

to these surveyors in resurvey has been so considerable that there is little danger of this pernicious practice being again resorted to.

Work on Hand.—There is in the hands of the members of the staff 1,210 square miles of triangulation and topography, and 150 square miles near Reefton; but it is not expected that the whole will be completed this coming season, as it is all in rough forest country, and can only be profitably carried out during the summer months. There are 6,273 acres of settlement selections of unsurveyed lands in different parts of the district awaiting survey, which has been apportioned to staff officers and one authorised surveyor. Some seventy miles of roads are required to be surveyed, and twenty-five mining claims, comprising 2,388 acres, are either now in course of survey or are shortly to be undertaken.

Office-work.—During the year 188 surveyors' maps have come to hand, which have been submitted to mathematical check, and recorded; and twenty-four deposited maps under the Land Transfer Act have been similarly dealt with. Public-counter maps of fourteen districts have been made to replace the old dilapidated ones that have been in use for the last fifteen or twenty years, and six Crown grant record-maps have been drawn. Fair progress has been made in the preparation of maps of survey districts for photo-lithography, seven having been drawn and lithographed, and a similar number are only awaiting examination to be forwarded. There are a considerable number yet to be drawn and published before even the settled portion of the district can be said to be lithographed. 321 certificates of title in lieu of Crown grants, leases, &c., have been prepared, and 1,457 maps have been drawn on various classes of titles; and, in addition to the ordinary current work of the office during the first three months of the year, a considerable amount of the time of the officers was employed in completing the valuation-maps for the Land-tax Department.

THOS. HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Minor Triangulation and Topography.—The chief entry under this heading is 480,000 acres by Mr. Morgan Carkeek, which embraces the valleys of the Awatere, Acheron, and Waihopai, and the western slopes of the Inland Kaikouras, which culminate in Mount Tapuaenuku (9,462 ft.). This was undertaken in connection with the reletting of the South Marlborough runs, the leases of most of which have recently expired. Mr. Simpson also has done 4,400 acres, near White's Bay.

Rural and Suburban.—There have been 84,464 acres laid off into 107 sections, which gives an average of about 790 acres each. The cost varies from 7d. to 1s. per acre for the surveys done by the department, and from 1s. 2d. to 2s. 5d. per acre for some 5,000 acres done by contract, the average of the whole being under 9½d., which must be considered very moderate.

Native Land Court Surveys.—These consist of the Anamahanga and Otaki Native Reserves.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Only ten sections, comprising an area of 181 acres, were surveyed this season; four of these were dredging claims in the bed of the Wakamarina River. The average cost was 23s. 3d. per acre, but it was all done by contract, and paid for by fees.

Roads, Railways, and Water-races.—In this column the largest item is forty miles of road survey by Mr. R. J. Johnston on the Main South Road and on roads to give access to the blocks for settlement in the Kaikoura district. This includes longitudinal and cross-sections, estimates, specifications, &c., for co-operative road contracts. Mr. McFarland has done a mile and a half of road survey, and Mr. A. D. Wilson has done a similar distance through Mr. Chaytor's freehold, to give access to the land recently taken up in the Pukaka Valley.

Office-work.—A four-mile map of the province, a plan of Orieri Survey District, and sale-plans of the Kahautara and Okarahia Blocks have been compiled for lithography; thirty-six plans were placed on block-sheets, 352 tracings were made, and 105 plans and lithographs mounted; fifty-seven plans and 204 traverse-sheets have been examined. In addition to the above, there is, of course, the usual miscellaneous office-work.

Proposed Operations for 1898-99.—Mr. F. Stephenson Smith, District Surveyor at Kaikoura, will superintend the roading and subdivision of the Puhipuhi, Kaitao, and other blocks for settlement in the neighbourhood of Kaikoura, and also the construction of the Main South Road round the Kahautara Bluff, which is being carried out by co-operative contracts. Messrs. D. W. Gillies and E. W. Buckeridge, who are stationed near the mouth of the Clarence, will extend the triangulation from the Kaikoura base over the Seaward Kaikouras, and close on Mr. Carkeek's work, which has been brought up from the Wairau base; they will also undertake the necessary settlement and road surveys in their locality. Messrs. T. W. Hughes, E. H. Farnie, and R. J. Johnston will subdivide the Spey and Stag country, and lay off any roads that may be required to give access to them, under the supervision of the District Surveyor. Mr. C. W. McFarland will carry on settlement surveys and triangulation on the north bank of the Wairau. Mr. A. Simpson will survey applications and land for landless Natives in the Sounds.

Field Inspections.—During the year I made twelve visits to Queen Charlotte Sound, eight to the Pelorus Sound, and one to Port Underwood. Most of these were in connection with the exploration and formation of the various tracks now being made to facilitate settlement. I went to Kaikoura three times—once to conduct a land-sale, and twice to inspect the surrounding country with a view to subdividing it for settlement. I also visited the Rai Valley with the Land Board to inspect the State forest. I went over the Flaxbourne, Starborough, and Ugbrooke Estates with the Land Purchase Commissioner, and attended a meeting of the Land Purchase Board in Wellington. I took the opportunity of accompanying the Inspector of Stock on one of his periodical trips through the back country, in order to get some idea of that part of my district, going *via* the Leatham River, Birch Hill, and Molesworth Stations to Kekerangu. I made one visit of inspection to the Omaka Estate, recently disposed of under the Land for Settlements Acts.

C. W. ADAMS, Chief Surveyor.