

on its division into suitable areas for small grazing-runs or farms as may be decided upon; this work will keep the surveyors fully employed during the year. There will also be the usual miscellaneous services connected with inspections, reports for guidance of the Land Board, and works needed by other Departments and local bodies.

I am pleased to put on record my appreciation of the assistance given to me by the officers here during the past year, and would recommend them to your favourable consideration when you are making out the estimates.

W. G. MURRAY, Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Minor Triangulation and Topography.—Under this heading Mr. Buckeridge has returned 77,750 acres in Patriarch district. The average cost was 1.32d. per acre. This was the only minor triangulation executed in this district during the year. The area triangulated would have been larger but for Mr. Buckeridge's resignation. He left this Department on the 6th June, 1902. There still remains about 140,000 acres of triangulation to be completed.

Rural and Suburban.—Eighty rural sections, embracing 237,171 acres, have been surveyed during the year, at an average cost of a little over 4d. per acre. This comparatively small price is explained by the fact that the area including the Birch Hill Block of over 200,000 acres was cut up into very large blocks of pastoral runs and small grazing-runs, and portions of the survey were only magnetic, and the higher boundaries were fixed by cross-shots.

Town Sections.—The only town sections surveyed last year were five in the Town of Kaikoura, at an average cost of £2 15s.

Road Surveys.—Altogether 26½ miles of road surveys were executed in various parts of the district. The average cost was £10 8s. 5d. per mile.

Field Inspections.—During the past year I have made six visits to the field surveyors in their camps. I have also made fourteen other visits of inspection as follows: To recreation, scenic, and other reserves, 6; road lines and deviations, 6; land for settlements, 2. I also paid a visit to Kaikoura, and attended a meeting of the Land Purchase Board in Wellington. In addition, Mr. F. E. Greenfield, of the office staff, inspected the field-work of seven Land Transfer surveys in and near Blenheim.

Proposed Operations for 1903-4.—Mr. D. W. Gillies, District Surveyor, has about six months' work on hand, in subdivisional surveys in Arapawa and Cloudy Bay districts, and with other work likely to come in will have full employment for the next season. Mr. C. W. McFarland has about two months' work on hand in the Kaituna Valley, and I have no doubt that he also will be kept fully employed with "spotting" surveys. Mr. H. Maitland has about a month's mapping on hand in connection with the surveys of the Awatere Runs. He has also a few "spotting" surveys on his list, and has some arrears of mapping in connection with former surveys which it will be necessary to complete before any new work is undertaken. It is probable that some land will shortly be acquired for a forest plantation, in which case a survey will be required. There are also three towns—Blenheim, Picton, and Havelock—that urgently require a revision of the original surveys, and unless a standard survey is made in each case there will be a considerable increase in the cost of survey whenever any sections are dealt with in the Land Transfer Department. These standard surveys should be put in hand as soon as a surveyor can be spared for the purpose. A standard traverse should also be carried over the rich level lands in the suburbs of Kaikoura. There is also about 140,000 acres of minor triangulation required to complete a topographical map of the Marlborough Land District, and I should like to have this finished during the coming season.

Office-work.—Mr. Armstrong, Chief Draughtsman, reports as follows: Between September, 1901, and December, 1902, three draughtsmen were transferred from this office to other districts, and only one sent here from the Wellington office. One of our draughtsmen was also absent on sick-leave for three months and at various other times, so that the office staff has been considerably undermanned. The current work has therefore engaged nearly all our time, and there has been no opportunity to work off arrears. Besides the ordinary miscellaneous routine work of the office, the principal items are as follows: Seven survey districts have been drawn and forwarded to the Head Office for lithography—viz., Tennyson, Patriarch, Raglan, Leatham, Upcot, Kaitarau and Puhipuhi. As there are only nine more districts to complete, I expect that the whole of the Marlborough District will be lithographed during next year. Compilation of lithographs for the publication of a map of the Marlborough County is well in hand, about half of the county being completed. Seven plans for poster lithographs were drawn, comprising a total area of 240,431 acres. Twenty-eight ordinary and eighteen Land Transfer plans, showing an area of 380,297 acres, were examined and approved; 247 plans were placed on Crown grants and other instruments of title; and thirty-two plans (in duplicate) were drawn on certificates of title for the Land Transfer Department. An exhaustive report on the triangulation of the Marlborough Land District was compiled. A register of the whole of the public reserves in the district which have been permanently gazetted was prepared, and tracings and descriptions of all "paper" reserves requiring to be gazetted were forwarded to the Head Office. The whole of the coast-line, comprising about 670 miles, was plotted on the Admiralty charts from Departmental surveys, and a schedule furnished showing the latitudes and longitudes of coastal trig. stations.

C. W. ADAMS, Chief Surveyor.