervision and direction of work and performance of duty is generally recognised. In no employment is it more necessary than in the actual work of surveying, and in the compilation of the field and office records and details thereof. The Assistant Surveyor-General, Auckland, states that the inspections made by two of his field officers were, with one exception, satisfactory as to the character of the staff and licensed surveyors' work. In Hawke's Bay few inspections were made, in consequence of the pressure of other work and duties. Ten inspections were made by District Surveyors in Taranaki, and the present Chief Surveyor visited all the staff surveyors and found their surveys progressing satisfactorily. The Wellington Inspector made eighteen thoroughly complete technical field inspections, which prove that, with one or two exceptions, the work was well and correctly done. Six inspections were made in Nelson. Seven visits of inspection were made by the Chief Surveyor of Marlborough. The Chief Surveyor of Canterbury reports that a District Surveyor checked a Land Transfer survey. The reduced number of staff surveyors and limited surveys by licensed surveyors were not considered as calling for actual tests in Otago. The Chief Surveyor, Southland, visited the surveyors engaged on the block set aside for landless Natives on the west side of the Waiau.

From the foregoing it is clear that the inspections effected fall short of what appears necessary and essential. Arrangements are being made to insure more general and frequent supervision of all of the staff and licensed surveyors' work.

## LAND TRANSFER.

The return of work and services of this class are summarised thus: Plans examined and approved, 1,242; deeds and other instruments passed, 7,894; number of plans placed on certificates of title, singly, 130; in duplicate, 5,565; in triplicate, 588; miscellaneous plans drawn or compiled, 172: cost of above, £3,975 1s. 8d.

The reports and details furnished indicate that the work has been carried out effectually and promptly, and with credit to the licensed surveyors and Land Transfer officers.