

Town-section Survey.—The only item under this head is forty-six sections in the Township of Seddon, on the Starborough Estate.

Gold-mining Survey.—Eleven sections, containing 1,017 acres, were surveyed by three surveyors, at an average cost of 4.42s. per acre.

Road Surveys.—These comprise about thirty-three miles in length; average cost, nearly £19 per mile. The rate per mile for most of the work is much less than this, but the extra cost of six miles of road survey round the Kahautara Bluff has caused the average to be higher than usual.

Office-work.—Sale-plans of Starborough Estate (three), Township of Seddon, Puhipuhi and Pine Valley Blocks, and Small Grazing-run 99 have been compiled for lithography. Fourteen plans were plotted on block-sheets and nineteen road-plans were compiled; 418 tracings were made, and 115 plans and lithos mounted; fifty-six plans and 266 traverse sheets have been examined. In addition to the above, there is, of course, the usual miscellaneous office-work.

Proposed Operations for 1899–1900.—Mr. F. Stephenson Smith, District Surveyor at Kaikoura, will be fully employed in superintending the subdivision of the Puhipuhi and other blocks for settlement and the construction of the main road round the Kahautara Bluff. Mr. D. W. Gillies will complete the survey of the Native reserve extending from the Puhipuhi River to the Government reserve on the south side of the Clarence; he will then assist Mr. Carkeek in the survey of the Stronvar country, &c. Mr. E. W. Buckeridge has completed the triangulation and topography of the Seaward Kaikouras, but it will take him four or five months to finish the plans and calculations; this should be done without further delay, after which he will be available for any settlement surveys that may be required. Messrs. T. W. Hughes and E. H. Farnie will complete the pegging of the Puhipuhi sections to be offered next month, and will then undertake the subdivision of the rest of the Puhipuhi Block, and the reserved portion of the Waipapa and Mount Fyffe runs; they will then be available for the subdivision of the Spey country or other settlement surveys. Mr. R. J. Johnston is now engaged on the survey of the Seaward Valley Road, Puhipuhi Block, which will take some time longer to complete; he will then be available for the road surveys in the Kaikoura district. Mr. Carkeek is now engaged in the subdivision of Richmond Brook Estate, after which I propose that he should complete the triangulation of a small piece of country between the Wairau River and the Nelson boundary; this has been standing over for a long time, and it should be finished without delay, as at present there is no reliable check for section surveys; Mr. Carkeek could then proceed with the survey of the Stronvar Run. Mr. A. Simpson has now in hand the completion of the survey of the Township of Seddon, and the levelling of roads in the Starborough Block; he has also to complete his plans of Starborough, after which he will be available for surveys at Port Underwood and elsewhere. Mr. C. W. McFarland will be engaged for some time in subdividing country on the north bank of the Wairau, in the vicinity of Bartlett's Creek, after which he has some surveys to make at the head of the Onamalutu, and some isolated surveys in the Kaituna and Pelorus Valleys, and other settlement surveys as they come in. Mr. Wilson will complete his work at Richmond Brook in a few weeks; after which, I believe, he proceeds to England on a six months' leave of absence; when he returns I understand he resumes work in the Westland District. Mr. H. Maitland is now surveying a scenic reserve, comprising the valley of the Brown River, adjoining the boundary of the Nelson District.

Field Inspections.—During the year I made eight visits to Pelorus Sound, five to Kenepuru, three to Tory Channel, four to Anakiwi and Mahakipawa, and four to Port Underwood. I visited Wellington twice on business connected with the Land Purchase Board, and once to give evidence in reference to W. Gibson's petition. I went once to Kaikoura to conduct a ballot, once to Richmond Brook Estate, twice to Starborough Estate, once to North Bank, and once up the Rai Valley to Tennyson Inlet.

C. W. ADAMS, Chief Surveyor.

WESTLAND.

Topographical, &c.—During the first three months Mr. Wilson was employed in connection with cutting the boundary-lines of the Ross Borough. This was no easy matter, as the boundaries traversed the western slope of Mount Greenland, passing over deep ravines. The work now completed will be of good service to the Ross Borough financially, as they are now aware upon whom to levy rates. Mr. Smyth has also completed the traverse of Deception River, a large feeder of the Otira; but, with the exception of ascertaining its position on the topographical map, no settlement land of any extent nor anything in particular requiring to be noted was discovered. Mr. Douglas has explored and mapped the back country between the Waiho and Wataroa, and has also defined the topographical features of the middle basin of the latter valley.

Rural and Suburban.—A block of very necessary revision surveys between Woolhouse Road, Donnelly's Creek, and Ross was completed by Mr. Wilson before his leaving for Blenheim. Mr. Smyth also revised a number of section surveys up the Kokatahi Valley, and which were very much in need of revision—not that any great error ever existed in the original surveys, but the bearings from magnetic to true are difficult to transpose upon the new blocks without a revision survey of nearly all the old boundary-lines, which have now grown up thicker than the original bush, and I should recommend that this work be proceeded with by the staff when no other pressing work is on hand.

Gold-mining Surveys.—During the year 365 acres (nine special claims) has been surveyed by Surveyor Smyth and Licensed Surveyors Lord and Macfarlane, the latter being paid the survey-fees deposited by applicants to Receivers of Gold Revenue. The sum of £133 8s. 6d. has therefore to be credited to the department for work done. Mr. Smyth has also been employed on behalf of the Mines Department in surveying and mapping the general water-race system about the Kumara