

Miscellaneous.—By the departure of Mr. John Langmuir from Dunedin this district has lost the services of a most competent surveyor, and by his retirement from field-work to become Chief Draughtsman at New Plymouth the Survey Staff has suffered a considerable loss. From the time Mr. Langmuir joined Mr. C. W. Adams as cadet in 1874 he has worked in Otago, and during all that time has shown great interest in his work, and his capacity, zeal, and accuracy had become recognised by the profession and all with whom he was associated. I think it therefore only fitting that this should be placed on record on his severance from the district. Mr. W. D. R. McCurdie has also severed his connection with this Department by transfer to the new Roads Department as Road Surveyor. As he has not left the district, his advice in connection with various works with which he was previously connected will no doubt be still available. His bush experiences and ability as a surveyor rank only second to that of Mr. Langmuir. Mr. W. H. Trimble, the late Accountant, has also joined the Roads Department. I have no doubt his work in the new office will be as satisfactory as that rendered to the Lands and Survey Department.

D. BARRON, Chief Surveyor.

SOUTHLAND.

Minor Triangulation and Topography.—No work of this kind was undertaken in this district during the year.

Rural and Suburban.—The total area surveyed during the year reached 32,249 acres, divided into 156 sections, at an average cost of 2-9s. per acre. Within this total, areas of 2,231 acres and 11,455 acres represent surveys of Ringway and Glenham Settlements under the Land for Settlements Act. Surveys of thirty-three sections—6,406 acres—cover timbered country, being applications for sawmilling purposes. The remaining areas tabulated represent a considerable area, comprising the landless Natives' block and a number of lesser sections scattered over the district, which need no special comment, the high cost noted being due to the long distances travelled and other expenses incurred by the surveyors in their work, and defrayed by the applicants.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Eight sections, totalling 381 acres, are tabulated, and the high cost of survey is again explained by the remote localities to be reached by the surveyor. These surveys, as before referred to, were carried on under the "fee system" by private surveyors practising in this district. The small number of gold-mining areas surveyed throughout the year is, I fear, the result of the reaction caused by the too-enterprising spirit displayed in the dredging operations during the year 1900.

Roads.—The only works carried out under this heading were the preparation of engineering plans giving longitudinal and cross-section data of some 6 miles in connection with proposed road-formation in the Glenham Settlement.

Other Work.—This represents cost of services performed by the surveyors, such as timber valuations, redefining old survey boundaries, and more particularly moneys expended on work in progress but not yet completed and mapped.

Proposed Operations for 1902-3.—Mr. Hodgkinson has on hand the subdivision for settlement purposes, in areas from 200 to 400 acres, Block XIX., Longwood, and Blocks XIII. and XIV., Waiau District, containing together an approximate area of 9,700 acres. There are also a few spotting surveys which, with the above, will keep him fully employed during the year. Mr. Lilliecrona has the plans to complete, which are well in hand, of some 3,500 acres in Blocks I. and V., Rowallan District; after which, I propose employing him to subdivide for settlement about 2,000 acres in Blocks I. and X., Alton, and 800 acres in Block I., Lillburn District. Before commencing these surveys, however, I would have all the areas in survey of deviation roads, &c.—the accumulation of some years back—brought up to date, so that these could be recorded and titles amended accordingly. Mr. Otway, by the middle of June, will have completed all the field-work of his block for landless Natives; he will then come into the office, push on with his mapping, and return to the field about the beginning of September. He anticipates finishing the whole of his field-work by the end of next summer. If opportunity and circumstances permit, I propose, as suggested last year, throwing a network of triangles over the Longwood Range, but this may stand in abeyance should more urgent work be required.

Land Transfer Office—Survey Branch.—The work of this department is steadily increasing. Eighty-one plans have been deposited and carefully checked by the office computer at intervals during the year, while the necessary draughting of marginal plans on certificates of title, certificates in lieu of grants, &c., reached 1,364 in number, while nineteen mortgages and other instruments of title have been examined. To this work the careful recording on office record-maps of the certificates last mentioned, and examining same, has added considerably to the work of the officer in charge.

Office-work.—Many duties occur in the working of the office that I need not here enumerate, but I may state that 149 working-plans have been received from surveyors, and checked by the office computer. As before noticed, eighty-one of these were for depositing in the local office of the Land Transfer Department. The large map of the Southland and Wallace Counties in hand last year was completed in April last, and its publication in the Head Office has enabled a considerable sale to the public here. Lithographic drawings of the Townships of Feldwick and Clifden were prepared, as also drawings of the survey districts of Waimumu, Waiau, and Mokoreta for publication on the mile-to-an-inch scale at Head Office. Drawings of Ringway and Glenham Settlements were also prepared and sent to the Head Office to issue as posters, and accompanying maps for the pamphlets issued to the public just prior to sale of these settlements. For the public room a new map was drawn and coloured, on mile-to-inch scale, of the north-east portion of Southland County, and a similar map of the south-east portion is now in hand. These maps replace