

1882.

VICTORIA.

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# REPORT

OF

PROCEEDINGS TAKEN UNDER THE PROVISIONS

OF

THE LAND ACT 1869, THE LAND ACT 1878, THE LAND ACTS  
AMENDMENT ACT 1880, AND THE LAND ACT 1880,

DURING THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>ST</sup> DECEMBER

1881.

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PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT BY HIS EXCELLENCY'S COMMAND.

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By Authority :

JOHN FERRES, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

APPROXIMATE COST OF REPORT.

									<i>£</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Preparation—Not given.											
Printing (900 copies)	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	34	10	0

# REPORT.

*To His Excellency The Most Honorable the Marquis of Normanby, G.C.M.G.,  
Governor of Victoria, &c., &c., &c.*

Department of Lands and Survey,  
Melbourne, 25th April 1882.

MY LORD,

In accordance with the 111th section of *The Land Act* 1869, I have the honor to submit the following Report of proceedings taken under the provisions of that Act, *The Land Act* 1878, *The Land Acts Amendment Act* 1880, and *The Land Act* 1880, during the year 1881.

The classification of subjects is in the following order :—

- I.—Settlement.
- II.—Sales by auction.
- III.—Pastoral occupation.
- IV.—Departmental management.
- V.—Miscellaneous.

## I.—SETTLEMENT.

The extent and method of alienation of Crown Lands in Victoria, from the first sales to the 31st December 1881, are shown in the following Table (A) :—

TABLE A.

	BY AUCTION.				BY SELECTION.								General Total.
	Country Lands.	Town Lands.	Suburban Lands.	Totals by Auction, &c.	Selection and Lease.		Certificate Selection.		42nd Section, Act 1865.		—		
					No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	
<b>Under Imperial Acts*</b>	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	Acres.
... ..	...	...	...	3,944,237	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,944,237
„ <i>Land Act</i> 1860	392,610	1,273	4,979	398,862	...	410,600	...	...	...	...	...	...	809,462
„ „ 1862	422,610	2,800	31,295	456,705	...	†701,322	...	59,992	...	...	...	...	1,879,940
„ „ 1865	639,761	6,709	34,137	680,607	5,900	†661,921	3,078	559,423	...	786,083	...	...	3,526,023
<b>Totals ...</b>	...	...	...	5,480,411	...	3,273,753	...	619,415	...	786,083	...	...	10,159,662
<b><i>Land Act</i> 1869.</b>													
<b>During year—</b>													
1870 ... ..	141,928	1,169	5,588	148,685	3,017	320,719	131	1,873	...	...	...	...	471,277
1871 ... ..	112,601	1,737	4,102	118,440	4,575	477,685	673	9,751	...	...	...	...	605,876
1872 ... ..	142,718	1,459	2,434	146,611	7,771	780,819	1,408	16,357	...	...	...	...	943,787
1873 ... ..	15,072	1,442	3,415	19,929	6,689	1,041,779	1,455	21,287	...	...	...	...	1,082,995
1874 ... ..	47,397	853	1,405	49,655	9,578	1,809,668	1,493	22,030	...	...	...	...	1,881,353
1875 ... ..	79,124	1,663	2,608	83,395	6,320	1,171,849	771	11,671	...	...	...	...	1,266,915
1876 ... ..	147,997	822	1,809	150,628	5,785	1,029,141	697	11,215	...	...	...	...	1,190,984
1877 ... ..	73,756	1,304	946	76,006	6,240	1,113,266	777	13,226	...	...	...	...	1,202,498
1878 ... ..	45,346	1,400	630	47,376	7,524	1,389,955	1,534	25,174	...	...	...	...	1,462,505
1879 ... ..	51,817	1,607	3,006	56,430	5,726	1,006,024	887	13,760	75	12,430	...	...	1,088,644
1880 ... ..	25,307	626	1,339	27,272	4,036	725,001	1,054	16,262	67	11,209	56	167	779,911
1881 ... ..	22,336	698	1,719	24,753	3,110	564,306	1,151	18,176	42	6,122	106	318	613,675
<b>Totals under <i>Land Acts</i> 1869 &amp; 1878</b>	905,399	14,780	29,001	949,180	70,371	11,430,212	12,031	180,782	184	29,761	162	485	12,590,420

\* This item, hitherto set down as 4,382,315, has, on recent revision of departmental records, been found to have represented a larger area than was alienated by auction under Imperial Acts; the extent of the error being 438,078 acres.—† Purchased moieties.—‡ Leased moieties.

Auction	...	...	...	...	6,429,591 acres.
Selection	...	...	...	...	§16,320,491 „
<b>Total alienation</b>	...	...	...	...	<b>22,750,082 acres.</b>

§ Of this area, 2,990,320 acres may be set down as having been forfeited or abandoned, and subsequently included in re-adjustments of selections re-licensed, sold by auction, or retained by the Crown.

Table B shows the progress of selection under sections 19 and 49 of *The Land Act 1869* :—

TABLE B.—LAND SELECTED.

Year.	Under 19th Section.				Under 49th Section.			
	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Average to each Selection.	Fees payable yearly.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Average to each Selection.	Fees payable yearly.
			Acres.	£ s. d.			Acres.	£
1870 ...	3,017	320,719	106	32,071 18 0	131	1,873	14	442
1871 ...	4,575	477,685	104	47,768 0 0	673	9,751	14	2,208
1872 ...	7,771	780,819	100	78,081 0 0	1,408	16,407	12	2,836
1873 ...	6,689	1,041,779	156	104,177 0 0	1,455	21,287	15	2,543
1874 ...	9,578	1,809,668	189	180,966 0 0	1,493	22,030	15	2,632
1875 ...	6,320	1,171,849	185	117,184 0 0	771	11,671	15	1,242
1876 ...	5,785	1,029,141	176	102,914 0 0	697	11,215	16	1,278
1877 ...	6,240	1,113,266	178	111,329 0 0	777	13,226	17	1,691
1878 ...	7,524	1,389,955	185	138,995 10 0	1,534	25,174	16	2,954
1879 ...	5,726	1,006,024	176	58,161 6 0	887	13,760	15	2,387
1880 ...	4,036	725,001	180	37,112 17 0	1,054	16,262	15	2,483
1881 ..	3,110	564,306	181	28,402 0 0	1,151	18,176	16	2,390

Under section 19 of *The Land Act 1869*, the fee payable for occupation of land under the provisions of Part II. thereof was Two shillings per acre per annum for a period of three years from date of license.

Section 2 of *The Land Act 1878*, which came into operation on 1st January 1879, extended to six years the period of licenses under section 19 of the Principal Act, and reduced the fee per acre to One shilling per annum ; hence the reduced amount of fees payable yearly on account of the areas selected during 1879, 1880, and 1881.

Table C shows the extent of the operation of sections 19 and 49 during each month of the year :—

TABLE C.

1881.	Section 19.			Section 49.		
	Number of Applications made.	Number Approved.	Area Selected.	Number of Applications made.	Number Approved.	Area Selected.
			Acres.			Acres.
January ...	264	167	31,674	65	79	1,232
February ...	335	137	25,515	88	74	1,248
March ...	391	276	51,748	90	121	1,874
April ...	346	227	45,082	87	51	836
May ...	420	407	72,030	78	102	1,617
June ...	527	262	49,340	119	92	1,416
July ...	603	297	58,336	170	84	1,357
August ...	691	219	37,566	142	128	1,810
September ...	690	251	40,147	193	126	1,902
October ...	561	342	63,743	116	118	1,933
November ...	558	242	41,338	148	82	1,437
December ...	487	283	47,787	114	94	1,514
Totals ...	5,873	3,110	564,306	1,410	1,151	18,176

NOTE.—When in any month the applications approved exceed in number those made, the excess consists of applications lodged during previous months.

## THE LAND ACT 1878.

Section 10 provides for licensees of residence sites obtaining Crown grants under certain conditions. During the year, 106 applications, representing an area of 318 acres, were allowed under this section.

Section 11 provides for issue of non-residence licenses for a period of six years, the fee payable being Two shillings per acre per annum, and for the issue of leases, on expiration of the term of licenses, for a period of fourteen years, at a rental of Two

shillings per acre per annum. Table D shows the transactions under this section during 1881 :—

TABLE D.

Number of Applications.		Area Selected.	Average to each Selection.	Fees Payable Yearly.		
Made.	Approved.					
67	42	Acres. 6,122	Acres. 146	£	s.	d.
				612	4	0

#### THE LAND ACTS AMENDMENT ACT 1880.

Section 4 provides for the holders of licenses under section 49 of the Principal Act obtaining Crown grants without competition; 752 applications, representing 11,578 acres, have been approved during the year, and the sum of £3,921 10s. has been received under this section.

#### THE LAND ACT 1880.

Section 3 of this Act provides for alteration of the term and conditions of licenses under section 19 of *The Land Act* 1869, whereby holders thereof who are in arrear with their license fees may have their licenses endorsed for an extended term, not exceeding in the whole six years, in lieu of three, as provided by the Act of 1869, the fees being reduced from Two shillings per acre per annum to One shilling.

By this provision the payment of arrears due at the time of such endorsement is not required, but carried forward, the licensee paying his rent from the date of the endorsement only at the lower rate for the extended term. *See Illustration A.\**

Considerable relief has thus been afforded, and, during this year, 2,051 licensees have brought their holdings under the provisions of this section of the Act, representing an area of 437,232 acres, the amount of arrears due on these licenses at the time of endorsement being £58,854 8s.

Licensees who have taken advantage of this provision, and subsequently find themselves in a position to pay up their arrears, and are desirous of obtaining their titles, are allowed to revert to the provisions of *The Land Act* 1869.

Section 4 of this Act provides for the endorsement of leases, in like manner that section 3 provides for the endorsement of licenses. The advantages of this section have been secured by 4,528 lessees, holding in the aggregate 1,034,982 acres, and the amount due on these leases—viz., £142,210 10s. 6d.—is also carried forward, and will be realized by the reduced fee of One shilling per acre per annum being collected during the extended period of their leases. *See Illustration B.†*

Three hundred and ninety-four licensees under the *The Land Act* 1869 applied for leases for 14 years, which were endorsed under the provisions of this section, representing 91,074 acres, in consequence of which the sum of £3,984 18s. is carried forward.

Section 6 of this Act provides that a lessee may give an “order” for the delivery of the Crown grant to any person who may have made an advance of money on the security of a lease, the mortgage being transferred from the lease to the Crown grant. Four hundred and twenty-two lessees have made application in accordance with the provisions of this section for the registration of such orders, representing in all an area of 88,799 acres 1 rood.

\* *A* holds a license for 3 years, dated 1st January 1878; he has only paid one half-year's rent of 1s. per acre up to 1st July 1878; on 1st January 1881, therefore, he is in arrear 5s. per acre. Under this section his license is endorsed from, say, 1st April 1881 for a term of 5 years, at a half-yearly rental of 6d. per acre, payable in advance, from 1st April 1881 to 1st April 1886. The charge for endorsement is 5s.

† *B* holds a lease for 7 years, dated 1st June 1879, and has only paid three half-yearly rentals of 1s. per acre up to 1st December 1880; therefore, on 1st December 1881 he is in arrear to the extent of 3s. per acre. On the last given date his lease is endorsed for 11 years, viz., to 1st December 1892, to which date he will have to pay 6d. per acre half-yearly, when his Crown grant will become due.

The following Table shows the number of licenses and leases revoked or declared expired during 1881 :—

TABLE E.

		Number.	Extent.		
			A.	R.	P.
Licenses	Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1865 ...	13	186	0	0
	Section 19, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	1,012	196,118	1	27
	Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	190	2,818	0	9
Leases	Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	21	2,267	0	0

NOTE.—The Treasury profited to the extent of £11,430 14s. 7d. through revocations and forfeitures during 1881.

Table F sets forth the grounds on which the licenses and leases referred to in Table E were revoked or declared expired, and the lands resumed by the Crown :—

TABLE F.

		At Licensee's request.	Non-payment of Fees.	Non-compliance with or Violation of Conditions.	For Re-license.	Issued in Error.	De-clared Expired.	Land Sold.	Death of Licensee.	Insol-vency of Licensee.	Amend-ed Sur-veys, &c.	Total.
Licenses—												
	Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1865 ...	1	5	...	...	...	7	...	...	...	...	13
	Section 19, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	332	403	64	50	2	92	26	2	19	22	1,012
	Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	17	104	10	...	...	17	41	1	...	...	190
Leases—												
	Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	2	18	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	21
Totals ...		352	530	74	51	2	116	67	3	19	22	1,236

Reports have been obtained from Land Officers as to the proceedings of selectors and the progress of settlement during the year in their respective districts, and a digest of their reports is given in Appendix A.

Appendix A.

Table G shows the estimated total area of Victoria, approximately the accessible extent thereof, lands alienated and otherwise appropriated, and the area remaining available for selection :—

TABLE G.

		Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
*Total area of Victoria	...	...	...	56,245,760
*Deduct mallee country	...	...	...	11,535,500
Total accessible area		...	...	44,710,260
Land alienated up to December 1864	...	6,633,639		
Roads, &c., in connection therewith	...	331,682		
			6,965,321	
Land alienated under <i>Land Act</i> 1865 ...	...	3,526,023		
Roads, &c., in connection therewith	...	176,301		
			3,702,324	
Land alienated under <i>Land Acts</i> 1869 and 1878 ...	...	12,590,420		
Roads, &c., in connection therewith	...	629,521		
			13,219,941	
Land included in cities, towns, &c.	...	...	302,000	
Auriferous lands, available under section 49 only	...	...	...	973,802
(about)	...	...	...	12,000,000
Mountain forests	...	...	...	832,530
State forests	...	...	...	218,412
Timber reserves	...	...	...	689,870
Other reserves	...	...	...	38,904,200
				5,806,060
Estimated area of lands abandoned or forfeited to the Crown	...	...	...	2,990,320
Approximate area suitable for selection, January 1882		...	...	8,796,380

#### LOCAL LAND BOARDS.

During the year 1881, 389 sittings were held, at which applications for land and other business, comprising in all 6,799 subjects, were dealt with.

This table has undergone a careful revision since the publication of the Report for the year 1880: hence the alteration in these items.

APPLICATIONS UNDER SECTION 20, LAND ACT 1869, FOR LEASES OR GRANTS.

The applications during 1881 for leases or grants had relation principally to lands selected under section 19 during 1878, in which year the total area selected under that section was 1,389,955 acres, which exceeded the extent acquired thereunder in any other year except 1874.

The following Table shows the transactions during 1881 :—

TABLE II.

Applications.		Grants Gazetted as Approved.	Leases Gazetted as Approved.	Purchase Completed.	Area Purchased.	Area Leased.	Balance of Purchase-money paid by Licensees.	Area Leased and afterwards Purchased.	Amount Paid by Lessees as Balance of Purchase-money.
Lodged.	Dealt with.								
4,359	3,652	185	3,467	3,375	Acres. 418,142	Acres. 560,780	£ 10,980	Acres. 402,627	£ 75,147

Table I shows the number of Crown grants under section 20 of *The Land Act* 1869 of holdings varying in extent from 10 acres and under to 320 acres, the issue of which was approved during 1881 :—

TABLE I.

Under 50 acres, 123	{	10 acres and under ...	52	Over 150 and not exceeding 200, 10	{	Brought forward ...	153
		20       "       ...	35			160 acres and under ...	1
		30       "       ...	11			170       "       ...	2
		40       "       ...	11			180       "       ...	2
		50       "       ...	14			190       "       ...	3
Over 50 and not exceeding 100, 21	{	60       "       ...	5	Over 200 and not exceeding 250, 6	{	200       "       ...	2
		70       "       ...	4			210       "       ...	2
		80       "       ...	9			220       "       ...	2
		90       "       ...	1			230       "       ...	1
		100       "       ...	2			240       "       ...	0
Over 100 and not exceeding 150, 9	{	110       "       ...	4	Over 250 and not exceeding 300, 4	{	250       "       ...	1
		120       "       ...	1			260       "       ...	1
		130       "       ...	1			270       "       ...	0
		140       "       ...	1			280       "       ...	0
		150       "       ...	2			290       "       ...	2
Carried forward ...	...	...	153	Over 300 and not exceeding 320, 12	{	300       "       ...	1
			310       "       ...			1	
Total ...			185	Total ...			185

Of the 185 grants approved, 123 were for holdings under 50 acres, and 21 for areas ranging from 50 to 100 acres.

The number of applications received and granted, respectively, under sections 19 and 20 since the Act came into operation, and the areas so applied for and disposed of, are shown by Appendix B, which also contains a statement of other transactions **Appen ix B.** under section 20.

SECTION 31, LAND ACT 1869.

This section conferred on holders of licenses, obtained under the repealed Acts of 1862 and 1865, to occupy lands for other than pastoral purposes, the right to acquire the fee-simple of the lands so held, credit being given in the purchase for all moneys paid by them as rent and survey fees.

In cases in which purchase has not been allowed on account of the auriferous character of the land, or of portions thereof being required or likely to be required for railways or other public purposes, such of the licensees whose payments represent

an amount equivalent to the estimated value per acre of the land have continued in occupation at a nominal rental of One shilling per annum pending removal of objections or decision as to public requirements.

Table J shows the transactions during 1881 :—

TABLE J.

Number of Applications.		Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase-money Received.	Survey Fees Allowed.
Received.	Approved.				
60	150*	110	Acres. 4,159	£ s. d. 436 12 0	£ s. d. 215 13 6

\* The surplus of applications approved over the number received during the year consists chiefly of applications the previous objections to which have been withdrawn.

## SECTION 33, LAND ACT 1869.

The transactions under this section in favor of lessees under *The Amending Land Act 1865* were as follow :—

TABLE K.

Applications Received.	Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase-money Paid.
7	7	Acres. 506	£ s. d. 99 15 0

## II.—SALES OF CROWN LANDS BY AUCTION.

The area of country lands sold at auction during 1881 was about 22,336 acres, of which about 15,454 acres were improved and subject to valuation, and 6,882 unimproved.

Table L shows the proceeds of sales by auction of country lands during each year of the operation of *The Land Act 1869* :—

TABLE L.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1870 ... ..	*141,928	0	0	179,939	0	0	1	5	4
1871 ... ..	†112,601	0	0	132,160	0	0	1	3	5
1872—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	87,273	3	12	96,695	11	4	1	2	2
Improved „ ... ..	2,345	2	13	3,288	15	0	1	8	0
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	20,425	3	31	25,772	3	0	1	5	2
Improved „ ... ..	2,180	0	20	2,450	18	0	1	2	5
1873—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	4,679	3	8	6,816	14	10	1	9	1
Improved „ ... ..	2,457	2	35	3,186	7	1	1	6	0
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	4,182	2	35	10,156	3	1	2	8	6
Improved „ ... ..	3,684	3	39	6,158	9	10	1	13	5

\* These figures include 11,523 acres passed at auction and afterwards purchased.

† These figures include 30,460 acres passed at auction and afterwards purchased.



TABLE L—continued.

Year.	Area Sold.		Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R. P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1874—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	10,711	2 16	12,588	13 0		1 3	6	
Improved „ ... ..	8,772	0 15	11,293	18 7		1 5	9	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	16,586	0 17	23,480	1 10		1 8	3	
Improved „ ... ..	11,327	3 38	12,072	10 8		1 1	4	
1875—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	32,042	3 26	41,688	19 10		1 6	0	
Improved „ ... ..	20,175	0 10	26,845	15 10		1 6	7	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	2,079	0 6	3,002	10 8		1 8	10	
Improved „ ... ..	24,827	0 0	34,858	10 5		1 8	1	
1876—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	22,218	2 16	30,229	1 1		1 7	2	
Improved „ ... ..	60,986	1 39	76,355	9 6		1 5	0	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	7,372	1 11	11,830	5 7		1 12	1	
Improved „ ... ..	57,420	0 11	74,340	13 8		1 5	11	
1877—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	1,592	2 4	2,639	15 5		1 13	2	
Improved „ ... ..	45,262	1 24	57,049	3 7		1 5	3	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	1,001	0 15	2,186	11 9		2 3	8	
Improved „ ... ..	25,900	1 13	32,464	7 5		1 5	1	
1878—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	808	3 15	1,483	15 6		1 16	8	
Improved „ ... ..	19,256	1 24	22,402	15 2		1 3	3	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	2,653	0 7	3,635	11 1		1 7	5	
Improved „ ... ..	22,627	1 14	29,052	12 3		1 5	8	
1879—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	9,978	1 9	17,811	6 4		1 15	8	
Improved „ ... ..	25,359	2 9	32,776	17 11		1 5	10	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	4,544	0 38	5,800	14 2		1 5	6	
Improved „ ... ..	11,934	2 12	14,519	10 4		1 4	4	
1880—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	3,795	3 37	5,858	2 11		1 10	11	
Improved „ ... ..	10,309	0 6	13,313	3 5		1 5	10	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	3,571	2 3	5,208	8 4		1 9	2	
Improved „ ... ..	7,630	2 35	8,780	5 4		1 3	0	
1881—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land ... ..	3,463	3 2	6,860	11 7		1 19	7	
Improved „ ... ..	8,235	3 0	12,370	14 1		1 10	0	
„ 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land ... ..	3,418	0 39	5,384	18 0		1 11	6	
Improved „ ... ..	7,218	2 6	9,171	1 5		1 5	5	

Table M shows the alienation by auction, during 1881, of town, suburban, and country lands, and the amounts derived therefrom :—

TABLE M.

Town Lands.			Suburban Lands.			Country Lands.																				
Area.		Amount.	Average per Acre.	Area.		Amount.	Average per Acre.	Area.		Amount.	Average per Acre.															
A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.									
697	2	17	90,212	2	0	129	6	4	1,719	0	4	6,468	5	10	3	15	3	22,336	1	7	33,787	5	1	1	10	3

### III.—PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

During the year, 46 runs were transferred, and the subdivision of 1 run was sanctioned. The fees for transfers and subdivision were £66. Penalties for delays in payment of pastoral rents produced £15.

Fifty-six runs, comprising an area of about 1,753,286 acres, were either abandoned or forfeited during the year.

#### SECTION 78.

The area held under pastoral license was, during the year, reduced by sales, selections, reservations, and proclamation of commons, to the extent of 396,684 acres. In June 1881, 73 applications for reduction of pastoral rent were considered, and allowed to the amount of £3,481 4s. 8d., and in December 1881, 98 such applications were considered, and reductions allowed to the amount of £3,908 11s. 10d. The amount received for fees under this section was £855.

The pastoral revenue for the year amounted to £71,036.

The sum of £13,663 was received during the year for grazing licenses.

Table N shows the amount of pastoral rent paid for each year, from the passing of *The Land Act* 1869 to the end of 1881 :—

TABLE N.

								£
1870	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	167,491
1871	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	172,228
1872	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	153,522
1873	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	140,791
1874	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	127,114
1875	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	139,304
1876	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	162,443
1877	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	146,043
1878	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	134,079
1879	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	107,732
1880	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	88,065
1881	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	71,036

### IV.—DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT.

The reduction in the number of officers effected at the end of the year 1880, and reported on last year, has not in any degree impaired the efficiency of the staff, which, after a full year's experience, has been proved to be equal to the requirements of the Department.

The Enquiry Branch has been reorganized during the year, and placed under the management of a Staff Officer. Telephonic communication has been

established between this branch and the other branches of the Department with good results, enquiries being more expeditiously answered. Similar communication has been established between the Public Offices and the Melbourne Exchange.

The Photographic Branch has done considerable work beyond the requirements of this Department, viz., for the Public Works, Mining, and Law Departments, for the Patent Office, and Water Conservancy Board, whereby considerable saving to the State has been effected.

The discovery of frauds on the part of the late Accountant of the Department led to the prosecution and conviction of that officer. The Account Branch is now on a more satisfactory footing, and a large saving in the cost of its management has been effected.

The report of the Assistant Surveyor-General on the progress made in surveys, Appendix C. compilation of parish plans, and the work of the Draughting and Lithographic Branches is set forth in Appendix C.

Reports on the Botanic Gardens, Government House Grounds and Domain, will be presented in a separate form.

#### SECTION 100.—PUBLIC HEARINGS.

Four hundred and six cases were publicly heard by the Minister during the year.

### V.—MISCELLANEOUS.

#### SECTION 58.—COMMONS.

Commonage to the extent of 29,982 acres was proclaimed during the year. Of this area, 3,362 acres were added to existing commons, and 26,620 acres comprised in new commons.

Commons were diminished by proclamation to the extent of 1,300 acres.

#### SECTION 98.—PENALTIES.

Table O shows the amounts of penalties, at the rate of Five shillings per acre, received during 1881 and previous years for non-improvement by lessees under the Land Acts of 1862 and 1865, and interest on rents in arrear :—

TABLE O.

			£	s.	d.
Prior to 1st January 1873	...	...	2,826	0	0
From 1st January to 31st December 1873	...	...	3,869	0	0
"	"	1874	13,327	5	0
"	"	1875	25,477	0	0
"	"	1876	72,160	14	3
"	"	1877	24,796	18	0
"	"	1878	4,613	5	4
"	"	1879	1,323	10	1
"	"	1880	1,886	2	6
"	"	1881	2,457	11	0
			<hr/>		
			£152,737	6	2

#### CROWN GRANTS AND LEASES.

Six thousand three hundred and seventy-three Crown grants and 4,431 leases were prepared and passed from the head office during 1881, the fees payable on which may be set down at £12,154 10s.

#### FEES AND CERTIFICATES.

The sum of £39,929 7s. 9d. was received during the year for certificates, transfers, and registrations under *The Land Act* 1869, and for miscellaneous fees, including those payable for grants, leases, and survey charges.

## LEASES AND LICENSES FOR OTHER THAN AGRICULTURAL OR PASTORAL PURPOSES.

The amount payable during 1881 for occupation and use of land under sections 45 and 47 of *The Land Act* 1869 is shown in Table P :—

TABLE P.

	£	s.	d.
For sites on the banks of Yarra ... ..	1,950	11	0
„ other factory sites ... ..	478	10	0
„ sites of rural stores and inns ... ..	1,187	0	0
„ sawmills ... ..	1,327	13	4
„ ferries ... ..	129	0	0
„ quarries ... ..	567	0	0
„ brick licenses ... ..	370	0	0
„ priced licenses ... ..	4,723	8	6
„ all other licenses (tramways, races, &c.) ... ..	2,783	17	8
	<u>£13,517</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>6</u>

## BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

During the year 1881, the Board of Examiners held four meetings and two examinations, at which 20 candidates presented themselves, of whom 10 succeeded in obtaining certificates of competency.

The fees received from candidates amounted to £21.

## REVENUE.

Table Q shows in detail the revenue contributed by the Department to the Treasury during 1881 :—

TABLE Q.

<i>Temporary Occupation.</i>				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Pastoral occupation and grazing licenses ... ..	...	...	...	84,699	3	10			
Rents under sections 45 and 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	13,070	14	5			
Total ... ..	...	...	...	...			97,769	18	3
<i>Alienated in Fee-simple by Auction and Deferred Payments, also Rents received towards Alienation.</i>									
		A.	R. P.	£	s.	d.			
By auction—Town land ... ..	...	697	2 17	90,212	2	0			
„ Suburban land ... ..	...	1,719	0 4	6,468	5	10			
„ Country land ... ..	...	22,336	1 7	33,787	5	1			
				130,467	12	11			
Sundry payments on account of purchase in fee-simple ... ..	...	...	...	962	14	1			
By purchase under section 31, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	436	12	0			
„ „ „ 33, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	99	15	0			
„ „ „ 20, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	86,127	7	0			
„ „ „ 4, <i>Land Acts Amendment Act</i> 1880 ... ..	...	...	...	3,921	10	0			
Rents under section 42, <i>Amending Land Act</i> 1865 ... ..	...	...	...	179	14	0			
„ „ 12, „ „ „ and section 33, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	63,539	16	0			
„ „ 19, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	276,851	18	0			
„ „ 20, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	9,217	11	10			
„ „ 49, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	60,851	9	6			
„ „ 19, „ „ „ as amended by <i>Land Act</i> 1878 ... ..	...	...	...	37,653	3	0			
„ „ 5, „ „ 1878, and section 3, <i>Land Acts Amendment Act</i> 1880 ... ..	...	...	...	20,682	2	6			
„ „ 8, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	1,658	15	0			
„ „ 11, „ „ „ ..	...	...	...	20,828	0	6			
„ „ 4, „ „ 1880 ... ..	...	...	...				713,478	1	4
Penalties under section 98, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, and interest ... ..	...	...	...	2,457	11	0			
Fees for grants, leases, licenses, &c. ... ..	...	...	...	39,929	7	9			
Sale of plans, &c. ... ..	...	...	...	1,362	15	11			
							43,749	14	8
Total Revenue ... ..	...	...	...	...			854,997	14	3

## EXTERMINATION OF RABBITS.

Although the several Land Acts contain no provision for the extermination of rabbits, the Department undertook, in view of the provisions of *The Rabbit Suppression Act 1880*, the work of extermination, which has been assiduously pursued, and will be continued energetically and with the benefit of experience acquired in past operations.

A full report on this subject will be found in Appendix D.

I have the honor to be,

My Lord,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

WALTER MADDEN,

Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey,  
and President of the Board of Land and Works.

# APPENDICES.

## APPENDIX A.

### DIGEST OF REPORTS OF LAND OFFICERS ON THE WORKING OF "THE LAND ACT 1869" IN THEIR RESPECTIVE DISTRICTS.

District.	Applications Approved.				Report as to the Working of Land Act on Holdings under Section 19 and 49.	Report as to use made of Land granted or leased under Section 20.	Report as to Agriculture and new Rural Industries.	Remarks.
	Section 19.		Section 49.					
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.				
Alexandra ...	92	15,668	17	338	Working satisfactorily. The applicants, almost without exception, are considered <i>bonâ fide</i> .	Chiefly for grazing. A few transfers to neighboring farmers and local storekeepers have been made.	The wheat and oats looked remarkably well, and promised a yield above the average.	Difficult transit to markets still bars the way to extensive cultivation. The land available for selection, though hilly, is well watered, which will enable the selector to weather the driest season with little anxiety.
Ararat ...	38	6,424	206	3,772	The Act still works well. Selection increased more than 50 per cent. over last year, and <i>bonâ fide</i> . The land taken up is principally heavily timbered, taking a considerable time to clear.	Grazing principally, the greater part of the land being unfit for cultivation. There is good agricultural land locked up in reserves.	Agriculture is principally confined to the older selectors, as they selected the best land for that purpose. The cultivation of vines seems to be on the increase. Corks and olives are being tried.	Large areas of land which are reserved from selection, principally on mining grounds, retard selection, which, it is believed, would otherwise take place.
Bairnsdale ...	62	7,583	19	296	The Act continues to work well, selectors being glad to avail themselves of the Amending Act.	Settlement seems to be of a permanent character. The proportion of leases transferred is very small.	Agriculture is not very extensive. Owing to the high prices, great impetus has been given to the cultivation of hops and maize, crops of which were, this year, very good. There has also been an improvement in tobacco and arrowroot.	There is a great rage for hop cultivation, and suitable land on the river flats is changing hands at high prices. This industry seems to have nearly superseded other industries.
Ballarat ...	16	1,223	95	747	Land available under section 19 in this district is poor in quality, and more fitted for grazing than for agricultural purposes. Selections made lately under this section have been but little improved. Selections under the 49th section have been used in accordance with the spirit of the Act.	Most of the land under this section in this district is now used for grazing purposes. Many blocks have changed hands. The tendency is for the land to fall into fewer hands; more especially is this the case when the land is poor.	Throughout this district the harvest and crops have been exceptionally good, and produce of all kinds is plentiful. There are no new rural industries in this district.	Most, if not all, of the Crown lands in this district available for selection is poor and rangy, and the present selectors, unless in the neighborhood of goldfields and population, are not likely to remain on the land longer than they can help.
Beechworth ...	225	25,763	67	1,217	Generally satisfactory. New selections in nearly all cases made by residents in the district. Compliance with conditions substantial.	Used chiefly for grazing, but a considerable area in the northern portion of the district is under cultivation. A few leaseholds have been transferred to adjoining selectors.	Crops of cereals generally good; the tobacco crop has been excellent, and the yield of wine fair. The area under vines has been largely increased.	A large area of poor hilly country, suitable only for grazing, has been taken up during the year.
Benalla ...	482	82,548	6	108	Working satisfactorily ...	As a rule still held by the original licensee or some member of same family. Transfers to outsiders are not numerous.	A large area under wheat and other cereals. The yield, notwithstanding a deficient rainfall, is up to the average.	Many selectors have, with benefit to themselves, taken advantage of sections 3 and 4 of <i>The Land Act 1880</i> .

Camperdown and Warrnambool	35	3,931	97	1,483	Satisfactory; <i>bona fide</i> intention is shown, as regards the 49th section in particular. This section is mainly taken advantage of by poor people to make a home, and has been the means of settling many who otherwise had to live on township allotments or rented land. Section 19 blocks are mostly taken up as grazing adjuncts to old holdings. Very satisfactory.	Grazing and cultivation, mainly the former. Dairying is perhaps the principal industry.	Not much agriculture, the land best fitted for this purpose having been taken up under prior Land Acts, notably the 1865 Act; but what there is gives promise of a good return this year. Potatoes are exceptionally good. No new rural industries to report.	This has been a favorable season, and it is anticipated the selectors' arrears in this district will be considerably decreased from this cause. Farmers are all apparently well satisfied with this season's prospects.
Castlemaine ... and Dunolly	32	4,688	38	580	As a rule, worked by the original licensee in accordance with the spirit of the Land Act.	Nothing new in the way of industries has come under notice. In some parts of the district the crops have been poor, but, taken on the whole, the yields will compare very favorably with other districts.	As far as can be ascertained, it appears to be the general desire of selectors to settle permanently on the land, and use their holdings for <i>bona fide</i> farming purposes.	
Echuca ...	117	19,668	9	158	Selection generally <i>bona fide</i> , and progressing steadily. Forfeitures for non-compliance comparatively few; some of the selectors on the northern plains may, on account of unfavorable seasons, be compelled to abandon their holdings.	Chiefly grazing, combined with a little agriculture. Transfers and sales have been numerous, although the general tendency of the original licensees is to retain their holdings, and settle permanently on the land.	Grass is very scarce throughout the entire district; and farmers have been sorely distressed by the excessively dry season, and the absence of effective measures for conserving a proper water supply.	
Geelong ...	63	7,380	84	1,303	Satisfactory.	The greater portion is still used for grazing, which, unless on superior soil and in exceptional positions, pays the best.	Almost the only subject calling for reference this year is the effort made to extirpate the phylloxera. Nearly all the vineyards in the district have been destroyed. Vines, however, are still allowed to exist within the town boundary.	
Hamilton ...	249	42,706	230	3,389	Selection still continues, although the available land is of inferior quality. The facilities of the present Land Acts have induced many to select land adjacent to their holdings, which, under other circumstances, would not have been taken up. The operation of the Act has therefore been most satisfactory.	Where the land is poor, the area is too small to admit of remunerative sheep-farming. In many cases there is a disposition to sell out; most of the land held is used for grazing.		
Horsham ...	652	162,094	Nil	Nil	Working satisfactorily, generally <i>bona fide</i> , proved by comfortable homesteads of earlier selectors. Many South Australian families are securing land in Victoria under 19th section.	Holdings mostly remain in the hands of original selectors. Some few have transferred and gone further north with their families to obtain larger areas, for wheat-growing and grazing.		
Kerang ...	114	25,172	28	532	Selection under these sections has increased this year. The 49th section is taken advantage of to increase the area of the holdings. The improvements are generally good, selectors, as a rule, <i>bona fide</i> ; but a number of licenses have been cancelled for non-compliance with conditions.	Used for grazing and cultivation. The majority of selectors appear to be making permanent homes. Some, however, have transferred their leases; and others have left the district and let their land.	The returns from cultivation this year are very poor; many have had to turn their stock into their crops. On the plains, crops have been a failure; but on the Murray they have, as a rule, been very fair.	
								The want of water is a great drawback; many have to drive their stock 10 to 15 miles for water, and to cart it for household purposes. The seasons here cannot be depended on; but in view of the railway construction to Kerang, the extermination of rabbits, and the conservancy of water, many are hoping for a more profitable future.

## APPENDIX A—continued.

District.	Applications Approved.				Report as to the Working of Land Act on Holdings under Section 19 and 49.	Report as to use made of Land granted or leased under Section 20.	Report as to Agriculture and new Rural Industries.	Remarks.
	Section 19.		Section 49.					
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.				
McLbourne ...	141	Acres. 19,105	39	Acres. 626	The Act would work better if all lessees and licensees were compelled to reside in the district.	Used chiefly for grazing; very little for cultivation, on account of the heavy cost of clearing the dense scrub and timber. Principally sheep-farming; a limited area only under cultivation for local requirements. The provisions of Land Act 1880 are largely taken advantage of, proving <i>bona fides</i> .	Crops of all sorts. Oats, potatoes, pease, &c., have been good. A Brick and Tile Company has started, but is not yet in full working order. No new industries to report. Flourmills, sawmills, and tannery, before reported, are still in operation.	The completion of the Tambo Valley road is much needed, to promote prosperity of the district. The Uplands, from the Omeo Plains, are beginning to be settled upon.
Omeo ...	51	9,008	12	193	Continues most satisfactory. The original occupants still retain their holdings; conditions of license being fully complied with.	Holders are not disposed to part with their land; where the land is suitable, cultivation is pursued as well as grazing; but, if poor, grazing only is attended to.	Crops this year throughout the district were first-class. There were splendid yields of wheat, oats, and pease, which were chiefly grown. No new rural industries to report.	There is still plenty of fair grazing land available for selection, and being taken up by families from Riverina. Land fit for cultivation can only be obtained by going into the back country, which is heavily timbered and scrubby, and requires to be opened up by roads.
Sale ...	154	18,834	41	619	The advantages of the Land Act 1880 have enabled many selectors to tide over their difficulties; they are availing themselves of the provisions of the 49th section to increase their holdings. The conditions under both sections are fairly complied with.	Continues to be used for <i>bona fide</i> farming purposes, principally by original holders.	A larger area under crop this year than last, but not so good an average yield. In some instances, 20 bushels per acre reported; but, about the vicinity of Raywood, not more than 4 to 6 bushels per acre. Reports from various vineyards are good. No new industries.	Settlement steadily increasing. Those who during the year have selected are, as a rule, thoroughly practical farmers, and possessed of the necessary requirements to ensure success.
Sandhurst ...	40	4,687	17	244	Very satisfactory. Dummymism almost entirely unknown.	Chiefly used for grazing purposes, for which the land is better adapted than for cultivation.	There does not appear to be any increase in the area under cultivation, owing no doubt to limited quantity of land suitable. No new industries to report.	During the latter part of the year there has been a large increase in the number of applications received. There is still a very large area of good grazing land available in country which only requires opening up to be appreciated.
Seymour ...	190	35,680	11	147	Very satisfactory; conditions, except cultivation, for which most of the land is unsuitable, being honestly complied with. The 49th section is being taken advantage of to increase the area of the holdings of those who have selected 320 acres under the 19th section.	Mostly held by original holders, who combine agriculture with sheep-grazing. Only a few transfers, and, as a rule, they are to relations and adjoining farmers. In a few instances, in Laen and Wyeheproof, they have passed into the hands of the squatter.	Area under cultivation this year greater than last, but the average crop is less. On the timbered land, the yield of wheat is good; but on the plains very poor—attributable mostly to bad seasons, but, in some cases, to bad farming. No new rural industries to report.	There are yet many complaints about the rabbits, although many have been destroyed. There seems to be in most parts a better supply of water than last year, owing to late rains and the number of tanks made by the shire council. Railway communication with Donald will induce selection in the north.
St. Arnaud ...	308	61,244	43	804	Working well. Selection increasing during the last six months, and extending to the northern parts of district. Selectors are of a good class, <i>bona fide</i> , many of them young men used to farming. In many instances, families combine to work together.	Cultivation and grazing combined. A few transfers have taken place.	No new industries to report. The lands under cultivation are principally under wheat and oats.	There has been a slight increase in selection, which has taken place principally in the north-eastern and central parts of the district; chiefly taken up for grazing purposes.
Stawell ...	49	9,900	92	1,620	These sections appear to have worked satisfactorily.			



## APPENDIX B.

APPLICATIONS for Licenses under Section 19, *The Land Act 1869.*

Year.			Number Received.	Area in Acres.	Number Granted.	Area in Acres.
1870	...	...	5,746	603,572	3,017	320,719
1871	...	...	10,771	970,680	4,575	477,685
1872	...	...	7,995	995,786	7,771	780,819
1873	...	...	9,587	1,606,389	6,689	1,041,779
1874	...	...	13,283	2,480,823	9,578	1,809,668
1875	...	...	8,732	1,375,072	6,320	1,171,849
1876	...	...	8,988	1,609,045	5,785	1,029,141
1877	...	...	10,967	2,043,830	6,240	1,113,266
1878	...	...	9,737	1,741,136	7,524	1,389,955
1879	...	...	7,033	1,215,024	5,726	1,006,024
1880	...	...	4,816	874,848	4,036	725,001
1881	...	...	5,873	1,115,282	3,110	564,306
			103,528	16,631,487	70,371	*11,430,212

\* Of the area selected under the several Land Acts, 2,990,320 acres may be set down as having been forfeited or abandoned, and subsequently included in re-adjustments of selections, re-licensed, sold by auction, or retained by the Crown.

TRANSACTIONS under Section 20, *The Land Act 1869*, to 31st December 1881.

No. of Applications for Leases and Grants.	Area in Acres.	No. of Applications for Leases Approved.	Area in Acres.	No. of Leaseholds converted into Freeholds.	Area in Acres.	No. of Grants Issued.	Area in Acres.	No. of Applications for Permission to Mortgage Leaseholds.	Area in Acres.	No. of Applications for Permission to Transfer Leaseholds.	Area in Acres.
45,464	6,967,084	36,648	5,772,588	9,767	1,270,194	13,359	1,513,054	14,612	2,868,308	8,089	1,340,445

## APPENDIX C.

I have the honor to submit the following brief report on the working of the Survey branch for the year ending 31st December 1881 :—

## SURVEYS.

1. The system of letting by public tender the surveys required in connection with selections having proved satisfactory so far, it has been determined to continue it and extend the period of service, as the frequent changes brought about by annual contracts are very objectionable both to the department and the surveyors.

The present Minister of Lands therefore decided to extend the term to three years, and fresh contracts have been entered into for that period from the 1st of January 1882. A large proportion of the old contract surveyors have secured their divisions for the extended period at much about the same prices as formerly ; but in a few instances the rates vary considerably, some being higher and some lower. On the whole there is a slight decrease on previous rates.

By means of a schedule of prices based on the accepted tenders, the plan of open tender is now virtually made to apply to all the field work required by the department which cannot be accomplished by the departmental staff, and it is found to answer well and to be economical.

2. The departmental field staff continues the same as at date of last report. The method of inspection continues to work well, and I am unable to suggest any improvement in this respect.

As regards the staff of assistant surveyors, the work of revising old and erroneous surveys is now so far advanced that, if deemed advisable, some further reduction might be effected at the end of the present financial year. But this will depend on the nature of the next Land Act, and it would probably therefore be injudicious to make any alteration until it is known whether the measure will increase the work of the department or not.

3. The adjusting and computing branches continue to work satisfactorily, but the work keeps up, and any reduction in the staff of these branches is not advisable at present.

## 4. The departmental expenditure in surveys during the year has been as follows:—

Subdivision of lands for sale and selection	...	...	...	£976	12	10
Main roads surveys	...	...	...	1,044	4	10
Standard survey lines, parish boundaries, &c.	...	...	...	3,261	14	4
Check and connecting lines	...	...	...	1,644	15	1
Re-surveys	...	...	...	3,781	5	8
Trigonometrical work, &c.	...	...	...	72	19	2
Survey of sites for public purposes, &c.	...	...	...	241	2	3
				<hr/>		
				£11,022	14	2
				<hr/>		

Against which have to be placed fees received during the year on account of surveys made by and at the expense of the department and passed to revenue, amounting to £6,730 10s.

5. It will be observed that there has been a considerable reduction in the expenditure of the department for the year in several of the items, especially those for surveys for main roads, check and connecting lines, and re-surveys. The increase on the item standard and parish boundary lines is due to the survey of county boundaries in the Mallee country, referred to in last report as a work of considerable importance.

The net reduction on the expenditure for the year cannot be accurately given, as the above statements include payments on account of the previous year, and there are a few outstanding liabilities at the present time; but the saving I estimate to be about £3,600.

## DRAUGHTING BRANCH.

About one hundred parish plans were compiled, photo-lithographed, and published during the year; second editions of about thirty more were issued on full and half scales, giving additional information up to date. A list of 934 parish plans, and of plans of most of the suburbs of Melbourne, which have been published, is obtainable at the Land Office. These latter, being drawn to large scales, prove of great service to land owners, agents, &c.

By aid of the parish plans the roads in 883 parishes have been proclaimed as dedicated to the public under the provisions of "*The Land Act 1869.*"

The draughting and lithographic branches have, as usual, performed a considerable amount of work other than that for this department, *ex. gr.*:—For Parliament: alienation, Mallee country, water conservation, and other maps; Chief Secretary's Department: maps of the provinces under the new Constitution Act, &c.; Railway Department: *fac-simile* parish plans—posting alienations, &c.; Water Supply Department: Watts River scheme, &c.; Government Statist: map for handbook—area calculations, &c.

Draftsmen have been told off at various times to assist the Deeds and Occupation branches, and occasionally the up-country district offices, and have been otherwise employed on work (outside of their regular duty of compilation) which cannot be tabulated.

A map of Victoria, showing the boundaries of all the parishes, is in course of preparation, and will be ready in May 1882. It will without doubt be found of great use, not only to various Government departments, but for general information.

A. BLACK,  
Assistant Surveyor-General.

## APPENDIX D.

The immense destruction by rabbits of the grass and crops of selectors, landowners, Crown tenants, and others impelled the Government to adopt some measures for the extermination of the rabbits on Crown lands; and for that purpose a sum of £10,000 was voted by Parliament for expenditure during the financial year 1881-2.

In the early portion of the year 1881 the work of extermination was pursued under the directions of Crown lands bailiffs only, and, notwithstanding the distribution of large quantities of phosphorized oats resulting in the destruction of great numbers of the pests, they increased to such an extent that it was deemed advisable to greatly expand the field of operations and to carry on the work on a much wider portion of the colony. This necessitated the organization of a small staff of experienced officers to take charge of out-door operations, to inspect the country, engage men, and establish depôts for mixing and distributing phosphorized grain, &c. During the past few months this step was attended with very satisfactory results, and good work was accomplished.

Although the work of extermination which has been carried on during the year 1882 does not strictly come within the purview of the Report for 1881, yet I may mention, in view of the importance of this subject, that, since February last, upwards of one hundred men have been employed mixing and distributing poison on Crown lands, and that over fifty depôts have been established in different parts of the colony, principally in the north-western districts, such as Charlton, Swan Hill, Horsham, Dimboola, &c.

Various experiments have been made with fair success. Bran and arsenic, arsenic and chaff, and crushed wheat and arsenic have proved effectual.

The Department has offered, if the shire councils purchase rabbit-skins at an advance of 6d. per dozen on Melbourne market prices, to recoup one-half of such advance, viz., 3d. per dozen, and to defray cost of transit to Melbourne by rail. The offer having been accepted by several of the local bodies, it is believed that the destruction of rabbits will be greatly accelerated.

As operations are now being conducted on a large scale, I doubt not that the result, so far as the destruction of the rabbits on Crown lands is concerned, will be found satisfactory, and that, although the work of extermination must necessarily be long and expensive, the next yearly report will show a great decrease in the numbers of the pests.

The statements to hand from the men employed, and from farmers and selectors, are most encouraging.

ARTHUR MORRAH,  
Secretary for Lands.

20th April 1882.