

NELSON.

Triangulation and Topography.—The work done this year was executed by Messrs. Muir and Wilson, and was for the special purpose of commanding sectional surveys made by them in the Motupiko and Buller Valleys.

Rural and Suburban.—With the exception of the area returned by Mr. J. D. Thomson, which was land applied for under Part III. of "The Land Act, 1892" (situate chiefly in the Pelorus Sound), the surveys were executed for persons who had occupied areas within the Midland authorised area under temporary license, and who were entitled by "The Midland Authorised Area Land Settlement Act, 1900," to a more permanent tenure.

Towns.—The work of this class which has been done during the year consists in the survey of 133 sections on the reclaimed land at Westport, forty-nine sections at Omau Township, near Cape Foulwind, and fifteen sections at Township of Birchfield, all done by Mr. Snodgrass, the whole of which will be put up to auction shortly. There were resurveys of portions of the Towns of Reefton, Bulwer, and Hampden (now known by postal authorities as Murchison) respectively, which had not been defined since the original magnetic surveys made years ago.

Mining Surveys.—During the past year there has been very little of this class of work done in the district. The work during the past twelve months has been the survey of twenty-seven sections or claims, and, with the exception of two which were done by staff surveyors, were executed by authorised surveyors, they receiving the fees lodged in the Warden's Court. There are now a good many dredges at work in the district, and the mean average produce of gold per week is about 26 oz., which allows a margin of profit to be distributed amongst the shareholders to assist in repaying their outlay. The outlay upon a dredge is between £8,000 and £10,000.

Road Surveys.—The roads traversed comprise chiefly portions of the main coach-road Belgrove to Reefton, &c., situate in the Clarke, Hope, and Upper Buller Valleys, which had not formerly been surveyed. It was therefore found necessary to do so, in order to locate selections which have recently been taken up, and also to make our office maps complete.

Other Work.—Under this heading the principal items are surveys in hand at the close of the year, notably the Sherry and Slippery Valleys, in the Tadmor Survey District, where about 6,000 acres may be sectionized, the land being all fairly good. At the present time Mr. Sadd and staff are prospecting for a road through the block, so when that is fixed upon sections will be laid off to the best advantage, having the road as a frontage. Trigonometrical and topographical extension up the Matakita Valley Road, in Central Buller District, and the sectionizing of block between Mokihinui and Little Wanganui Rivers, are also in hand; other items being the various inspections and reports for Land Board, inspection of surveys, roads, &c.; also general expenditure connected with the district offices at Reefton and Westport.

Proposed Operations, 1902-3.—The completion of trigonometrical and topographical survey to connect between Murchison and the Maruia Plains, *via* Matakita Valley, and also of road surveys which I estimate at, say, forty miles. Of rural lands there are about 48,000 acres, which it is proposed to cut up into suitable allotments for selection under the optional system. It is also proposed to open up a block of Crown lands of about 40,000 acres in the Totaranui Survey District on the selection-before-survey system, and from what information I have been able to gather most of it is only suitable for sheep-farms, so would have to be taken up in large areas. It will therefore be requisite to have the country classified, reserves made for forest conservation, and reserves for other public purposes, &c., and roads.

Office-work.—There has been a good deal of extra work thrown upon the office staff during the year in connection with the opening up of the Midland authorised area and the disposal of lands within same; also searching titles and preparing plans, &c., for Rivers Commission, and the transfer of the Nelson portion of the Grey County to Westland, which entailed a great deal of copying of plans and documents; work of preparing index-maps for Valuation Department, tracings in connection with the Nelson Harbour endowment, calculations of trig. stations to determine correct coast-line; the collection of data for Year-book; returns of timber lands, and other similar work; tracings for sale-maps, besides about 430 miscellaneous tracings.

W. G. MURRAY, Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Minor Triangulation and Topography.—Under this heading Mr. Buckeridge has returned 511,400 acres of the Clarence Valley and Seaward Kaikouras. Mr. Carkeek also returned 36,400 acres of the north-western portion of the district. The average cost of the whole was 1.42d. per acre.

Rural and Suburban.—Seventy rural sections, embracing 75,873 acres, have been surveyed this year, at an average cost of a little over 10d. per acre. This comparatively small price is explained by the fact of the Waipapa Block being included. This block contains 54,542 acres, and is subdivided into only nine runs.

Town Sections.—The only town sections surveyed this year are a few in the town of Kaikoura.

Native Land Court Surveys.—There was no work under this heading.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Eleven claims, containing 844 acres, were surveyed during the year by contract surveyors, at an average cost of about 5s. 9d. an acre; this, however, was paid for out of deposits.

Road Surveys.—Altogether 32 miles of road surveys were returned in various parts of the district. The average cost was a little over £13 a mile.

Other Work.—The principal expenditure under this head was incurred in connection with the district office at Kaikoura, which was the headquarters of the surveys in that locality.