

The book-keeping in connection with this amount, in addition to the time necessarily devoted to the general business, have tasked the energies of the office staff. Mr. Mackenzie and Mr. Wright and his assistants, by cheerfully giving much overtime, have materially aided to cope with the pressure of business.

*Proposals for the Year 1890-91.*—My recommendations for the current year include those for last year—viz., the extension of trigonometrical and topographical surveys in the inland district. The survey of roads and legalising the same should be undertaken and carried out promptly in order to prevent compensation claims falling upon the local bodies. Standard surveys for Land Transfer purposes should be pushed forward in settled districts. Besides these important duties, the opening-up of Crown lands for sale and the survey of the areas already selected must take precedence of all other work. The office arrears should be worked off, and the long-required standard maps of various classes should be completed. In order to accomplish all this effectually the field and office staff should be increased.

I have once more to place on record my sense of the willing and satisfactory manner in which the staff officers have attended to their duties.

J. W. A. MARCHANT, Chief Surveyor.

### MARLBOROUGH.

THE work in the field during the past year has chiefly been in connection with rural and suburban section surveys, and the area returned under that heading considerably exceeds that of last year. I attribute this increased demand for land in a great measure to the favourable provisions by which the settlement of the Crown lands is now being carried out under the various systems of the Land Act of 1885 and the Amendment Acts of 1887 and 1888. With the exception of one mining survey, all the season's work has been executed by Staff Surveyor Goulter, with no cadet assisting; and I think, when we review the different classes of surveys, their dispersive character, the generally rough country dealt with, the traverse closures, and the cost per acre, that the results of the season's work will appear satisfactory.

*Rural and Suburban.*—Out of the 10,751 acres surveyed, 6,985 acres, in twenty-nine sections, are situated in nine different localities, and are all covered with heavy bush. In determining the boundaries of the sections, natural features have been used as much as possible, 13 miles of beach and 11 miles of spurs and ridges having been traversed. Most of the beach traverses could only be chained at low-water. 2,902 acres, in eleven sections, were surveyed between the Kahautara and Kihikihi Rivers. This block was sold many years ago, but the survey and issue of the Crown grant were held over pending the selection of the Main South Road. The remaining 864 acres include five sections at Kaikoura and two sections in the Wairau Valley, on requisition from the Land Board: open country. There were seventeen closed traverses in connection with the above, which show a mean closing error of 1·3 link per mile.

*Revision Surveys.*—1,148 acres were surveyed, into five sections, at the mouth of the Kahautara River. A resurvey of these sections was necessary to determine the position of the adjoining block of 2,902 acres before mentioned.

*Mining Surveys.*—Under this heading 29 acres were surveyed for a licensed holding at Jackson's Head (a remote locality, and very difficult of access), and 5 acres for special claim in the Waikakaho Valley.

*Other Work.*—The work detailed in the returns under this head comprises the rough traverse and sketching of 136 miles of rabbit-proof fences in the Awatere Rabbit District, in accordance with your instructions, and Mr. Goulter was engaged one month at this work. A survey of the road-line over Torea Neck, Queen Charlotte Sound, was made; and the Tuamarina Land-plan Survey, for the purpose of exchanging old for new road, was commenced.

*Office and Land Transfer Work.*—The Chief Draughtsman (Mr. G. Robinson) states that during the year seventeen surveyors' plans have been received, checked, and plotted on their respective block-sheets, ten of which were constructed for this purpose, and one new Crown-grant record-map was compiled and brought up to date. In the Land Transfer branch 11 plans have been examined and passed. These represent dealings with 11 original sections, subdivided into 82 allotments, and embracing an area of 539 acres. Twenty certificates in lieu of grants, and 60 ordinary certificates, representing in all 180 marginal plans, were prepared; and 4 leases, 85 transfers, 87 mortgages, and 5 applications were examined.

In consequence of the illness of Mr. White, Receiver of Land Revenue and Clerk to Crown Lands Office, and subsequent pressure of work in that department, a good deal of the attention of the office staff has been devoted to Crown lands duties, in addition to the usual class of work done for that department, such as placing diagrams on the various kinds of leases and licenses, descriptions, tracings, &c. Other routine work, such as correspondence, accounts, tracings, and returns for head office, attendance on surveyors and the general public, and other items which cannot be presented in tabular form, also occupied a considerable amount of the draughtsmen's time.

*Proposed Operations.*—To begin the season with, we have in hand the following works: 7,970 acres of section surveys in the Pelorus Sound, and one mining survey, Wakamarina Valley; observations for determining the proper variation of the needle at the chief port in the district; survey of bridle-track, 1 mile, through Sections 6, 12, and 130, Waitaria Bay, Kenepuru Sound; land-plan survey of Tuamarina-Kaituna Road, 5 miles, and bridle-track, 2 miles, Watamonga Bay, Queen Charlotte Sound, under Public Works Act, for exchanges of roads; exploring and grading stock-driving track through the forest country between Tennyson Inlet and the main line of road