

Proposed Operations for the Coming Season.—To commence with we have in hand section survey (4,200 acres) in different parts of the Pelorus Sound, 1,000 acres in Queen Charlotte Sound, survey and subdivision of Native reserves at Kumutoto, Ruakaka, and Tahuahua (4,500 acres), in Queen Charlotte Sound, and survey of Native Reserve A (4,800 acres), extending along the coast some 12 miles in length between the Porangarau Stream and the Hapuka River. Of road surveys we have in hand land-plan survey of trespass road through sections Nos. 1, 2, 3, and 46, at Mahakipawa, the freehold property of Mr. Cullen.

In addition to the above we may be called upon to grade a track from Nydia Bay to Havelock—20 miles—a petition from the settlers on the west side of the Pelorus Sound for a track to be made from thirds and fourths derived from deferred-payment, perpetual-lease, and small grazing-run lands on that side of the sound having been received and approved of by the Land Board. These, with the ordinary requisitions for surveys from the Land Board, constitute the principal part of the work for the coming season.

I propose, if the time will admit, that Mr. Goulter, when surveying the Native Reserve A on the East Coast, should make a topographical sketch-map of the country lying behind the reserve at the foot of the Seaward Kaikouras, to embrace the Waipapa and Kincaid Runs, in anticipation of the expiry of these leases in 1896. The topography of this part of the district is very meagre indeed.

The amalgamation of the Survey Department with the Crown Lands, effected at the beginning of May, and the appointment of Mr. Robinson as Receiver of Land Revenue, have thrown a large amount of work on the Survey branch hitherto performed by Mr. White, the late Crown Lands Clerk, and if my staff is further reduced, I am afraid the work of the office will get into arrears.

HENRY G. CLARK, Chief Surveyor.

NELSON.

Minor Triangulation with Topography.—There have been 157,813 acres, at a cost of 1½d. per acre, completed by Messrs. Smith and Thompson in the Amuri circuit for the purpose of controlling revision of old work and present leases. During the past season, which has been exceptionally fine, the field-work has been nearly completed of 21,351 acres, including two blocks selected by the Midland Railway Company, 42,444 acres of revision-survey, and 80,000 acres of triangulation. The so-called revision-surveys are in reality, original, as sections were not laid off on the ground, the old work being only magnetic traverses without check, and the sections marked off and scaled on the office plans. Mr. Murray has completed the trig. survey and topography of the bays and mountainous block of country lying between the Takaka Valley and Blind Bay, and completed the outlying applications in arrear. A close was made between the Collingwood and Nelson triangulation, with a difference of 8" in observed convergence, and 1·9 links per mile on side CC-BR, and 2·1 links per mile on side CC-A.

Rural and Suburban Sections.—There have been 25,663 acres surveyed, containing 314 sections, at an average cost of 2s. 2d. per acre; and 983 acres of surveyed and 54,750 acres of unsurveyed second-class lands have been thrown open for selection. About one hundred and eighty applications for land within the Midland Railway Company's area for selection have been received from the company, the surveys of which will have to be undertaken when a basis of settlement has been arrived at. These have brought considerable work on the district office in supplying information and reports to the Commissioner of Crown Lands.

Gold-mining Surveys.—Forty-eight surveys of licensed holdings and sites have been made, including one mineral lease. Applications for mining surveys fell off considerably during the year, but have come in lately, and there are nine at Westport and eighteen at Reefton to be surveyed. Mr. Bullard completed the arrears of surveys in the Karamea district, which had accumulated for several years, on account of the difficulty of access and expense of sending a surveyor there. He is now transferred to the North Island.

Town Sections.—Mr. Snodgrass laid off the Village of Coalbrookdale, consisting of 111 sections at a cost of £1 3s. 6d. per acre. This township is located at an elevation of 2,000ft. above sea-level, in rough country. A survey has also been made of the coal staiths, breakwater, beach, &c., for the issue of a new plan of the Town of Westport. A standard survey of Westport has been required for some years past, but it has been impossible to undertake it and keep up current work; the same may be said of the closing triangles to connect the Karamea and Buller circuits.

Road Surveys.—Thirty-five miles and a quarter of road survey have been made at an average cost of £6 3s. 5d., consisting chiefly of roads in use not previously surveyed, and required to give access to alienated lands. This includes five and a half miles of Riwaka Valley Road to give access to bush-land on the back hills.

Other Work.—This includes the cost of a large amount of work in progress, but not returnable this year; other surveys than for settlement purposes, reports, attendance at Courts, and other miscellaneous items.

Land Transfer.—There have been 133 certificates of title with 400 plans issued, and 294 plans placed on certificates for transfer, 180 plans have been examined and checked, besides plotting and recording the work done, and 141 certificates of title are in arrear. Mr. Wright, from the Survey Office, has been employed in checking and making transfer surveys, reserves, &c., in Nelson and suburbs connected with this branch.

Office-work.—One hundred and sixty-one leases and licenses with 354 plans have been issued, three Crown-grant record-maps have been compiled, and about fifteen more are urgently required, and fifteen selection-maps require renewal, four new application-maps have been made, and seven prepared for printing. I would point out that thirteen years ago sheets of the districts in Nelson were compiled from the old magnetic surveys and lithographed. These are now still on sale