

Other Work.—The cost of survey to date of 180 acres applied for as a homestead site on the Hampshire Hills Run has been £20.

Office-work.—Fourteen surveyors' plans were examined, reduced, and recorded on the block-sheets and record-maps. Seventy-nine marginal plans were placed on certificates of title in lieu of grants and ordinary certificates, and ninety-three on leases, licenses, &c. The revision of maps and schedules for the property-tax, commenced last year, was completed, and tracings showing pastoral runs expiring up to 1896 furnished to Head Office. In the Land Transfer branch 4 deposited plans, dealing with 263 acres, in seven allotments, were examined and passed, and 46 mortgages, 51 transfers, and 6 leases examined. With the reduced staff I find it is impossible to devote as much attention as formerly to survey office details, the work in connection with the Crown lands and land revenue occupying a large amount of the Chief Draughtsman's time.

Proposed Operations.—The season commences with 3,980 acres on application, for sale, deferred payment, and small grazing-runs, now in progress and drawing towards completion; trigonometrical and topographical survey over the Ronga, Tunakino, and part of Rai Valleys in connection with Mr. Robertson's contract for section survey of 5,500 acres in the Rai; 3,000 acres special settlement association block in Ronga Valley, and 2,000 acres in Rai Valley set apart for selection by holders of remission certificates under the Naval and Military and Volunteers Land Act; and 6,180 acres of Native Land Court survey, with subdivisions of the Ruakaka, Tahuahua, and Waikawa Native reserves in Queen Charlotte Sound. We shall also have the usual calls for section and other work on requisition from the Land Board and other sources to attend to. Of this I can form no estimate of what may be required. With regard to the Ronga and military settlement blocks, there is some doubt whether these surveys will be required. As you are aware, there is a proposal to alter the mode of dealing with the forest lands in this part of the district, and until the report of the two members of the Land Board who are now inspecting the district has been sent in, and something definitely decided upon, it would be unwise to incur any additional expense in survey in this direction. In my report for last year I pointed out the desirability of having a topographical sketch-survey made of the Waipapa and Kincaid Runs. Since then a plan was prepared at your request, and forwarded to you in March last, which shows a large amount of country of which the topography is insufficient in detail to readjust the boundaries of the runs, should it be found requisite to do so in anticipation of the expiry of the leases. I therefore suggest, with that object in view, and with your approval, that steps be taken to carry this out not later than next year.

HENRY G. CLARK, Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Field-work.—Owing to the present period under review being only nine months, instead of twelve, which has ruled hitherto, much of the field-work completed during the summer months has not been plotted, and is not returnable in this period.

Minor Triangulation.—A small amount of this work only has been done in connection with a traverse of a portion of the main road through the Buller Gorge not previously laid down on our maps. In the Amuri District the triangulation executed in the field in the previous summer season has not yet been plotted, owing to the District Surveyor being taken off to make surveys and superintend road-work provided for the unemployed during the winter months, and there is consequently now two seasons' work in arrear of plotting in this district.

Topographical Survey for selection under "The Land Act, 1887."—A block of about 60,000 acres of this work, lying between the Takaka Valley and Mount Arthur, has been covered by Mr. J. D. Thomson, assistant surveyor. The country is rough, gorgy, and precipitous, covered with birch forest, and occasional patches of table-land, part of it being limestone formation.

Rural and Suburban Surveys.—During the past period 33,779 acres have been surveyed, in 130 sections, at an average cost of 1s. 0.1d. per acre. Messrs. Sadd and Thomson have completed the field-work of 7,702 acres in the Collingwood District, not yet plotted, and have 1,400 acres in progress. Mr. F. S. Smith has surveyed 20,186 acres at a cost of 6.53d. per acre, and has yet 56,820 acres unplotted. Several authorised surveyors have been employed to assist the staff, being paid by fees. On the western side of the main range a large number of applications for lands within the area set apart for selection by the Midland Railway Company have been received, but which cannot be dealt with until the necessary mining reserves are proclaimed, as many of these are situate within the proposed areas of reserves, and the company will not be entitled to deal with such applications.

Town Section Survey.—Several blocks in the Township of Ahaura have been sectionised, in order to complete the original plan. A standard survey of the Town of Westport is in progress by the District Surveyor as his other work permits.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Forty-three mining surveys have been made in the West Coast districts, containing 1,135, the demand for these having fallen off considerably, as well as in the Collingwood District.

Road Surveys.—Twenty miles and three-quarters of these surveys have been made, of which eight miles, in the Amuri District, were in connection with relief-works for the unemployed, in charge of the District Surveyor; seven miles and a quarter of Nelson and Westport Road traversed for placing on plans; 3 miles 55 chains were surveyed for the Inangahua County; and the remainder in short lengths to give access to lands.

Other Work.—Under this head is included surveys other than for settlement, inspection, reports, district offices, and other miscellaneous items,