

hands of staff and private surveyors, and there is every prospect of a heavy demand being made upon us for this class of work for some time to come. Added to this, 3,734 acres of sectional work is in the hands of the surveyors, and surveys are required of fifty-five miles of road, some of which are long lengths of main trunk lines which have never been surveyed.

THOS. HUMPHRIES, Chief Surveyor.

MARLBOROUGH.

Topographical Survey.—Although no items appear under this heading, it should be mentioned that an accurate topographical survey has been obtained of the Stronvar Run, comprising about 80,000 acres of country which was surveyed by Messrs. Carkeek and Gillies, and appears under the heading of "Rural and Suburban."

Minor Triangulation and Topographical Survey.—Although there is no entry under this heading in the schedule, still a large area has been surveyed in the field, as Mr. Buckeridge's survey embraces an area of 400,000 acres. The country was very high and rugged, and the stations he observed at included Mount St. Bernard, 7,418 ft., Kaitarau Peak, 8,700 ft., and Tapuaenuku, 9,467 ft. high, the latter being the highest trig. station in New Zealand.

Settlement Survey.—One hundred and thirty-four rural sections, of a total area of 150,083 acres, have been surveyed, at an average cost of 8s. per acre. About 80,000 acres of this was surveyed in connection with the exchanges arranged by the Land Purchase Board.

Town Sections.—One hundred and fifty-five town allotments, comprising 76 acres, were surveyed, at a cost of 10s. 6d. per allotment. These sections were chiefly in Town of Seddon, and Marlborough High School Reserve, Town of Blenheim.

Gold-mining.—Ten sections containing 301 acres were surveyed by three contract surveyors at schedule rates. The average cost works out at 7·2s. per acre.

Road Surveys.—This comprises about 120 miles, chiefly on Starborough Estate and round about Kaikoura; average cost, £13 2s. per mile.

Other Work.—The chief expenditure under this head was incurred in boring for the bridge-site, Waiiau-ua River, and for work connected with accounts, inspections, &c., in the charge of the Kaikoura district office.

Proposed Operations for 1900-1.—As far as I can judge at present, there will not be full employment for the whole of the present field staff during the coming survey season, unless more land is acquired under the Land for Settlements Act. The District Surveyor, with the three temporary surveyors under his direction, anticipates surveying an area of 97,600 acres of settlement surveys, but this estimate includes 58,000 acres Waipapa leasehold and 3,400 acres of Waipapa freehold, which it is not very certain will be acquired this season. If work should get slack in the Kaikoura district, I think the opportunity should be taken to carry out a standard traverse of the rich, level, and valuable lands to the north and west of the Township of Kaikoura. Combined with this, the District Surveyor makes a good suggestion—viz., that mile-posts should be erected on several of the main lines of communication leading out of Kaikoura. Mr. D. W. Gillies has sufficient work in hand in spotting settlement surveys, &c., to keep him employed for several months yet. Mr. E. W. Buckeridge has a winter's work before him in plotting the trig. and topo. plans of the work he has been doing during the past season. Mr. M. Carkeek will have his hands full for a good while to come with the 250 square miles of triangulation he has on hand. Mr. C. W. McFarland will be fully employed for the whole season in settlement surveys, adjustment of run boundaries, &c. He will also have the subdivision of Bell Brothers Block on the North Bank, seeing that he has made the previous survey of this block. Mr. A. Simpson has several settlement surveys and reserves on his list, which will keep him employed till other work turns up. Mr. H. Maitland is now engaged in cutting up some sections in the Tinline Valley, which will occupy him for some time longer. The standard survey of Blenheim and suburban sections should be put in hand as soon as a suitable surveyor can be spared for the work.

Field Inspections.—During the year I made six visits to Kenepuru Sound, four to Beatrix Bay, three to Mahakipawa, three to Manaroa, two to Mahau Sound, and one each to Section 71, Omaka, Crail Bay, Tory Channel, Pelorus Sound, Titirangi, Lockmara, Starborough, Blind River, Maddox and Hodder Cutting, Waihopai and Stronvar, and Hillersden. I also attended a meeting of the Land Purchase Board in Wellington on the 1st December.

Office-work.—Mr. Armstrong, Chief Draughtsman, reports as follows: Good progress has been made in an endeavour to cope with the large accumulation of arrears in the issue of leases, besides ordinary miscellaneous work. 470 copies of leases have been prepared, 676 plans placed on titles, and 250 tracings made. Eighty-eight plans have been received and examined. During the past six months a new county map of Marlborough, comprising four large plans, was compiled, but not yet checked. It is intended to issue lithographs of the Sounds and Kaikoura Counties. All the mining surveys have during the year been plotted on block-sheets up to date. A considerable amount of work was done in connection with exchanges effected by the Land Purchase Board. For photo-lithography twenty-one sale-maps have been prepared, also lithos of the Arapawa Survey District and the Towns of Picton and Seddon. Owing to no draughtsman having been set apart for lithographic work during past years this district has been very much behind in the preparation of district maps for lithography, but now that we have a draughtsman who is employed specially at lithographic work we hope to make good progress in this direction. Lithographic maps of the Kaikoura County and also of the Sounds County are in hand, and an endeavour will be made to have them completed for publication next year. The present staff are kept fully employed in keeping the current work of the department up to date, and this year has been a very busy one, 159 new settlers having been added to our books.

C. W. ADAMS, Chief Surveyor.