

## SOUTHLAND.

*Rural and Suburban.*—This work embraces an area of 34,155 acres, of which 10,816 acres have been surveyed by Staff Surveyor Hodgkinson, and the balance by Temporary Surveyor Robertson. The greater part of Mr. Hodgkinson's work has been the resurvey of inaccurate work by a surveyor referred to in my last report. This would not have been again mentioned were it not that in my proposed future work similar resurveys may have to be effected. Mr. Robertson's work consisted of a small block for settlement, and the balance landless Native surveys. The latter is being carried out under contract and schedule rates. Mr. Robertson is proceeding vigorously with the survey, and the estimated area of 20,732 acres has actually been completed in a period of eight months. Of course his contract embraces only the section-work, the roading and boundaries having been previously defined by Mr. Treseder. I anticipate that the contracts will be completed within six months, and the landless Natives will then have an opportunity of showing whether they will take up the somewhat difficult task of carrying out the work of settlement on this allocation. The surveys by Mr. Miller were done at schedule rates in Stewart Island, and do not call for special remarks.

*Gold-mining Surveys.*—It will be seen that for a small district the area of 2,551 acres surveyed shows progressive work in mining matters during the year. Although nothing startling has been developed, great hopes are expressed that the future will justify the amount expended in prospecting and surveys. The greater part of the Waiau River has been laid off in dredging claims, and one dredge now being built will be the pioneer of many should the first few months prove payable to the Belmont Company. The future year must mean a great decrease in the number of this class of survey, as the greater part of the known auriferous country is now occupied.

*Roads, &c.*—It will be seen that very little has been done in this direction. Mr. Treseder completed some of the roads in the landless-Native block previously referred to, and under the heading of "Other work" it will be seen that a considerable mileage of coastal and other boundaries were carried out by him when Mr. Robertson commenced work. I might here refer to the fact that Mr. Treseder applied for a change when the above work was finished, and was successful in obtaining the succession to Mr. Nelson, who was removed to Blenheim.

*Other Work.*—The bulk of other work was carried out by Surveyor Miller. This comprised the survey and valuation of twenty-three sawmill areas, equal to an area of 3,487 acres; this apparently establishes a record for this class of work. So far as I can gather, there have not been so many applications for surveys of this class in any previous year. It might be noted that Mr. Miller has made a name as an expert valuer of timber; his long experience has enabled him to arrive at values fair to both the department and the buyer, hence he is intrusted with this class of work.

*Proposed Operations for Ensuing Year.*—The work on hand includes the landless-Native block, now under contract to Mr. Robertson; the township reserve of Clifden into suburban sections; Block XVIII., Longwood District, for settlement; and the resurvey of some very old work, such as Limehills Township; and also one of the first-settled localities in the vicinity of Riverton must be attended to. Difficulties with the Land Transfer registration of these titles almost require the department to make an authentic survey, so that there may be no overlapping of titles. Resurveys of isolated sections have lately come in, and as these may mean encroachment, and necessitate rectification in the future, it is deemed advisable to meet the difficulty by establishing at least some of the boundaries from which all others must depend.

*Office-work.*—This work has to a certain extent suffered during the year by the absence of Chief Draughtsman Clare. For nearly seven months of that time he has been incapacitated through illness from carrying out his duties. From the nature of his illness, he anticipates he will be in any case unfit to take up his old position in this district, but may, in a warmer climate, have an opportunity of doing further work somewhere in New Zealand. I extremely regret the loss of Mr. Clare from the position, held with so much credit to himself and to the department. His place will be difficult to fill, as his many years' service in this office established a connection with the traditions of the past and the present of which there is no permanent record. During the year it became necessary to prepare a county map of Stewart Island for public reference and other uses in this office. I took advantage of the opportunity to prepare a lithographic drawing instead of the usual compilation, as this will enable the public to obtain copies of the map in the form of lithographic prints. It has been found difficult from time to time to explain to the would-be settler about to visit the island the localities surveyed for settlement, and, having regard to the more correct positions of the old Native surveys and those for early settlers connected by the triangulation survey covering the eastern portion of the island, I have had the topographical maps accompanying reduced and placed with trig. points on the new map, and this data alone will be of great value. The surveys for settlement of landless Natives also appear, and thus the public will shortly be able to procure, at a small cost, a valuable map of the island. Another large drawing has been completed of the Survey Districts of Waikawa and Otara, whilst additions have been made to the maps of Taringatura District and Winton and New River Hundreds for republication. In addition to this, there has been a considerable amount of work necessitated by the Advances to Settlers, Property-tax, and Land Transfer Departments. There has also been the usual work, the following being a brief summary of some of the details: During the year 131 plans have been examined and passed; 1,791 plans have been placed on Crown grants and other instruments of title; 260 ordinary and forty-eight lithographic tracings have been prepared; 5,144 letters, telegrams, &c., were received, and 10,045 letters, notices, &c., were despatched; 851 vouchers were passed; 5,560 posters were posted to various parts of the district; 450 provincial titles were issued, and sixty-eight titles were scheduled on warrants.

D. BARRON, Chief Surveyor.