

been passed. Eighteen road-diversion plans have been verified and returned to the Road Boards concerned.

Office-work.—The following are some of the principal items of work done during the year, viz.: Twelve tracings for lithography of Crown lands to be opened for sale; four new districts traced for the public map-room; thirty-nine large and thirty-two small plans received from the surveyors have been checked or are in course of check; 277 certificates of title covering 446 sections, and eight Crown grants, were prepared and handed over to the Land Transfer Department; and fifty-five perpetual leases in triplicate were prepared (this class of work, owing to press of other work put upon the officers lately, is somewhat in arrear, but I expect to have most of the leases issued during the present year).

During the current year I also hope to get a larger number of the survey districts forwarded for photo-lithography, as this part of our work is also very much in arrear, about one-half only of the Canterbury District having yet been done.

I must not forget to mention that, in addition to the year's work above outlined, two large plans, one of the Mueller, Hooker, and Tasman Glaciers, near Mount Cook, and the other of the Godley Glacier country, were prepared by Messrs. Haylock and Styche respectively, each plan in different style, the former obtaining a certificate of the first-class order of merit at the New Zealand and South Seas Exhibition held recently at Dunedin. These are excellent specimens of draughtsmanship, and, as they were both done by gentlemen trained entirely in this office, reflect credit not only upon them but upon the department itself.

Proposed Operations, 1890-91.—A considerable area of land has been purchased for cash during the early part of the present year, which, with land taken up on perpetual-lease conditions under the Amendment Act of 1887, has largely augmented the acreage remaining on hand for survey, which now amounts to 262 sections, containing 85,935 acres.

About 3,700 acres of the Lake Ellesmere lands will require to be laid off into sections in the early spring, and I may anticipate that the Midland Railway Company will apply for title for several large blocks during this year, which, with the blocks already applied for, will give more work than I can reasonably expect to get through in the current year.

Early in the season I purpose to send Mr. Brodrick to complete the survey of the Murchison and Tasman Glaciers, in connection with his previous surveys, so that an absolutely correct map of this most interesting district can be issued for the use of tourists and others visiting the locality. He will afterwards finish the topographical survey of the Ahuriri and Hunter Rivers, which will complete the topography of the country actually occupied.

JOHN H. BAKER, Chief Surveyor.

OTAGO.

THE permanent field staff remains the same as last season—namely, six surveyors, and there is only one cadet in the field. In January last two surveyors were engaged temporarily to assist in completing the settlement surveys in Glenomaru district, and they are still at work in that locality. The office staff is the same as last year—namely, eight draughtsmen and the accountant; but one cadet entered the office in October last. In order to keep the settlement surveys in advance of the demand, two or three survey parties in addition to those already engaged, and two or three survey cadets in the office, will be required.

Topographical Survey.—Only 287 acres are returned under this head, at a cost of 2d. per acre.

Rural and Suburban Surveys.—Over 32,000 acres have been surveyed during the past year, as against 20,000 acres for the previous one. The cost per acre is a little under 1s. 9d., as against 1s. 7½d. for the previous year. It must be remembered that in the Otago Survey District the greater part of the land for settlement is in dense bush. The bush has to be explored for every road, and this often necessitates going over the ground several times before the road is finally graded and pegged. Some excellent roads have been found in what at first appeared to be almost inaccessible country.

Town Section Surveys.—One hundred and nine quarter-acre sections were laid off at Nenthorn Township, at a cost of 10s. per section.

Native Land Court Surveys.—Two Native reserves—at Waitaki and Moeraki—comprising 1,147 acres, were subdivided into fifty-eight allotments, at a cost of 2s. 11½d. per acre. The work of allotting the ground between the various applicants, especially at Moeraki, was very difficult and tedious, and required great tact and patience on the part of the surveyor. A large part of the Moeraki Block was bush-land.

Gold-mining Surveys.—There has been a greatly-increased demand for mining areas this season as compared with the last, nearly three times the area having been taken up this year. The figures are 307 sections, comprising 10,424 acres, as against 109 sections, comprising 3,667 acres, last year. The cost per acre is less this year, being 4s. 7½d. Of the above total, 6,300 acres was surveyed by the staff surveyors, and 4,100 by authorised surveyors on the fee system.

Roads, Railways, and Water-races.—Under this head the totals are 14.4 miles, costing £96 19s. 6d., or £6 14s. 8½d. per mile.

Other Work.—The chief item under this is the contract survey and land-plans made by Mr. George Mackenzie of 6½ miles of railway reserves, comprising 414 acres, at a cost of £130.

Survey Inspections.—Of sixteen field inspections made during the year, four were road-inspections and two of land before survey. As there were four surveyors at work during the greater part of last season in the neighbourhood of Catlin's River, most of my inspections were in that locality. I visited the surveyors in their camps on seven different occasions, and inspected their work, besides