

explorations undertaken by him during the past season, and of the sixteen miles of track cut between Tautuku Bay and Catlins River. I am glad to say that Mr. Strauchon reports that the land between Tautuku and Catlins River, is, on the whole, of much better quality than the country formerly explored. You will observe that the land lately explored, although for the most part bush, is of moderate elevation, as the highest peaks are not much above 2,000 feet high. Besides the through track, connecting Waikawa with Catlins River, another track has been surveyed and cleared down the Tautuku Valley, which connects with the track leading to Wyndham. This track, Mr. Strauchon reports, is the best for travellers on horseback.

Minor Triangulation.—I have no minor triangulation proper to include in this report, but Mr. Assistant-Surveyor Langmuir observed the vertical angles, and obtained the heights of the trig. stations in Glenkenich and Waipahi Districts, comprising 150,000 acres, at an expense of £187 10s. 0d., or a little over $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per acre.

Rural Sections Surveys.—The total area laid off during the past year is 41,272 acres, at a cost of 1s. 2·16d. per acre. Each year, as the better land is taken up, inferior land is brought under survey. The cost of surveying, therefore, naturally tends to increase, but part of the increase is due to the increased attention that is now paid to grading roads carefully. This extra expense, however, is more than recouped by the lessened expenditure required in subsequently making the roads.

Town Section Surveys.—These surveys have been principally executed by Mr. District-Surveyor Strauchon, who laid off sections in the Townships of Fortrose, Waipahi and Tokanui, and by Mr. Assistant-Surveyor Langmuir, who laid off the Blue Spur Township and sections in Clyde. The total number of allotments is 268, comprising 315 acres at a cost of £252 1s. 4d., or 18s. 9½d. per allotment.

Port Chalmers Standard Survey.—Referring to last year's report, I have to remark that the nine sheets referred to have been lately returned to this office by the Mayor of Port Chalmers, and the grades for the permanent levels have been inked in and the maps completed.

Mining Surveys.—Thirty-nine sections (containing 432 acres) have been laid off this year, as against thirty sections (containing 335 acres) last year. The cost per acre this year is greater than last, being 15s. 6d. per acre, as against 8s. 3d.

Roads.—Besides the ordinary roads laid off in the course of settlement survey, there have been fifty-one and three-quarters miles surveyed, at a cost of £343 13s. 5d., or at the rate of £6 12s. 10d. per mile. The greater part of these roads are in Mr. Strauchon's district. Mr. Calder returns two miles of roads. These are outside the blocks lately surveyed by him, but necessary to give access to the land. All the roads laid out by Mr. Calder were approved by the County Engineer, before being pegged on the ground.

Other Work.—The work done under this head by the field staff includes, amongst other things, report and plan of proposed Crofter block at Waikawa; plan of Munro's gully for Warden at Lawrence; running boundary between the Counties of Lake and Vincent, from Mount Barker to Mount Pisa; fixing the position of Criffel diggings, with levels for water-races to command the same.

Survey Inspections.—During the nine and a-half months I have been in charge of this district I have only made one field check, viz., Block X. Wyndham District, surveyed by Mr. T. Miller for the Otago School Commissioners. Besides this, I have visited Mr. Strauchon, at the Nuggets; Mr. Langmuir twice, viz., at Dusky Hill and Clyde; Mr. Wilmot and Mr. Adair at Queenstown, when I inspected roads to Skipper's Creek, and also at the head of the Lake. I also visited Mr. Calder at Kurow, and went over all the proposed road lines with him and Mr. Banks, the County Engineer. I also inspected run 171^E, on the Waikouaiti River, roads in Hawksbury District, and a road in Glenomaru District.

District Offices.—There are now only three District Survey Offices, viz., at Lawrence, Queenstown, and Naseby. The former is in charge of Mr. McLean, and I found all the maps and records in good order and marked up to date, when I visited the Lawrence office last month. I also inspected the Queenstown office, in charge of Mr. Adair, during the month of April last. The Naseby office is in charge of Mr. District-Surveyor Barron.

Dunedin Office Work.—By the statement at the opening of this report you will notice that, through various causes, there have been several reductions in the office staff, as there are now only ten assistants and two cadets, as against eleven assistants and five cadets when I took charge. I regret to state that Mr. W. F. Browne has been prevented by illness from attending to his duties since the 12th of last March. This is a serious loss to the office, as he was an excellent officer. Besides the ordinary routine work of the office, I wish to draw attention to the large amount of work done by this office for other departments, notably the Property Tax Department. The ordinary work done is as follows: Mr. Skey, chief draughtsman, has examined and prepared the following:—Seventy-five Crown grants prepared and recorded comprising 2,140 acres; 295 Certificates of Title, comprising 26,941 acres; seventy Perpetual Leases in triplicate; forty-two Pastoral Licenses in duplicate; ninety-eight Deferred-Payment Licenses in duplicate, and 46 Occupation Licenses in duplicate. Mr. S. Thompson, checked and examined 121 staff surveyor's plans and sixty-two land transfer plans; also the following in duplicate, viz.—forty-three plans of roads, &c., forty-one mining leases, and fifty agricultural leases. Mr. Nicolson, besides attending to the public room and safe, has furnished the Land Office with duplicate plans of all surveys received. He also receives all applications for unsurveyed lands, prepares tracings for the field surveyors, and records surveys on record maps. Mr. W. F. Browne besides recording gold-fields surveys and compiling working plans, has prepared, in duplicate, forty-four mining, forty-eight agricultural, and four exchange leases. Mr. Wadie has been kept fully occupied in keeping new run maps up to date, making out pastoral licenses and supplying Land Office with all information connected with runs. He has completed and colored a large lithograph map showing Otago runs, counties educational endowments, surveyed land, &c., for the use of the Waste Lands Board. He has also made out Survey Office contracts and examined and checked all other plans and specifications in connection with roads to open up Crown lands, and has charge of all railway and engineering plans. He has also made two large Land Transfer record maps, and has also done work for the following departments, viz.:—Property Tax, Census, Sheep Inspector, Official Assignee, Sheriff, &c., besides usual office work. In Road Office, Mr. Fynmore has recorded forty new