

Land Transfer Work.—Seven Crown grants, with 28 plans; 117 certificates of title in triplicate, with 351 plans; 292 plans placed on certificates of transfer, and 121 plans examined and checked: 112 certificates of title are in arrear. This work is under the charge of Mr. W. S. Curtis, with the assistance of Mr. A. G. Spreat.

General Office-work.—A hundred and eight leases and licenses, with 240 plans, have been prepared; 12 schedules of certificates of title in triplicate; 110 field plans and 301 sheets of tabulations examined; 10 block-sheets, 2 trig. sheets, 2 Crown-grant record maps and selection maps prepared; property-tax maps and schedules were posted up in transactions on sections for the past triennial period; monthly and quarterly returns, recording plans and surveys on block-sheets, have been kept up; 1,945 payment receipts in duplicate have been given, and 1,500 open accounts are in operation; 780 vouchers for payments prepared and examined; and 3,742 letters and telegrams received, despatched, and recorded.

I would again call attention to the necessity of preparing a new set of maps, to be published for the information of the public generally, as the sale of the old ones has been stopped, the information being fifteen years behind date of present surveys. This and other matters in arrear must be done by outside assistance, as at present the amalgamated office staff only consists of five for all purposes, independent of Land Transfer work and Receiver of Revenue. A considerable amount of business connected with Midland Railway lands has fallen upon the office during the past year, and a large amount is still in hand.

Proposed Work, 1892-93.—The arrears of survey remaining under current applications to be undertaken amount to 109 sections, containing 13,263 acres, averaging in size 121 acres. Of these, seventy-four applications for land to lease are distributed over the Waimea and Collingwood Districts, and generally speaking are isolated surveys adjoining old sections, many of which will require revision to locate the newer surveys. These will be taken in hand by Messrs. Sadd and Thomson, assisted by authorised surveyors. Of second-class unsurveyed lands there are twenty-four applications for purchase, and perpetual-lease tenure, to survey and in hand. Mr. Smith, with Mr. Barron, Assistant Surveyor, will be employed on survey of blocks selected by the railway company, and the former will endeavour to bring up the arrears of the two past seasons' field-work not yet plotted. Mr. Snodgrass has current mining surveys and standard survey of Westport to continue. Mr. Montgomerie has also mining surveys, and both these officers will have a large amount of surveys to take in hand as soon as the applications for land within the railway company's area of selection can be dealt with, and also, probably, to define some of the boundary-lines of proclaimed mining reserves. Messrs. F. Thompson and Bullard have been transferred to the North Island surveys. Messrs. J. D. Thomson and D. Barron have completed their cadetships, passed examination successfully, and have been promoted to assistant surveyorships.

JOHN S. BROWNING, Chief Surveyor.

WESTLAND.

Topographical Survey.—Total area, 24,900 acres, at a cost per acre of 0.6d., from traverses and exploration surveys made during progress of adjacent isolated section surveys; also reconnaissance surveys of country at heads of unexplored rivers in South Westland.

Topographical Surveys for selection under "The Land Act, 1887."—Total area, 34,560 acres; cost per acre, 3.4d. Also derived from extension of traverses, and exploration surveys, by Messrs. Murray and Wilson, while employed on adjacent settlement surveys, roads, &c., and with a view to completion of application maps.

Rural and Suburban Section Surveys.—Total area, 1,340 acres; cost per acre, 4s. 7d. Comprising fifty-six sections of small areas and isolated positions. The whole country is covered with heavy and dense forest: this, with the excessive rainfall common to our Coast, and the distances between the various surveys, increases the cost very considerably.

Gold-Mining Surveys.—Total area, 213 acres; cost per acre, 4s. 9.3d. These have been principally executed by authorised surveyors under the fee system. In consequence of the considerable falling-off in mining speculation, these surveys are fewer in number than last year, and are generally of the larger special claims and licensed holdings: in regard to the smaller claims and holdings which are not usually surveyed, the transactions are probably much about the same.

Road Surveys.—Traverse and engineering surveys have been made of thirteen miles of road, at an average cost per mile of £20 5s. 4d. This fills up a gap in former survey of Main South Road, "Cook's River southward" Section, and it is proposed to ask for a sum to be placed on estimates for partial construction thereof.

Other Work.—In this is included cost of sundry inspections for Land Department of various classes of holdings and improvements, and also of final completion of road contracts which had not been accepted as finished when inspected by myself; inspection of certain prospecting tracks for Mines Department, survey of tramway and saw-mill sites, general office assistance at odd times by members of field staff during bad weather, and also sundry repairs effected to survey buildings, fences, &c., by the survey labourers when stormstayed.

General Remarks on Field-work done by Staff and Contract Surveyors.—The total cost has been £1,321 6s. 1d. for the period, being a decrease in gross cost, as compared with last year, of £151 2s. 6d.; but, as the credits for fees received—£184 18s. 3d.—are less than for that period, the results, in regard to net cost, are practically the same. The fees for unsurveyed lands selected under