

latter district. A close was made on Mr. Ellison's triangulation, side C-F, Motupiko District, with a difference of 3" in bearing and 1.6 links per mile in length; and on Mr. Carkeek's work, side L-S, of 3" in bearing and 0.7 links per mile in length; in altitude, in closing on L, a difference of 2.8 feet. In the Reefton district 140,000 acres have been in progress during the year by Mr. G. Bullard. Most of the field-work has been completed, but, owing to the party having kept the field so late, the work cannot be returned for this year. This officer, formerly a cadet, deserves mention for the perseverance he has shown in carrying triangles over a rough and high district, and for careful field-work. In the Buller District 13,850 acres, at a cost of $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per acre, has been done by Mr. J. Snodgrass, extending triangulation northerly to the Mokihinui, for the purposes of sectional work.

Sectional Surveys.—There have been 474 sections surveyed, comprising 67,790 acres, averaging 143 acres per section, being 195 sections more than in previous year. There being less demand for mining surveys during the past season has enabled more progress to be made with sectional surveys. Owing to the freedom of selection before survey in a mountainous and heavily-timbered district such as this, in which mining is carried on in isolated localities where there is no other settlement, there must necessarily be a certain number of applications for land made which are both difficult to reach and costly of survey; these have to await the opportunity of being attended to, and sometimes for a considerable time. It is generally some of these cases which are brought forward as instances of "delay in survey" against the department. In those parts of the district where real settlement would be materially hindered by delay every effort has been made, both to overtake arrears and to dispose of current applications with the staff at our disposal. At the end of last season the arrears amounted to 90,873 acres in 618 sections; at the close of the past season, on 30th June, the arrears were 72,922 acres, comprised in 411 sections. The largest proportion of these are situated in the bays of the Nelson Circuit and in Amuri, and I hope to dispose of most of these during next year. Mr. T. Sadd has been employed during the latter part of the year in sectionizing a block of 10,000 acres in the Tadmor district, through which a dray-road has been constructed under the vote for opening up Crown lands: 2,700 acres have been done, and the remainder is in progress. Mr. A. W. Carkeek completed a survey of the Taitapu (Native land) Block, Collingwood district, comprising 88,350 acres, for the purposes of the Native Lands Court. Inspection was made of the work, and the usual necessary checks forwarded.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Owing to the extra efforts made in the previous year to overtake the rush for these surveys, and fewer applications having been made during the year, the arrears on the West Coast have now been disposed of, and affairs are very quiet in that part. Triangulation still needs extension in the Buller district to check mining surveys up the Mokihinui River, which, at present, are yet isolated, and which must be done next season if possible.

Mineral Leases.—There has been a demand for mineral-lease surveys about the Aniseed Valley and ranges near Nelson, principally with a view to copper, for which ore a good deal of prospecting has been done, both in driving and sinking. One or two companies have been formed and are carrying on operations, which have been so far successful as to lead to sanguine anticipations for the future. A contract is in hand for opening up a dray-road in the valley, towards the cost of which the Government have given a subsidy, the construction being supervised by the department.

Town Survey.—Mr. J. Montgomerie has been engaged on a standard survey of part of the Town of Reefton, which has become necessary on account of Land Transfer work, and also on an extension of sections; the whole of the original plan of the town not having been surveyed, and now required. This work is returnable during next year.

Land Transfer.—There have been 161 plans examined and passed, and 466 plans placed on certificates of title, and the work recorded on the record-maps.

Road Surveys and Construction.—The details of these works form the subject of a separate report attached.

Office Work.—During the year one cadet has entered the department. I have to regret the sudden decease of Mr. J. Thomson, Computing Draughtsman, the loss of whom is much felt in the office, and whose place has not yet been supplied. There have been 410 leases and licenses prepared for an area of 123,051 acres, including renewals. A map of the district has been compiled on a scale of four miles to an inch, based on the triangulation as far as it has been executed. Lengths of standard-bearing lines, connecting geodesical stations between initial stations of circuits, have been determined, differences of latitudes and longitudes, convergence of meridians have been computed, on which the map has been constructed and a copy forwarded to head office for publication. Forty-two new block plans have been made, on which more or less new work has been plotted, six plans for printing have been prepared, and revised application-maps for district offices. Mr. H. Trent, Chief Draughtsman, was absent on leave for two months, being the first leave for ten years, and Mr. Carrington one month. Much work is yet required to be done in the office in compiling Crown-grant record-maps, district application-maps from new surveys, to replace the old ones, and preparation of plans for publication, which cannot yet be undertaken, as the staff cannot keep pace with the current work, which is beginning to get into arrear.

Future Operations.—Messrs. Smith and Thompson have seventy thousand acres of triangulation, the field work of which is completed, but not plotted. During next season with this work they will be enabled to locate the boundaries of some large leases not yet laid down on the ground, and which are necessary to locate other applications in the Amuri Circuit. A block of land of about ten thousand acres in the Maruia Valley, Grey Circuit, will require to be sectionized for lease or sale. It is proposed that Mr. G. Bullard should extend the triangulation he has in hand over this block, connecting with the stations on the main range of the island erected by Mr. F. Thompson, and joining the triangulation brought up by that officer from the eastward; Mr. T. Sadd to complete the sectionizing of the ten-thousand acre block in the Tadmor District. Mr. W. D. Murray to survey the Wakapuaka Block of fifteen thousand acres, Native land, and extend triangulation northerly to the bays and sounds connecting with Marlborough. In these are situated old applications of some