

WESTLAND.

Topographical Survey.—Under this heading is 44,750 acres of new country, by Messrs. Wilson, Muir, and Harrop, and portrays the mountainous districts comprising the head-waters of Crooked, Otahake, and Browning Rivers; it also embraces Mr. Douglas's explorations of the coastal lands immediately south of the Wataroa River. These several surveys fill up vague patches on our maps, and we are now enabled to furnish the public with complete and trustworthy information of these localities.

Rural and Suburban.—An area of 5,933 acres, comprising fifty-three sections, has been completed during the year, at a mean cost of 2.55s. per acre. This somewhat high average has been due to an exceptionally wet season, the heavily timbered nature of the country, and the isolation of the allotments. Messrs. Wilson and Muir cut up the Kokatahi Estate for settlement purposes, and completed the surveys of "spotting" sections in various districts. Mr. Harrop also made several surveys of small scattered holdings, and laid off a number of sections in the Kawhaka Valley for future public selection. Messrs. Falkiner, Morison, and Cunningham have been busily engaged in cutting up blocks for selection in the Toaroha, Waitaha, and Poerua districts; but as they have only been with us for a few months none of their work is completed, and is therefore not included in this return. My field inspections prove the faithful and skilful manner in which all the surveyors have carried out their work. I might add that we have had one of the wettest seasons on record, and much hindrance has been caused by the "picking-up" and adjustment of old defective surveys of adjoining sections.

Gold-mining Survey.—During the year 1,016 acres (thirteen special claims) has been surveyed by contract surveyors Macfarlane, Spence, Morison, and McCabe, who were nominated and paid by the applicants. The staff surveyors and Crown Lands Rangers have also made inspections and furnished the Wardens with reports on various mining applications.

Roads.—Mr. Muir completed surveys of a mile and three-quarters in connection with the roading of Kokatahi and Teremakau Settlements.

Other Work.—In connection with this the sum of £502 12s. was expended, and is made up as follows: W. Wilson—Repairs to trig. stations, £10 10s.; surveys, plans, reports, and inspection for Roads and Mines Departments, £249 18s. 2d. and £69 2s. 3d. A. G. Muir—Reports for Land Board, £2 15s. A. N. Harrop—Road survey for Mines Department, £56 14s. 8d.; repairs to trig. stations, £4 16s.; exploration and reports on lands, sick-leave, and general office-work during convalescence, £108 15s. 11d. In connection with the expenditure of this office, attention should be drawn to the amount which this small office recoups for work done for other Departments. The total amount repaid to us during the year totals £838 11s. 6d., and half of this is on behalf of the Roads Department—viz., one-quarter salary, &c., Chief Surveyor, nearly the whole of an assistant Surveyor's pay, and two-thirds of the Accountant's wages—as we take charge of the whole of their work in this district.

Proposed Operations, 1903-4.—In accordance with your instructions, the whole energies of the staff have been and will be used in opening up land for settlements; we must therefore postpone several important operations, such as standard surveys of Towns of Hokitika and Kumara, necessitous revision surveys, traverses of main roads, and final laying off of many reserves. Mr. Wilson will most probably be occupied with work on behalf of the Roads Department, and therefore, beyond making a few "spotting" surveys, his services will not be available. Mr. Falkiner will finish the two blocks at Waitaha, and, after laying off a village township there, will proceed with the survey of lands in the Wanganui district. Mr. Harrop, after completion of two blocks in Teremakau and Kawhaka Valleys, will overtake certain pressing section-work in Hohonu and Turiwhate districts. Mr. Morison will complete his present settlement-work at Poerua, and then cut up the lands on north bank of the Wataroa River, below the Ferry. Mr. Cunningham will be fully employed with his present blocks at Koi-te-rangi, and with the surveys of the Kokatahi Township and adjacent areas. Two additional surveyors will define allotments for sale in Towns of Hokitika, Kumara, and Greymouth; mark out lands in Grey Valley; and, if possible, attend to certain arrears of settlement surveys in South Westland. The surveys of numerous reserves which it is proposed to uplift during the year must also be attended to, and should the land surveys in connection with the State coal-mine near Cobden be controlled by this Department we will require more assistance.

Office-work.—Mr. Grant, Chief Draughtsman, notes that fifty-two surveyors' plans, with tabulations, were checked and approved; 430 miscellaneous tracings were made; 207 plans placed on titles, leases, &c.; 910 vouchers, with 563 cheques, put through; drawings, plans, and report on Westland triangulation; ditto with scenic reserves report; and elaborate chart of the coast-line for the Marine Department; 140 tracings of land dealings; forty-eight sale-plans for posters.

In conclusion, I would especially direct your attention to the zealous manner the Chief Draughtsman and other officers have worked while endeavouring to keep returns, &c., up to date, and to acknowledge the willing help they have at all times accorded me.

G. J. ROBERTS, Chief Surveyor.

CANTERBURY.

The settlement surveys completed and mapped during the year have been for the most part the subdivision of estates acquired under the Land for Settlements Acts.

Mr. Brodrick returns 2,956 acres of the Mead Settlement, 179 acres being a portion of the Waikakahi, and 5,140 acres of the Chamberlain Settlement; and, in addition to this, a few isolated surveys. Mr. McClure's returns of completed work embrace 3,181 acres of the Mead Settlement, 100 acres Kaimahi Settlement, and seventeen town sections at Hanmer Springs. He has com-