

## SOUTHLAND.

*Minor Triangulation.*—This consisted of one triangle, covering 6,975 acres, of which the angles were observed, and the calculation of sides based on results obtained, by Mr. Surveyor Macpherson last year.

*Rural and Suburban.*—20,194 acres are returned under this head. This area was subdivided into 113 sections at an average cost of 2.93s. per acre. This will be seen to be a higher rate than that returned for last year; but the explanation is that the greater part of the area is hilly, densely wooded country, a considerable portion of which had been milled over, rendering line-cutting very difficult; while in other parts the ground had been much cut up by sluicing operations, and was intersected by numerous water-races, involving a large amount of extra traversing. By the new regulations all boundary-lines of sections in bush country have to be cut and pegged. This cutting and pegging necessarily adds largely to the cost of section-work, probably 9d. to 1s. per acre, if the work is well done. A further reason for increased cost was frequent delays owing to bad weather. When everything is taken into consideration the cost per acre, 2.93s., which includes the selection and grading of roads, cannot be called high. 4,800 acres of the above area consisted of sawmill areas, mostly in rough bush country.

*Town Surveys.*—There was 1 survey of this class, comprised in 1 allotment of 3 acres, the cost of which was £6.

*Gold-mining Surveys.*—Special claims to the extent of 274 acres, comprising 4 allotments, were surveyed under this class, at an average cost per acre of 4.8s. On comparison with last year's figures, the cost will be seen to be higher. As usual, the surveys were made by private surveyors, the survey fees being deposited by applicants.

*Roads, Railways, &c.*—There was 1 survey of this class, 2.19 miles in length, of which the cost per mile was £32.75. This road is in broken country, and for half its length runs through heavy bush.

*Other Work.*—The total sum returned under this head is £2,423 7s. 8d. Of this amount only £183 9s. 8d. is strictly chargeable to "Other Work." The balance represents the amount expended on unfinished work, to be carried forward to next year.

*Land Transfer Branch.*—Mr. J. L. Dickie, Land Transfer Draughtsman, reports that 92 plans were examined and approved, containing 17,030 acres, and comprising 579 lots. Nine hundred and forty-seven diagrams were drawn on certificates of title, representing 456 in duplicate, 3 in triplicate, and 26 single. He also examined 22 leases and other instruments of title. During the first part of the year the amount of work put through was very much beyond the average, land transactions being very brisk; but during the last six months the work has slackened off considerably.

*Office-work.*—The Chief Draughtsman reports as follows: During the past year 63 plans, representing 11,217 acres, received from surveyors, have been examined; also 13 sheets of railway-land plans. In addition to these, a large amount of miscellaneous calculations was done. A lithographic drawing on a 40-chain scale was made of Invercargill Hundred to take the place of the old original drawing, which was obsolete and useless for the purpose of reproduction, and the original drawing of New River Hundred was revised and brought up to date. Lithographic drawings were also commenced of the Borough of Riverton and the suburban boroughs around Invercargill. A topographical plan was compiled of the interior districts in the north-western part of the land district on a scale of 80 chains to the inch. Some of these districts have never yet been lithographed, and when opportunity offers steps will be taken to have this done. New application maps were compiled of three districts, and 22 lithographic tracings were made for sale-plan purposes. Eight plans of townships were compiled, and forwarded for the Governor's approval. Twenty-four schedules in duplicate were prepared for local bodies' proposals for expenditure of "thirds," and 80 draft warrants for landless Natives were written and checked. The index-book of road-plans, mentioned in last year's report as having been commenced, has now been completed to date, and is found to be most serviceable. A new plan register is also partly compiled. Consequent upon the enlargement of the safe, the old system of portfolios for the storage of plans has been abolished, and sets of drawers, running on brass wheels, have been constructed. This involved a large amount of work in the rearranging and renumbering of plans; but the benefit of this is apparent in the saving of time which has been secured thereby in getting out plans. In connection with ascertaining the real estate possessed by the Postal Department, diagrams and other information were placed on 16 cards. Three plans were compiled showing proposed adjustment of street-frontages in East Invercargill. Seventy-six Land Transfer deposited plans were traced for the Valuation Office, and 339 miscellaneous and 242 working tracings were made for surveyors and others. Some 300 lithographs and plans were mounted.

*Proposed Operations for 1909-10.*—It is anticipated that surveyors Falkiner and Macpherson will be occupied during the ensuing year in cutting up the landless Natives' block, this work being much more troublesome than I had anticipated. Mr. Otway will complete the road-survey at Lake Hauko, on which he is at present engaged, and will then take in hand a block of bush land for settlement near Otatau. Mr. Drury will finish his present work of laying off mining-districts-land-occupation and renewable-lease applications near Orepuki, and will probably thereafter cut up a block of 2,000 acres for settlement on the west bank of the Waiau River. These works, with probably some smaller surveys, which should be done by staff men, will keep these two surveyors employed all this year. As usual, mining surveys and surveys of sawmill areas will be made by private surveyors, and other works, such as scenic-reserve surveys and small "spotting" surveys, where urgently required, will be placed in their hands. There is a persistent demand that more bush lands (abandoned sawmill areas) shall be cut up for settlement, but with the present staff of surveyors the demand can only partially be met, and I should very much like to see the staff increased by one or two surveyors used to bush-work.

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Chief Surveyor.