

the access thereto, before they take up any block. As the surveys have to be eventually done in any case, it is far the cheapest in the long run to get the whole survey done when the surveyor is first on the ground, and though it may for the first year prevent the land being opened as fast as it might otherwise be done, it will, I am convinced, prove more economical and more satisfactory both to the public and to the department. I will, at a later period, report on the steps it will be necessary to take to get the new district and county plans ready for publication.

JOHN H. BAKER, Chief Surveyor.

### MARLBOROUGH.

*Topographical, Minor Triangulation, and Topographical Survey for Selection under "The Land Act, 1887."*—No surveys under these headings have been required during the year, the triangulation covering the northern part of the district—the only part where lands at present are open for disposal—meeting all the requirements appertaining to surveys and applications.

*Rural and Suburban Surveys.*—Of the 6,704 acres returned at an average cost of 1s. 5·9d., the 6,646 acres surveyed by Mr. Goulter are divided into twenty-five sections, averaging 265 acres, at an average cost of 1s. 5·6d. per acre; twenty-two of these sections, representing 5,962 acres, being in seven different localities in the Pelorus, Mahau, and Kenepuru Sounds. The country is high, steep, and densely wooded to the water's edge. Much time is lost in traversing the beaches of the Sounds. Owing to the abrupt nature of the coast, and the narrowness of the foreshore, it can only be accomplished during short periods before and after low-water. There were 16 miles of bush-cutting, mostly traverses of ridges, and 13 miles of beach traverse in connection with the above. These surveys, as well as most of those done in the sounds during the last few years, fill up the gaps between old surveys revised and located some ten years ago, and in every case the revision work was found correct, and the closures well within the regulation limits. The remaining 684 acres (in three sections) are situated in the Wairau Valley; one, a reserve for pilot- and signal-station at the mouth of the Wairau River, and two on the Erina Run—open country. The balance of the section-surveys done by the schedule surveyors calls for no special remarks beyond stating that, with the exception of three reserves, the whole of the section-surveys returned are for lands applied for on requisition from the Land Board.

*Gold-mining Surveys.*—Of the 224 acres returned, 24 acres are for a licensed holding and 200 acres for a mineral lease (antimony).

*Road Surveys* (11½ miles).—These surveys comprise land-plan surveys under Public Works Act, 6 miles, of Kaituna-Tuamarina Road. Three out of the four of the freeholders through whose lands the road passes have conveyed the new line to the Queen in consideration of receiving the old road in exchange; I think, therefore, the local bodies might be asked to take the necessary steps under the Public Works Act to complete these exchanges, the Survey Department undertaking to supply the necessary plans. This line of road follows generally the old line, cutting in and out in many places, these numerous intersections making the survey complex and intricate; and nearly all indications of the original ground-marking of the sections passed over were wanting; requiring a considerable amount of extra survey to re-establish them. The survey of this road was commenced on the 9th June, 1890, and the cost to the 30th June, 1890 (£43 19s.), was included in last year's report.

*Track from Kenepuru to Manaroa* (1 mile).—This is a continuation of the Manaroa track through freehold sections, and was made with the object of acquiring the road through Messrs. Henderson's property, at Waitaria.

*Picton-Port Underwood* (2½ miles).—Portion of track through Mr. McCormick's property, at Watawonga Bay, Queen Charlotte Sound. Mr. McCormick has agreed to convey this line in exchange for old useless roads, but has not yet executed the conveyance to the Queen.

*Track from Portage Bay towards the head of Kenepuru Sound* (2½ miles).—This road passes through Mr. Gullery's land, at Torea, and the survey was made to acquire the road which has now been conveyed to the Queen, in consideration of receiving a Crown grant of some Crown land adjoining Mr. Gullery's property. The cost includes the grading of 1½ miles, Mr. FitzGerald having graded 1 mile prior to this survey.

*Other Work.*—This consists of observations taken at the Ports of Picton and Wairau for determining the variation of the compass, and commencement of Native Land Court survey and subdivision of Kumutoto Native Reserve, Queen Charlotte Sound.

*Native Land Court Survey.*—Mr. Goulter commenced the survey of Kumutoto Native Reserve on the 1st June, but had to discontinue the work on account of ill-health. About 2 miles of the back ridge are traversed and pegged, and some preliminary stations established on the beach. The cost to date is £40.

*Office and Land Transfer Work.*—During the year 19 surveyors' plans were received, examined, and recorded, and the greater portion plotted on their respective block-sheets and record-maps. Plans of roads in the Kaituna and Pelorus Valleys were prepared for the Pelorus Road Board, and tracings and litho maps of Native reserves supplied for the sitting of the Native Land Court at Kaikoura. Land plans also of a further extension of the Blenheim-Awatere Railway under the Public Works Act, and for lands taken by the Omaka Road Board, were examined and approved of. The revision of property-tax maps and schedules, and tracings of new subdivisions for the approaching triennial assessment, are now in hand. Throughout the year a considerable amount of work was done for the Crown Lands Office, which cannot be shown in tabular form. Some of the old application maps having become very much worn, others have been prepared, and all the application and exhibition maps kept up to date. In the Land Transfer branch 8 plans, comprising 12 original sections, representing 266 acres in 43 allotments, were received and passed; 34 certificates of title, representing 68 marginal plans, were prepared; and 3 applications, 2 leases, 65 mortgages, and 92 transfers examined.