

the current work of the office, one of the computers being uninterruptedly engaged upon it, and, as he proceeds, surveys which will not close fairly are reported for revision to the staff officer who may happen to be in the district. It is, therefore, hoped that the end of the current twelve months will show them all plotted or in course of revision on the ground.

*Trigonometrical Plans.*—Good progress has also been made with these, eight new districts having been completed, together with tracings for the photo-lithographer. Two of the previous seasons' and six prepared this year have been lithographed, leaving but two in hand. The number of survey districts of which the triangulation is published being now fifty-five, and as these comprise the whole of the settled districts in which land-transfer surveys are likely to be required, all the triangulation is now easily available to the surveyors working under the Act; therefore, for the present, I have transferred the draftsman formerly engaged on this work to the compilation of the district maps showing the sectional work.

*Reduction Office.*—During the year a copy of the map of the County of Ashley has been made for the head office, and one for the Christchurch public office, and the map of the County of Geraldine is in hand. Two new district maps have been constructed, ten have been traced for the photo-lithographer, and seven others are in hand. Six districts have been traced and coloured for the public office in Christchurch, and two for the Timaru office, to be used as land-application maps. And there have been prepared and shown at the Exhibition a map of the Canterbury District delineating the surveys up to the then date, and another showing the trigonometrical surveys, together with copies of trigonometrical, topographical, block, and district plans. For these exhibits the Christchurch Survey Office was awarded a gold medal.

*Crown Titles.*—During the past twelve months have been prepared forty-six Crown grants, covering 4,322 acres under the old system, and 985 certificates of title, covering 1,519 rural or town sections, equal to 151,814 acres, have been delivered to the Land Transfer Office for issue. 2,107 certificates of area, embracing 197,736 acres, were forwarded to the Chief Commissioner to enable the schedules to be prepared and transmitted to Wellington for the necessary authority to issue titles. The delay of purchasers to pay for excess areas has, however, considerably retarded the certificates, which otherwise would have been issued much faster. Thus rather large arrears remain to be overtaken.

*Land Transfer Surveys.*—Very little has been done during the year in putting down standard stones for reference points for these surveys, Mr. Maitland, the officer formerly engaged on the work, having been absent on sick leave. He has, however, now resumed duty, and has commenced the standard survey of the Timaru borough, now very much needed; but sufficient progress has not yet been reached to enable me to do more than mention it. Mr. Monro, the officer in charge of the draughtsman's office, reports of the work for the past twelve months that there were 100 plans deposited, containing 2,288 allotments of from 10 perches to 588 acres; 15 plans of land taken for railway purposes for Public Works Department; 1,088 transfers for verification of descriptions, areas, &c., prior to drafting certificates; 19 mortgages for verification of descriptions, areas, &c.; 40 leases for verification of descriptions, areas, &c.; 9 proclamations for verification of descriptions, areas, &c.; 386 applications referred (9 in excess of number received by Land Transfer Office owing to requisitions on some previously received being complied with, &c.); 2,102 ordinary certificates issued; 1,052 certificates issued in lieu of Crown grants under "The Land Transfer Act Amendment Act of 1880. He also reports a slight but steady increase in the general work of his office, and it is a pleasure for me to state that, owing to his most effective supervision of the surveys coming before him, a great and marked improvement has taken place in them. The Land Transfer surveyors being made aware of what is required, nearly all send in their plans in a highly creditable manner, in accordance with the survey regulations. These plans are now carefully checked before they are sent in, and consequently the work of revision is much lightened, delays in passing them are lessened, and the frequent and unavoidable detentions formerly complained of seldom or never occur; in fact, I may say that, during the last twelve or eighteen months, no complaint of any kind has been brought under my notice in reference to the survey work of the Land Transfer Office, and this result being mainly due to the highly satisfactory way in which Mr. Monro carries out his duties, I am but rendering this officer justice in acknowledging it.

*Proposed Operations for 1882-3.*—The arrear surveys of sections purchased under the Canterbury Land Act are now considerably reduced, the work remaining to be done not exceeding 1,486 sections, containing 98,642 acres; but as these are very much scattered, the surveys will be more tedious than hitherto. I estimate that about 20,000 acres of revision will complete the old provincial surveys, except the peninsula work, anent which see my last year's report. These arrears I hope to greatly lessen during the current twelve months. Of the surveys I have instructions to proceed with, there are in progress 31,281 acres of pastoral deferred-payment land, and 5,200 acres reserved for settlement in the Oxford district; and I find also that there are yet unsurveyed 1,562 acres of town land in six reserves, and 3,761 acres of suburban and deferred-payment land set apart under "The Public Reserves Act, 1878," and in addition there are 35 reserves, containing 4,524 acres, which have been recommended as suitable for subdivision into village settlements, for which purpose they will probably be set apart during the present session of Parliament. The above, with the standard survey of Timaru, and the completion of the triangulation in the Waimakariri country, is the work I purpose to take in hand during the current year. I cannot conclude my report without bearing testimony to the constant and effective support I have received from the various officers of this branch of the department, and to the zealous discharge of their respective duties.

JOHN H. BAKER,  
Chief Surveyor.

#### OTAGO.

The season generally of 1881-82 has not been propitious, there having been a great deal of rain, wind, and mist, which have caused much trouble and delay to the surveyors at work in the field. These drawbacks have been specially felt by the surveyors engaged in triangulations on the Lammerlaw