

Miscellaneous.—The usual demands made on the office staff were attended to. These comprised supplying of information to the public generally, and of data for the execution of surveys by staff surveyors and others; 107 tracings, thirty-nine general plans, seventy-three lithos, twenty-six sale-plans, and seventy-six application forms were mounted, and sixty-one plans repaired; reducing and recording data on maps; and a multitude of other duties. 1,480 block sheets and smaller maps have been bound with silk and repaired, a total of 2,737 altogether; six county maps were prepared; and twelve standard block sheets have been laid down.

Proposed Operations for 1903-4.—A staff of nine permanent and nine temporary surveyors are at present engaged on field-work in different parts of the district and have an area of some 333,284 acres of subdivision surveys in hand, consisting chiefly of pastoral lands in large sections. 60,793 acres of the Ohotu Block is included in the above area, and is being surveyed under the Maori Councils Act by Messrs. Carkeek, Stevenson, Drew, and Hovell. Mr. Climie will continue the inspections where necessary, and be available for other work as required. Mr. Lowe, assisted by Messrs. Frasi and Scott, is preparing for subdivision about 50,000 acres in the Waimarino, chiefly in the Kaitieke and Manganui districts, to be opened for selection shortly. Messrs. Thompson and Marchant will complete the roading and subdivision of the Maraetaua, Taonui, and Ngapuke-whakapu Blocks, and Messrs. Mountfort and Roberts will complete the roading and prepare for selection before survey the Te Tuhi, Ahu Ahu, and Puketotara Blocks in the Tauakira district. Mr. Wheeler will complete surveys in hand, and be available for various surveys necessary in the Wanganui district. Mr. McKay will complete the survey of the Normandale Settlement, Lower Hutt, and will, if the urgency of settlement-work will permit, then continue road and railway surveys necessary in the Karioi and adjacent districts. Mr. Strachan will probably complete the survey of the Kirikau and Retaruke Blocks by the end of September. Mr. Girdlestone will be available to assist Mr. Greville in subdividing the Awarua 1B and 1D Blocks, of about 81,000 acres; and Mr. Lewis will complete the survey of the north Waimarino Block, including the proposed improved-farm settlement block on the left bank of the Wanganui River, opposite Taumararui.

JOHN STRAUCHON, Chief Surveyor.

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Topographical Surveys.—Under this head about 86,400 acres has been surveyed for selection prior to division into sections, and an additional 157,000 acres is being surveyed with a view to throwing the lands open for selection at an early date. Of these, about 89,000 acres is on the West Coast between Karamea and Mokihiui and south of Brighton; about 34,000 acres near the Inangahua Junction; and some 25,000 acres on the Buller, Matiri, and Owen Rivers, between the Village of Murchison and the Hope Valley; while in the Tadmor and Rainy-river Valleys there is some 10,000 acres under survey. Since January last the staff has been increased by the employment of six additional temporary surveyors, who in most cases are working with double parties, in order to push forward the work and allow of the settlement of these Crown lands at the earliest possible date.

Trig. and Topographical Surveys.—The only return in this class is an area of 32,000 acres in the Tutaki Survey District, carried out by Mr. D. M. Wilson. This was undertaken chiefly for the purpose of locating numerous isolated surveys in the Valley of the Mangles.

Rural and Suburban.—15,203 acres has been laid off in 105 sections, averaging 145 acres, most of which has been disposed of. These lands are situate in the Tadmor, Sherry, and Slippery Valleys, Motueka and Tutaki Survey Districts, and a small block near Westport.

Town Surveys.—During the year Mr. Snodgrass has surveyed into allotments, averaging quarter of an acre, a portion of the reclaimed land to the northward of the Town of Westport. This work was commenced last year, consequently it appears with "Other work."

Mining Surveys.—There has been very little work of this description during the year, very few applications having been received, there being only six sections, comprising 326 acres, scattered between the Collingwood district and the Grey Valley.

Roads and Railways.—46½ miles of road has been traversed, thirty-five miles of which has been executed by Mr. D. M. Wilson in the Mangles, Matakitaiki, and Buller Valleys, the latter including the pegging of the main coach-road (between Motupiko and Murchison) from Hope Junction to Longford, of which only small isolated portions had previously been defined, seven miles and a quarter of main road between Motupiko and Belgrove, and four miles and a quarter in the Sherry and Slippery Valleys, which were done by District Surveyor Sadd.

Other Work.—Under this class numerous works have been carried out for County Councils and for various other Departments, the inspection of lands and reports thereon as to their suitability for settlement, the repegging of forest reserves in the Wai-iti Survey District, inspections of holdings, engineering surveys of bridge-sites, roads, &c., State coal-mines at Seddonville, and particularly the topographical surveys in progress as referred to under that heading.

Office-work.—The construction of new Crown-grant record and selection maps, the compilation of survey-district sheets for publication, preparation of sale-plans, and the work of posting up to date the originals of existing publications has occupied the attention of the office staff principally. A complete schedule of all reserves in the district has also been compiled, and tracings and descriptions prepared of a great number of sections which it was found had not been proclaimed as reserves. A considerable amount of work in connection with the investigation of road rights, and the preparation of the necessary transfers or conveyances to the Crown has been carried out. Several check surveys have been made in the city and suburbs.

Proposed Operations, 1903-4.—The services of the whole staff are to be devoted to the completion of the blocks of lands it is intended to throw open for selection before survey, and later