

Office-work.—During the year lithograph sale-posters and Land Guides were sent out to the number of 5,080; tracings for photo-lithography, 8; other tracings for Head office, surveyors, public bodies, &c., 451; vouchers passed through the office, 594. Eighty-one survey-plans containing 57,088 acres, 1 minor triangulation, 30 Midland Railway land plans, 10 road-deviations, 6 engineering, and 1 township plan were examined and approved. The total number of letters, telegrams, &c., dealt with during the year was 15,378. Certificates, leases, &c., issued for the year were 1,542. The office also prepared maps required for the census returns, and 104 school-maps for the Education Department in this district. This office also transacts all work or business required for the Roads Department in the Nelson Land District.

W. G. MURRAY,
Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Minor Triangulation.—This class of work has been suspended for the time being, and there remains an area of about 140,000 acres situated mostly in the Pelorus Valley waiting to be done. Some of the work done many years ago also requires revision.

Topographical Surveys.—There has been nothing done under this heading during the year.

Rural and Subdivisional Section Surveys.—There were 61,478 acres of this class of survey completed during the year. Of this area the Flaxbourne Estate accounted for 46,566 acres, and the bulk of the work in connection therewith was executed during the previous year; but as it was not quite finished, it was all carried forward to the year 1905-6. It may be noted that other areas have been surveyed, but owing to the surveyors being detailed for other work near the close of the year the area could not be included in this return, and is consequently carried forward to next year.

Roads and Railways.—There were 42½ miles of road survey completed, about 30 miles being up the Wairau Valley and the balance in the Sounds.

Native Land Court Surveys.—The subdivision of the Maungamaunu Reserve—total area, 4,524 acres—was well advanced towards completion on the 31st March; the country being all heavy forest lands, and the subdivisions numerous, the progress of the work has been retarded considerably, but it is expected that it will be completed by May next.

Other work consists chiefly of compass survey of Crown lands in the Rai Valley; defining boundaries of State forest in the Wakamarina; and survey of reef at Dieffenbach, that was a menace to navigation.

Land Transfer Surveys.—Twenty-seven plans of surveys under the Land Transfer Act were examined and approved, and 142 diagrams were drawn on 71 certificates of title.

Inspection of Surveys.—During the year inspections embracing the work of five surveyors were made at Kaikoura, Pelorus, and Queen Charlotte Sound, Spring Creek, and the boroughs of Blenheim and Picton, the results of which were satisfactory, and therefore call for no special comment.

Proposed Operations.—During the ensuing year I propose to complete the subdivision of the Maungamaunu Native Reserve for the Native Land Court (4,524 acres), and cut up some 7,000 acres of Crown land in the Wakamarina and Onamalutu Districts, and 3,500 acres in the Sounds. In addition to these, there are 3,000 acres of sawmill areas and 34 miles of road surveys to be done. The above will keep the present staff fully occupied, and it will probably be necessary to provide an extra surveyor and party to survey the scenic reserves, which it is anticipated will be recommended by the Scenic Commission.

Office-work.—Work in connection with the acquisition and settlement of Flaxbourne Estate kept the staff very busy for a large portion of the year. This comprised the holding of two ballots, compilation of two sale-plans, preparation of data for pamphlet, preparing 120 leases in quadruplicate, and providing the settlers with tracings of their holdings, &c. During the year 84 plans, embracing 106,517 acres, and 265 traverse sheets were examined and approved; 634 diagrams were drawn on 178 Crown leases, &c.; 187 certificates of title and Crown leases were prepared (674 copies); locality maps (5-mile radius) of 35 schools were made for the Education Department, and a large number of plans were prepared for the Scenery Commission, and for the Clarence Valley Exploration Party.

HENRY TRENT,
Chief Surveyor.

WESTLAND.

Topographical Survey.—During the past year several blocks of land, aggregating 33,500 acres, which were generally known as comprising areas fit for settlement purposes, were thoroughly explored, and such portions as were found suitable will be sectionized and placed in the market in due course. By means of exhaustive reports and maps by the surveyors every care is used in the scheming out of blocks of sections, especially having regard to the best road-locations, the providing of the necessary reserves of various kinds, the exclusion of milling-timber areas, and the conservation of auriferous country. In addition to the above area of land, which has been provisionally surveyed prior to sectionizing, 101,577 acres of practically unknown country have been explored with a view to the fixing of certain prominent geographical features, at the same time with the possibility of discovering areas of land which may be available for settlement purposes. Mr. Douglas, explorer, continues to materially assist in furnishing most useful topographical information in this connection.

Rural and Suburban.—The sectional work completed under this heading comprises blocks newly sectionized for settlement purposes, and also the locating of selections made before survey, the latter of which were urgently required by settlers. There is still a very considerable area under both of the above headings to be completed in the next twelve months.