

Minor Triangulation.—Total area, 4,000 acres; cost, £20 16s. 8d., covering upper portion of Wills River Valley.

Rural and Suburban.—Area, 11,404 acres in forty-four sections; cost, £1,131 2s. 10d. These sections were scattered over the district between Lake Brunner and the Haast Pass, and accessible only by pack-tracks; the country is also densely wooded. Of the above amount, £623 9s. 3d. will be refunded out of survey fees deposited, and from half cost of boundary surveys, repayable by Midland Railway Company in terms of contract.

Gold-mining Surveys amounted to only 25 acres; cost repaid out of fees.

Road Surveys.—Engineering and traverse surveys, together with necessary plans and sections for same, were executed during the year of six miles of road, and the cost thereof charged against the respective road votes. Owing to the small sections and widely-scattered nature of the surveys, they have been unusually expensive: all were in bush.

Other Work includes the cost of a survey that had to be undertaken in order to compel the removal of certain machinery erected by a settler on the Hokitika-Christchurch Road to the danger of traffic thereon; also cost of survey labourers' wages while employed on sundry odd jobs.

General Remarks.—During the year topographical surveys have been made of the Wills, Macfarlane, and Copland Valleys, thus closing up the gap in our reconnaissance survey of the country between the Arawata and Karangarua Rivers. Separate plans and reports on these will accompany this. The reconnaissance survey has also been completed in the upper valleys of the Hokitika, Mikonui, Gordon, and Waitaha Rivers, and much valuable information obtained. Three district maps, including the above, can now be completed and forwarded for publication, containing information similar to that shown on accompanying plan of the Copland, and which will prove a great boon both to the department and to the general public. The season, until about end of February, was a very unfavourable one for survey operations, and progress was accordingly slow.

Proposed Course of Operations for 1893-94.—To continue and complete survey of Block 28B¹, a selection of the Midland Railway Company, and also, if desired, to undertake survey of Block 26B¹, a similar selection by same company, and of a large number of small selections and reserves scattered about between Lake Brunner and Cook's River. Should time permit and opportunity offer, I should also like to take in hand the survey of outside boundaries of some of the mining blocks, to complete some revision surveys commenced last year, and included within the boundaries of which are some applications that have never been surveyed. There are several places in this district, where surveys were made in the old times, that urgently need revision, but I am afraid that class of work will only be taken up at odd times, and when lands adjoining them have to be surveyed. Engineering surveys of road-works for co-operative contracts will also have to be undertaken from time to time. The reconnaissance survey of the upper valleys of such of the rivers as are not yet done between the Wanganui and Karangarua Rivers will be put in hand shortly. On its completion a first-class map of the provincial district could be published, replete with information valuable to the surveyor, miner, settler, and tourist.

Another very important work on which I hope to be able to employ Mr. Douglas is the exploration of a tourist route between the West Coast and Hermitage, *via* the Karangarua, Landsborough, and Hopkins Valleys. Although very much longer than that *via* the Copland, as tried last year, I am quite satisfied that the proposed route is practicable, and hope the next annual report will record its accomplishment. The finding and subsequent construction of a tourist route (if only a bridle one to begin with) would do wonders towards opening up the beauties of southern Westland, at present so little known, and would also enable the tourist to land at the Bluff and do the overland journey from thence to Nelson and Picton, and at the same time, without diverging far from his direct route, see all the beauties of the Manapori, Te Anau, Wakatipu, Wanaka, Hawera, Ohau, and Pukaki Lakes, the wonderful Tasman, Hooker, Murchison, and other glaciers on the east side of the main range; while on the western side, the Balfour, Fox, and Franz Joseph Glaciers are easily accessible. A most magnificent view of Mounts Cook and Tasman can be obtained at quite close quarters, and we have many beautiful lakes on the west coast as yet but little known to outsiders such as Mapourika, Wahapo, Rotokino, Ianthe, Mahinapua (with its wonderful shadows and reflections), Kanieri, and Brunner, while every here and there along the route grand glimpses are obtained of the numerous peaks in the main range. The Towns of Ross and Kumara, famous places for mining on a large scale, are passed through, also Hokitika and Greymouth. The world-famed Otira Gorge can be visited by a short diversion, while the less known but, in my opinion, far more beautiful and extensive Buller Gorge is passed through for many miles. From the Spooner Range, over which the road passes, a most magnificent view is obtained of Tasman and Golden Bays, Farewell Spit and lighthouse, the French Pass, and D'Urville Island, while from Belgrove to Nelson the scenery of a sylvan character is charming indeed.

There is another matter of considerable importance, and which I forgot to mention in its proper place, and one that needs immediate attention—*viz.*, standard surveys of the Towns of Greymouth and Hokitika. The Corporations of both places have repeatedly asked for them, and that of Hokitika has offered to pay cost of survey labour if Government will provide the surveyor. Had it been possible to spare a staff officer from his other work this would have been undertaken ere now, but surveys of this class require a special man, and should not be intrusted to any one, unless thoroughly qualified for minute and careful measurement.

JOHN STRAUCHON, Chief Surveyor.

CANTERBURY.

In consequence of my prolonged absence at Cheviot, the full report submitted to you last year, and the pressing demands upon my time, I venture to offer you this year but a short statement of operations during the year 1892-93.