

1886.
—
VICTORIA.

REPORT

OF

PROCEEDINGS TAKEN UNDER THE PROVISIONS

OF

THE LAND ACT 1869, THE LAND ACT 1878, THE LAND ACTS
AMENDMENT ACT 1880, THE LAND ACT 1884, AND THE
MALLEE PASTORAL LEASES ACT 1883,

DURING THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER,

1885.

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

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REPORT.

To His Excellency SIR HENRY BROUGHAM LOCH, K.C.B., *Governor of Victoria,*
&c., &c., &c.

Department of Lands and Survey,
Melbourne, 16th July, 1886.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following Report of proceedings taken under the provisions of *The Land Act 1869, The Land Act 1878, The Land Acts Amendment Act 1880, The Land Act 1884, and The Mallee Pastoral Leases Act 1883* during the year 1885.

The Report has reference to the undermentioned subjects, which are dealt with in the order indicated:—

- 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, 1885, 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.		Area.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
Under Imperial Acts	...	...	...	3,944,237	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,944,237
<i>Land Act 1860</i>	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	1,499,910	3,078	559,423	...	786,083	...	...	3,526,023
Totals ...	...	...	...	5,480,411	...	3,273,753	...	619,415	...	786,083	...	...	10,159,662
During year—	<i>Land Act 1869.</i>				<i>Land Act 1869.</i>				<i>Land Act 1878.</i>				
					Section 19.		Section 40.		Section 11.		Section 10.		
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
1882 ...	29,347	800	1,239	31,386	4,383	830,166	837	14,056	51	7,039	47	141	882,788
1883 ...	18,317	699	1,069	20,085	4,453	814,863	1,070	18,428	58	10,614	22	66	864,556
1884 ...	33,112	950	1,384	35,446	3,918	705,326	1,002	16,533	71	12,200	11	33	769,531
1885 ...	23,917	2,106	877	26,900	3,930	699,749	714	12,922	68	10,603	83	249	750,423
Totals under <i>Land Acts 1869, 1878, & 1884</i>	1,010,092	19,335	33,570	1,062,997	87,055	14,480,316	15,654	242,721	432	70,217	325	974	15,857,225

Auction 6,543,408 acres.
Selection *19,473,479 „
Total alienation 26,016,887 acres.

* Of this area, 3,657,004 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
1882 ...	4,383	830,166	189	41,806 5 0	837	14,056	17	1,668
1883 ...	4,453	814,863	183	41,078 16 0	1,070	18,428	17	2,089
1884 ...	3,918	705,326	180	35,266 6 0	1,002	16,533	16½	1,897
1885 ...	3,930	699,749	178	34,987 9 0	714	12,922	18	1,483

The fee payable for occupation of land under the provisions of section 19 of *The Land Act 1869* was originally Two shillings per acre per annum for a period of three years from date of licence ; but section 2 of *The Land Act 1878*, which came into operation on 1st January, 1879, extended to six years the period of licences 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, 1881, 1882, 1883, 1884, and 1885.

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

TABLE C.

1885.	Section 19.			Section 49.		
	Number of Applications made.	Number Approved.	Area Selected.	Number of Applications made.	Number Approved.	Area Selected.
			Acres.			Acres.
January ...	560	215	31,964	45	35	642
February ...	19	340	60,234	23	32	566
March ...	...	163	28,075	...	15	252
April ...	...	227	34,805	...	33	560
May ...	...	429	76,111	...	73	1,336
June ...	...	205	36,250	...	58	1,016
July ...	...	546	100,154	...	67	1,248
August ...	...	358	66,205	...	85	1,467
September ...	...	369	73,819	...	73	1,433
October ...	...	424	70,012	...	58	1,082
November ...	...	449	82,010	...	79	1,227
December ...	...	205	40,110	...	106	2,093
Totals ...	579	3,930	699,749	68	714	12,922

The following Table shows the number of licences and leases revoked or declared expired during 1885 :—

TABLE D.

		Number.	Extent.
			Acres.
Licences	Section 42, <i>Land Act 1865</i> ...	1	41
	Section 19, <i>Land Act 1869</i> ...	453	89,142
	Section 49, <i>Land Act 1869</i> ...	62	1,021
Leases	Section 20, <i>Land Act 1869</i> ...	17	2,112

NOTE.—The Treasury profited to the extent of £4,141 2s. 6d. through revocations and forfeitures during 1885.

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

TABLE E.

	At Licensee's request.	Non-payment of Fees.	Non-compliance with Conditions.	For Re-licence.	De-clared Expired.	Land Sold.	Insol-vency of Licensee.	Amend-ed Sur-veys, &c.	Total.
Licences—									
Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1865 ...	...	1	...	...	..	...	...	...	1
Section 19, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	125	161	43	54	9	42	5	14	453
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	2	21	2	6	8	23	...	...	62
Leases—									
Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	3	14	...	...	...	...	...	...	17
Totals ...	130	197	45	60	17	65	5	14	533

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.

SECTION 20, "LAND ACT 1869."

The following Table shows transactions under this section during 1885:—

TABLE F.

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.								£	s. d.
2,906	1,993	61	1,932	1,896	Acres. 388,486	Acres. 335,506	£105 19s.	Acres. 388,351	46,799	16 6

Table G shows the number of Crown grants under section 20 of *The Land Act* 1869 of licensed holdings varying in extent from 10 acres and under to 320 acres, the issue of which was approved during 1885:—

TABLE G.

	10 acres and under ...	23		Brought forward ...	58
80 acres and under, 54	20 "	14	Over 160 and not exceeding 240, 2	170 acres and under ...	1
	30 "	8		180 "	0
	40 "	3		190 "	0
	50 "	2		200 "	0
	60 "	1		210 "	0
	70 "	1		220 "	0
	80 "	2		230 "	1
	90 "	1		240 "	0
Over 80 and not exceeding 160, 4	100 "	1	Over 240 and not exceeding 320, 1	250 "	0
	110 "	0		260 "	1
	120 "	0		270 "	0
	130 "	0		280 "	0
	140 "	1		290 "	0
	150 "	0		300 "	0
	160 "	1		310 "	0
	Carried forward ...	58		320 "	0
				Total ...	61

The number of applications received and granted respectively, under sections 19 and 20, since *The Land Act* 1869 came into operation, and the areas so applied for and disposed of, are shown by Appendix B, which also contains a statement of other Appendix B. transactions under section 20.

Appendix C gives full information as to transfers and mortgages of Crown Appendix C. grants issued under section 20.

SECTION 31, "LAND ACT 1869."

This section, the rights of which are continued by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1884, conferred on holders of licences, 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 H shows the transactions during 1885 :—

TABLE H.

Number of Applications.		Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase-money Received.	Survey Fees Allowed.
Received.	Approved.				
40	53*	53	Acres. 1,664	£ s. d. 74 19 0	£ s. d. 84 11 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, the rights of which are continued by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1884, in favour of lessees under *The Amending Land Act* 1865 were as follow :—

TABLE I.

Applications Received.	Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase-money Paid.
5	5	a. r. p. 1,193 1 8	£ s. d. 488 10 0

"THE LAND ACT 1878."

Under section 10 of this Act, any licensee of a residence site not situate within a city, town, or borough, who so occupied same during a continuous period of not less than three years, and paid all licence fees then due, was, at the expiration of such period, or at any time within thirty days thereafter, entitled to obtain a Crown grant of the site, if it were not auriferous or required for mining purposes, or for any public purposes. The rights conferred by this section are preserved by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1884. During the year, 83 applications, representing an area of 249 acres, were allowed.

Section 11, which is re-enacted by section 49 of *The Land Act* 1884, provided for issue of non-residence licences for a period of six years, the fee payable thereon being Two shillings per acre per annum, and for the issue, on expiration of the term

of licences, of leases for a period of fourteen years, at a rental of Two shillings per acre per annum. Table J shows the transactions during 1885:—

TABLE J.

Number of Applications.		Area Selected.	Average to each Selection.	Fees Payable Yearly.		
Made.	Approved.			Acres.	£	s.	d.
38	68	10,603	156	1,060	6	0

“THE LAND ACTS AMENDMENT ACT 1880.”

Section 4 of this Act (which is re-enacted by section 18 of *The Land Act* 1884) conferred on licensees under section 49 of *The Land Act* 1869 the exclusive right of purchasing their holdings at a price to be determined by the Board of Land and Works. Four hundred and twenty applications, representing 7,781 acres, were approved during the year, and the sum of £3,050 18s. was received.

“THE LAND ACT 1884.”

Part III.—Agricultural and Grazing Lands.

Under this Part of *The Land Act* 1884 provision is made for the occupation of Crown lands for the combined purposes of grazing and agriculture.

During the year 25 county plans were prepared and published, showing by projected boundary lines allotments or blocks, denominated “Grazing Areas,” varying in size from a few acres to 1,000 acres, and representing an aggregate area of 4,702,300 acres.

As each batch of county plans was published, applications for the occupation of the land were invited, and a day fixed up to which all applications received were dealt with as if lodged simultaneously.

The “Grazing Areas” in the various counties were appraised by valuers appointed in accordance with section 37, and the appraisements (ranging from Two-pence to Fourpence per acre per annum) were duly published for general information.

Section 42 provides for the issue to grazing area lessees of licences for agricultural allotments not exceeding 320 acres in extent. As no leases under section 32 were issued during the year 1885, no person was in a position to apply for an agricultural allotment, but from the evidence given by applicants when before Local Land Boards it would appear that in the great majority of cases lessees will avail themselves of the provisions of this section.

Under section 56 a lessee of an agricultural allotment of land under *The Land Act* 1884, or of an allotment under Part II. of *The Land Act* 1869 or any Act amending such Part, can give an “order” for the delivery of the Crown grant to any person who has made an advance of money on the security of a lease, the mortgage being transferred from the lease to the Crown grant. Two hundred and twenty-two orders, representing in all an area of 46,003 acres, were registered during the year.

Section 57 empowers licensees under Part II. of *The Land Act* 1869, and licensees of agricultural allotments under *The Land Act* 1884, to register liens at the Crown Lands Office upon the security of the permanent improvements effected on their holdings up to half the value of such improvements. The first application for registration of a lien was received on the 17th April, 1885.

One hundred and seventy-one liens, comprising an area of 40,223 acres, were registered during the year, representing, as advanced on this kind of security, £22,344 17s. The number of applications is gradually increasing, leading to the conclusion that, as this mode of obtaining monetary assistance becomes known among the selectors, it will be largely resorted to.

Table K sets forth the number of lots and the area available for occupation as "Grazing Areas" under Part III. of *The Land Act* 1884, and Table L shows the number of applications received under section 32 thereof :—

TABLE K.

Showing the Number of Lots and the Area available for Occupation as Grazing Areas under Part III. of *The Land Act* 1884.

County.	No. of Allotments.	Approximate Area in Acres.	County.	No. of Allotments.	Approximate Area in Acres.
Anglesey	497	410,000	Kara Kara †	282	134,500
Benambra *	790	650,000	Karkaroc †	20	3,800
Bendigo	120	19,000	Lowan	974	403,000
Bogong †	572	525,600	Millewa ... ..	...	...
Borong	670	265,000	Moira †	300	67,000
Bourke	52	11,000	Mornington	360	217,000
Bulu Bulu *	1,829	1,232,000	Normanby	621	392,000
Croajingolong	409	644,000	Polwarth	355	251,000
Dalhousie	240	160,500	Ripon	80	26,000
Dargo	397	293,000	Rodney	146	58,000
Delatite	1,150	559,000	Talbot	14	2,800
Dundas	254	162,000	Tambo *	728	593,000
Evelyn	286	150,000	Tanjil *	675	642,600
Follett	367	195,000	Tatchera *	225	50,000
Gladstone *	178	59,000	Villiers	31	10,000
Grant	116	43,500	Weeah ... ..	...	...
Grenville	8	2,500	Wonnangatta	160	111,000
Gunbower	70	8,500			
Hampden ... ..	...	...	
Heytesbury	413	174,000	Total	13,389	8,525,300

NOTE.—The plans of the counties marked thus (†) were published on 1st February, 1886, and 8th April, 1886, respectively.

TABLE L.

"THE LAND ACT 1884."—SECTION 32.—APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Month.	Number.	Area.
		Acres.
June	221	135,598
July	468	257,793
August	1,111	652,141
September	503	269,837
October	400	204,759
November	490	227,432
December	628	260,208
Total	3,821	2,007,768

NOTE.—No applications for leases under section 32 of *The Land Act* 1884 were approved during 1885.

Part IV.—Auriferous Lands.

Part IV. provides for the occupation of Crown lands denominated "Auriferous." Under section 65 licences for the purpose of residence or cultivation may be issued for lands not included within any city or town, and not exceeding 20 acres in extent. Under section 67 licences may be issued for grazing purposes only up to 1,000 acres.

No alienation of auriferous land can take place; all occupiers, therefore, of the public estate under this Part of the Act are in the relation of annual tenants, and their occupation is subordinate to that for mining purposes.

The number of applications received during the year under sections 65 and 67 is shown in tables M and N:—

TABLE M.
“THE LAND ACT 1884.”—SECTION 65.—APPLICATIONS RECEIVED.

Month.	Number.	Area.
		Aeres.
July	3	60
August	61	1,180
September	76	1,519
October	38	755
November	25	490
December	17	283
Total	220	4,287

NOTE.—No applications for licences under section 65 of *The Land Act 1884* were approved during 1885.

TABLE N.
“THE LAND ACT 1884.”—SECTION 67.—NUMBER AND AREA OF APPLICATIONS RECEIVED DURING 1885.

Number.	Area.
424	217,799 acres.

NOTE.—No applications under section 67, *Land Act 1884*, were approved during the year 1885.

II.—SALES OF CROWN LANDS BY AUCTION.

The principle of deferred payments was introduced in Part V. of *The Land Act 1884*, one-fourth of the price bid being paid at the time of sale, and the remaining three-fourths spread over three years, payable quarterly, in instalments of equal amounts, bearing interest at the rate of £6 per centum per annum.

Many of the purchasers only partially availed themselves of this concession, the balances having been paid during the year, in order to obtain the Crown grants.

During the year 26,900 acres 2 roods 18 perches were sold for £115,352 4s. 8d., and interest to the amount of £463 7s. 6d. was paid with the instalments as they fell due.

The area of country lands sold at auction during 1885 was about 23,917 acres, of which about 14,906 acres were improved and subject to valuation, and 9,011 unimproved.

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

TABLE O.

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

* These figures include 11,528 acres passed at auction and afterwards purchased.

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

TABLE O—continued.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1872—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
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

TABLE O—continued.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1881—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
1882—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	8,623	2	22	13,143	15	11	1	10	6
Improved „	9,758	1	21	15,002	15	7	1	10	9
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	4,919	1	32	8,012	19	6	1	12	7
Improved „	6,045	3	26	7,447	2	10	1	4	8
1883—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	4,104	2	20	5,431	13	1	1	6	6
Improved „	2,518	0	33	3,560	8	10	1	8	3
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	6,416	3	27	9,141	1	9	1	8	6
Improved „	5,276	3	31	6,518	5	2	1	4	8
1884—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	7,522	2	9	14,106	18	2	1	17	6
Improved „	6,076	2	2	8,717	2	1	1	8	8
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	13,254	2	0	22,971	18	6	1	14	8
Improved „	6,258	3	22	8,356	6	4	1	6	8

Table P shows the alienation by auction, during 1885, of town, suburban, and country lands, and the amounts derived therefrom :—

TABLE P.

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.	A. R. P.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
2,106 0 33	74,165 6 1	25 4 3	877 0 38	1,549 5 0	1 15 4	23,917 0 27	39,637 13 7	1 13 2

III.—PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

The Land Act 1884 came into operation on the 29th December, 1884, and the occupation of runs, under pastoral licence, under *The Land Act* 1869 ceased on the 31st December, 1884.

Section 3 of *The Land Act* 1884 provided, however, for the continuation, under grazing licence, of the occupation of such runs until the lands comprised therein were required for the purposes of the Act.

During the year thirteen runs were transferred. The fees for transfers amounted to £13.

Forty-six areas, comprising 736,690 acres, and formerly held as pastoral runs under *The Land Act* 1869, were forfeited or abandoned during the year.

The revenue derived from runs for the year amounted to £28,900.

The sum of £25,893 15s. 1d. was received during the year for grazing licences, the greater number of which were previously held under section 47 of *The Land Act*

1869, and renewed for 1885 under section 3 of *The Land Act* 1884, the balance being new licences issued under the provisions of section 119 of the latter Act.

The area of runs formerly held under pastoral licence under *The Land Act* 1869, and occupation of which was renewed for 1885 under the provisions of section 3 of *The Land Act* 1884, was on the 31st December, 1885, 7,000,622 acres.

Table Q shows the amount of pastoral rent paid for each year, from the passing of *The Land Act* 1869 to the end of 1885 :—

TABLE Q.							£
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
1882	...	...	...	...	...	...	57,838
1883	...	...	...	...	...	...	43,983
1884	...	...	...	...	...	...	35,485
1885	...	...	...	...	...	...	28,900

Section 19 of *The Land Act* 1884 provided that plans should be prepared, showing the lands available for application as pastoral allotments.

On the 1st June, 1885, the first set of such plans was published, comprising the counties of Polwarth, Normanby, Dundas, Anglesey, Mornington, Heytesbury, and Hampden, and containing 39 allotments, representing an area of 580,890 acres.

On the 13th June, 1885, the second was published, including the counties of Follett, Villiers, Wonnangatta, and Evelyn, and containing 65 allotments, representing an area of 1,415,020 acres.

The third was published on the 12th August, 1885, and comprised the counties of Bourke, Dalhousie, Grant, Grenville, Ripon, Bendigo, Rodney, and Talbot. The county of Ripon was, however, the only one which contained any pastoral land, viz., 2 allotments, with an area of 21,100 acres.

On the 2nd November, 1885, the fourth was published, and included the counties of Borung, Croajingolong, Dargo, Delatite, Gunbower, and Lowan, containing 136 allotments, with an area of 2,748,900 acres.

A date was fixed—in respect of each set of plans, as published—for the receipt of applications, and all applications received up to such date were dealt with as if lodged simultaneously.

Where two or more applications were received for one allotment, such allotment was subsequently submitted to public competition, the assessment per acre being previously fixed. Twenty-five allotments were thus offered at auction, and the sums paid as premiums for the right to the leases amounted to £3,104 1s.

For further particulars, reference is invited to Table R.

TABLE R.
PASTORAL ALLOTMENTS—SECTION 21, "LAND ACT 1884."

* Number of applications received to 31st December, 1885	...	...	180
† Area applied for	...	...	2,500,000 acres
Number of approved applications to 31st December, 1885	...	...	35
Area	...	...	517,500 acres

* Of this number, 66 applications remain to be dealt with.

† An area of 1,460,750 acres only was available. The larger area applied for is accounted for by the fact that in many instances several applications were received for one allotment.

The Mallee Pastoral Leases Act 1883 deals with about 11,535,500 acres of land in the north-western district of the colony.

During the year, leases of 7 mallee blocks, containing 156,640 acres, were issued to purchasers at auction of the right to lease. One mallee block, containing 6,880 acres, passed at auction, was subsequently applied for under the 9th section of the Act, and lease issued. Eighty-four leases, comprising 258,749 acres, were issued to applicants for mallee allotments.

The leases of one mallee block, containing 221,440 acres, and of 49 mallee allotments, containing 112,800 acres, were transferred during the year.

The revenue derived was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Assessments on blocks	1,942	9	7
Rents of allotments	2,571	8	6
Proceeds of sale at auction of right to lease mallee blocks ...	131	10	0
	<u>£4,645</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>1</u>

VERMIN RATES.

Vermin rates, proclaimed by the Governor-in-Council on the recommendations of local committees elected or appointed for the destruction of vermin, were collected and remitted to local committees as under:—

	£	s.	d.
Northern Vermin District	784	13	0
North-Eastern Vermin District	569	4	0
North-Western „ „	472	10	0
Eastern „ „	254	0	0
Western „ „	221	0	0
Warracknabeal „ „	207	10	0
Middle „ „	161	12	0
Total	<u>£2,670</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>0</u>

On 1st January, 1886, the areas available for occupation were as under:—

Mallee blocks	1,185,920	acres
Mallee allotments	124,736	„

IV.—DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT.

There has been no alteration of importance during the year in the method of management of the head office or of the district offices.

The retirement, under section 100 of *The Public Service Act 1883*, of Mr. Lewis, late chief clerk, after faithful and efficient service for thirty years, and of two draughtsmen, did not render necessary any new appointments, and some reduction in expenditure was thereby secured.

The Titles Branch of the Department acquired increased work and additional importance during the year. A report by Mr. Black, Assistant Surveyor-General, on its working will be found in Appendix D, which furnishes information in regard to Appendix D. the work performed under his direction.

SECTION 125, “LAND ACT 1884.”—PUBLIC HEARINGS.

During the year 1885, 251 sittings of Local Land Boards were held, at which applications for land and other business, comprising in all 6,548 subjects, were dealt with.

Two hundred and ninety-one cases were publicly heard by the Minister during the year.

V.—MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 58, "LAND ACT 1869," AND SECTION 100, "LAND ACT 1884."—COMMONS.

Additional commonage, to the extent of 5,500 acres, was proclaimed during the year.

Seventy-five commons which had been absorbed by alienation or had become useless through want of management were abolished.

SECTION 98, "LAND ACT 1869," AND SECTION 113, "LAND ACT 1884."—PENALTIES.

Table S shows the amounts of penalties, at the rate of Five shillings per acre, received during 1885 and previous years for non-improvement by lessees under the Land Acts of 1862 and 1865, and interest on rents in arrear :—

			£	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
"	"	1882	1,698	3	2
"	"	1883	1,485	13	8
"	"	1884	578	5	7
"	"	1885	96	0	0
			<u>£156,595</u>	<u>8</u>	<u>7</u>

CROWN GRANTS AND LEASES.

Four thousand seven hundred and sixty-eight Crown grants and 2,098 leases were prepared and passed from the head office during 1885.

FEES AND CERTIFICATES.

The sum of £24,719 3s. 9d. was received during the year for certificates, transfers, and registrations under *The Land Act* 1869, and *The Land Act* 1884, and for miscellaneous fees, including those payable for grants, leases, and survey charges.

LEASES AND LICENCES FOR OTHER THAN AGRICULTURAL OR PASTORAL PURPOSES.

The amount payable during 1885 for occupation and use of land under sections 45 and 47 of *The Land Act* 1869, and Part VIII. of *The Land Act* 1884, is shown in Table T.

In consequence of the increase in the capital value of the Crown lands in the vicinity of the River Yarra Yarra, a re-valuation thereof was made by impartial and professional valuers, with a view to a re-adjustment of the rents on a fair and equitable basis, and an additional yearly income of £983 18s. 8d. was thereby secured to the State.

			£
For factory, storage, and other like sites	...	...	3,248
" sites of rural stores and inns	...	...	399
" sawmills	...	...	1,921
" ferries	...	...	141
" quarries	...	...	1,472
" brick licences	...	...	702
" priced licences...	...	...	7,617
" all other licences (tramways, races, &c.)	...	...	2,996
			<u>£18,496</u>

REVENUE.

Table U shows in detail the revenue contributed by the Department to the Treasury during 1885 :—

TABLE U.

<i>Temporary Occupation.</i>						£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.		
Pastoral occupation and grazing licences ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	60,182	15	2			
Rents under sections 45 and 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, and sections 91 and 93, <i>Land Act</i> 1884 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	18,155	11	10			
Total ... ..	...	...	...	...	...				78,338	7	0
<i>Alienated in Fee Simple by Auction and Deferred Payments, also Rents received towards Alienation.</i>													
				A.	R.	P.							
By auction—Town land ... ..	...	...	...	2,106	0	33	*77,500	17	1		
„ Suburban land	877	0	38							
„ Country land	23,917	0	27							
Sundry payments on account of purchase in fee simple ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,738	18	7		
By purchase under section 31, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	74	19	0		
„ „ „ 33, „ „ „ ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	488	10	0		
„ „ „ 20, „ „ „ ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	46,905	15	6		
„ „ „ 4, <i>Land Acts Amendment Act</i> 1880, and section 18, <i>Land Act</i> 1884 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,050	18	0		
Rents under section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	9,049	7	8		
„ „ 19, „ „ as amended by <i>Land Act</i> 1878, and section 3, <i>Land Act</i> 1880 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	176,403	18	6		
„ „ 11, „ 1878 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	3,427	13	6		
„ „ 20, „ 1869 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	84,298	1	0		
„ „ 3, <i>Land Acts Amendment Act</i> 1880, and section 4, <i>Land Act</i> 1880 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	123,072	2	6		
										526,011	1 4		
Penalties under section 98, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, and section 113, <i>Land Act</i> 1884 ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	96	0	0		
Fees for grants, leases, licences, surveys, &c. ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	24,719	3	9		
Sale of plans and sundries ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1,284	12	5		
										26,099	16 2		
Total Revenue ... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...				630,449	4 6

* This item includes interest, £463 7s. 6d.

EXTERMINATION OF RABBITS.

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

Appendix E.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

JNO. L. DOW,

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 Sections 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. Acres.	No.	Area. Acres.					
Alexandra ...	203	39,397	32	591	As far as could be ascertained, the land was taken up and held for <i>bona fide</i> occupation.	Chiefly used for grazing, land being too hilly and poor for cultivation. (Only one transfer effected.)	Rather more acreage under cultivation. Fair yields of wheat and oats expected. The late rains have saved the potato and maize crops. A few acres under hops in parish of Thornton favorably reported on.		
Ararat ...	55	9,134	40	780	These sections appear to be working satisfactorily.	Land leased under Section 20 in this district is chiefly used for grazing.	No new industries to report. The area under vines is increasing. Vignerons anticipate a large yield this season.	All the available land in this district is being applied for under the provisions of "The Land Act 1884."	
Bairnsdale ...	171	29,378	3	45	Holders under these sections have, with few exceptions, occupied the land at once, and have settled down permanently.	Settlement is satisfactory. A few transfers have been effected, principally owing to difficulties occasioned by bad seasons.	No new industry has been started. Owing to the prices for hops being so low, there is now about one-sixth only of the area under crop that there was last year. Maize has, to a very large extent, taken the place of hops.	Great depression exists owing to the dryness of the season.	
Ballarat ...	68	7,358	129	2,245	Land held under section 19 is used in nearly every case for grazing purposes, being mostly of a poor quality, and unfit for cultivation. Land held under section 49 is mostly used in connexion with residence purposes.	Nearly all used for grazing.	Crops of all kinds in this district have suffered this season from unseasonable weather. Just as the grain was ripening, excessively hot weather set the grain in the ear before it had filled properly, and after the crops were cut, and before they were stacked, heavy rains spoilt both the grain and hay; the hay crop especially has suffered. Wheat and oats are both lighter than for several years past. Pease are a fair crop, not having suffered so much. Potato crop looks well.	Cultivation for both grain and hay crops is largely carried on in this district, and appears to pay the farmers well, as is evidenced by the continual improvements effected on the farms. New homesteads and better farm buildings are to be seen on many of the farms, and live fences and good stock evidence the prosperity of the occupiers.	
Beechworth ...	437	69,766	123	2,234	Land now held under 19th section is, to a large extent, used for grazing in connexion with prior holdings, but cultivation is carried on where practicable. The same remarks apply also to 49th section selections, cultivation being principally effected on holdings near the mining centres.	Used principally for grazing purposes, cattle-breeding being found more profitable than cultivation, especially in the more hilly parts of the district.	Agriculture is being prosecuted with success on the level country. Unaware of any new rural industries.	The wheat and oat crops have given very fair yields, the former as high as twenty-five bushels in some few places. Hops give promise of a good yield, and the tobacco crop presents a fair appearance. Some of the vineyards look very well.	

Benalla	322	55,737	8	160	Very satisfactory	...	...	...	Grazing and cultivation combined. Transfers have not been numerous.	The area under crop still increases, and the yield has proved tolerably satisfactory. Vine culture is coming more into favour every year.	The question of fruit-growing is now a matter of frequent discussion in portion of the district, and little doubt is entertained that, with an improved water supply, it would soon prove a remunerative industry.
Castlemaine	78	10,904	35	653	Very satisfactory	Selectors are, on the whole, <i>bonâ fide</i> . A large number of the licensees have availed themselves of the provisions of <i>The Land Act 1884</i>.	...	...	Used principally for cultivation and grazing. Lessees who have sold out are comparatively few.	A very extensive area has been under cultivation this year, but the yields, although very fair, have fallen short of expectations. In the southern portion of the district, the heavy rains have caused much damage to the oat crops, and the supply of hay is consequently very limited.	In the neighbourhood of the Gunbower and Barr Creeks, large sums of money have been expended in erecting machinery and cutting drains for irrigation purposes, and as the Water Trusts are gradually perfecting the various schemes, a few years will doubtless produce a great improvement in this portion of the district.
Echuca	20	2,084	1	20	Generally satisfactory	...	...	...	Used principally for grazing and agriculture combined.	In the northern portion of the district, the area under cultivation was not so large as that of last year, but the yield will average about the same. East of the Campaspe, the area so treated exceeds that of previous seasons, and the returns are very encouraging.	The crops in the district of Geelong looked remarkably well early in the season, but, on account of heavy frosts, want of rain, hot winds, &c., the crops in the northern part of the district became sickly, but partially recovered when the rain fell. On maturity, one-half of the latter crops were destroyed by hot winds, and the remainder deteriorated by the heavy rains.
C Geelong and Camperdown and Warr- nambool	123	20,055	38	607	Satisfactory	...	...	...	Most of the land in the district of Geelong is used for grazing purposes, but a very perceptible increase in agriculture is apparent, grains being the principal crops. Land in the Camperdown and Warrnambool district is used for farming, grazing, and dairying. Many holders are, however, giving up farming and turning their attention to cheese and pigs, which are far more profitable than cereals.	More land appears to have been cultivated this year in the district of Geelong than formerly. The only new industry worthy of note is hops, which were freely grown in the Gerangamete valley and the head waters of the Barwon; but, in consequence of the low rates ruling for the produce, the industry has latterly languished very considerably. Agriculture is decreasing in the district of Camperdown and Warrnambool. No new industries to report.	Many selectors, who have found it a struggle to exist on 320 acres of poor land, will be materially benefited by the addition of a "grazing area."
Hamilton	149	28,852	1	17	Generally satisfactory	...	...	...	Mostly used for grazing purposes.	No new industries to report	A number of lessees under <i>The Mallee Pastoral Leases Act 1883</i> have improved their allotments, and next season there will probably be a considerable area cropped. There has been a great demand for the remaining Crown lands under the provisions of <i>The Land Act 1884</i> . Rabbit extermination has been carried on with very fair results. The several Water Trusts are extending their operations with every promise of success.
Horsham	343	74,536	...	...	The new selectors under section 19 are of a <i>bonâ fide</i> class, and all the licensees are working their lands in a very satisfactory manner.	...	...	...	A large area has been placed under cultivation, but the result, except in a few localities, is not so satisfactory as was expected. Several saw-mills are at work in the district. Take-all made its appearance in a few paddocks.		

APPENDIX A—continued.

District.	Applications Approved.				Report as to the Working of Land Act on Holdings under Sections 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. Acres.	No.	Area. Acres.				
Kerang ...	98	19,432	9	167	Generally satisfactory ...	Grazing and cultivation. Some lessees have been compelled, through bad seasons, to sell their blocks to adjoining holders.	The area under cultivation is about the same as last year. Farmers are reluctant to cultivate where there is no prospect of being able to irrigate. The unirrigated crops have not been so good for some years, and the irrigated crops have, in some instances, yielded as high as ten bags to the acre.	The all-important question to every farmer in this district is how to irrigate his land. Those who abandon all hope of obtaining water quickly relinquish their holdings. A great many are holding on in anticipation of some national scheme of irrigation being carried out.
Melbourne and Warragul	408	78,833	86	1,556	Satisfactory ...	Chiefly used for grazing and dairying.	A larger area than previously has been cultivated in the district of Melbourne. Wheat, oats, barley, potatoes, &c., have yielded abundantly. Brickmaking is carried on extensively, the demand for bricks being rapidly on the increase. A large trade is done in preserves. Very little agriculture in the district of Warragul in consequence of the bad state of the roads. No new industries to report.	The principal support of the district of Warragul is timber, grazing, and dairying. Fruit is grown to a small extent.
Omeo ...	160	26,344	...	...	Licensees have complied substantially with conditions, and have proved <i>bonâ fide</i> .	Principally used for grazing. Very little agriculture during the year.	Owing to continued dry weather, the crops in this district are mostly failures. No new rural industries to report.	
Sale ...	449	55,556	12	174	Generally satisfactory ...	Chiefly for grazing and dairying.	Owing to continuance of dry weather, the crops have been very poor in some parts of the district. Wheat, oats, pease grown, oats giving the best yield. Hop cultivation has, to a great extent, been abandoned. No new rural industries to report.	Some very high prices have been obtained for both town and country lands. Intending applicants under <i>The Land Act 1884</i> cannot fail to obtain land suitable for all purposes in this district, the land along the proposed route of the Great Southern Railway being for the most part exceptionally good.
Sandhurst ...	50	9,597	34	570	Satisfactory ...	Cultivation and grazing. Transfers few. In some instances owners of small blocks have disposed of their holdings, and applied under the provisions of <i>The Land Act 1884</i> for larger areas in other parts of the colony.	The area under cultivation has been larger than that of last year, and the crops on the whole fairly good. The average yield will be about 12 bushels, although in many cases much larger returns have been obtained.	The sudden change to intense heat, after the spring rains, prematurely ripened the grain, and produced an almost disastrous effect in many quarters.
Seymour ...	273	59,665	28	475	Generally satisfactory ...	Grazing and cultivation ...	Average area under cultivation. No new industries to report.	A very fine season for grass, owing to late rains and cold weather.

St. Arnaud ...	333	61,998	113	2,208	<p>Satisfactory. All the late selections under both sections were mostly taken up by sons and daughters of former selectors and worked in connexion therewith as family selections, and are of a <i>bona fide</i> character.</p>	<p>All the land leased under section 20 appears to be used legitimately for agriculture and grazing. The past season has been a very bad one for agriculture in this district; but the late exceptionally heavy rains give good promise for both agriculture and grazing next season. Very few transfers have been effected.</p>	<p>The area under wheat is considered to exceed that of last season, but the yield will be found very small in most parts. Very little under any other cereal crop, and no root crops. A tannery, on a small scale, has been started in the borough of St. Arnaud.</p>	
Stawell ...	190	41,143	22	420	<p>Satisfactory. The persons who obtained, under 19th section, selections in the State forest, mining, and other reserves (thrown open within the past two years) have already made substantial improvements, are complying with conditions of licences, and appear to be <i>bona fide</i>.</p>	<p>Used chiefly for grazing. A few leaseholds have been transferred to neighbouring holders.</p>	<p>The late heavy rains considerably damaged some of the crops in this district, but the yield on the whole was good. Tobacco growing has been abandoned owing to small prices obtainable for it in Melbourne. Maize, however, is being profitably grown; one selector has 26 acres under crop, which, at 8s. per cwt., will, he states, return him a fair profit. Vine crop this season promises to be good.</p>	<p>All the available land in this district, although very rangy and scrubby, is being taken up under the provisions of <i>The Land Act</i> 1884, by persons desirous of increasing their present holdings, their object being to combine sheep farming with cultivation.</p>

APPENDIX B.

APPLICATIONS for Licences under Section 19 of *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
1882	6,966	1,311,635	4,383	830,166
1883	6,161	1,169,984	4,453	814,863
1884	8,445	1,671,552	3,918	705,326
1885	579	132,262	3,930	699,749
	125,679	20,916,920	87,055	*14,480,316

* Of the area selected under the several Land Acts, 3,657,004 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 of *The Land Act 1869*, to 31st December, 1885.

No. of Applications for Leases and Grants.	Area in Acres.	No. of Applications for Leases Approved.	Area in Acres.	No. of Leasholds converted into Freeholds.	Area in Acres.	No. of Grants Issued.	Area in Acres.	No. of Leasholds Mortgaged.	Area in Acres.	No. of Leasholds Transferred.	Area in Acres.
53,036	8,192,339	42,437	6,863,825	20,602	2,919,395	24,307	3,167,683	21,768	4,444,689	15,327	2,603,080

APPENDIX C.

"THE LAND ACT 1869."

TRANSACTIONS by Transfer of Grants under Section 20, prior to and during 1885.

Districts.	Large Landed Proprietors.		Farmers.		Storekeepers and Publicans.		Solicitors, Auctioneers, Accountants, Agents.		Banking Companies.		Graziers.		Miscellaneous.		Total.	
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.
Alexandra ...	8	1,787	56	5,318	7	299	7	829	2	340	31	3,320	24	1,699	135	13,592
Ararat ...	19	2,832	92	10,177	15	1,606	10	971	9	1,135	20	2,137	21	2,527	186	21,385
Bairnsdale ...	1	259	30	2,404	1	4	4	668	19	2,332	43	3,502	69	5,871	167	15,040
Ballarat ...	24	1,690	121	9,251	20	1,190	14	1,227	1	80	7	538	61	3,811	248	17,787
Beechworth...	15	1,627	191	16,393	46	3,782	10	867	10	1,170	50	5,273	77	7,766	399	36,878
Benalla ...	17	2,720	165	24,501	30	4,037	18	2,623	7	972	11	2,278	65	8,925	313	46,056
Castlemaine ...	22	1,587	291	21,746	41	2,482	15	1,545	9	647	9	654	104	8,020	491	36,681
Echuca ...	65	13,966	228	37,645	28	3,797	17	3,043	8	924	14	3,018	101	11,876	461	74,269
Geelong ...	64	7,079	272	20,100	30	1,405	15	1,605	6	192	73	5,830	105	6,296	565	42,507
Hamilton ...	153	19,282	349	45,991	63	7,008	22	2,175	20	3,658	62	10,008	150	20,253	819	108,375
Horsham ...	20	4,505	226	46,020	56	8,811	2	637	12	2,989	19	4,942	53	10,694	388	78,598
Kerang ...	8	1,868	18	3,336	5	1,049	2	109	3	958	3	254	10	5,879	49	13,453
Melbourne ...	12	2,107	186	19,473	60	7,434	19	2,178	14	2,182	48	4,525	178	22,030	517	59,929
Omeo ...	...	...	1	8	2	112	...	...	1	320	3	113	4	36	11	589
Sale ...	16	1,414	109	10,851	30	3,482	10	726	2	138	83	8,618	88	5,279	338	30,508
Sandhurst ...	3	237	113	24,145	29	2,889	15	2,543	11	1,342	3	236	95	10,148	269	41,540
Seymour ...	10	1,290	152	14,018	34	3,117	10	751	6	911	23	2,641	64	6,236	299	28,964
St. Arnaud ...	23	5,033	135	28,153	24	3,812	5	781	8	1,036	17	4,600	106	21,985	318	65,400
Stawell ...	20	2,940	40	4,257	10	1,435	1	197	1	320	1	475	30	3,447	103	13,071
Total ...	500	72,223	2775	343,787	531	57,751	196	23,475	149	21,646	520	62,962	1405	162,778	6076	744,622

TRANSACTIONS by Mortgage of Grants under Section 20, prior to and during 1885.

Districts.	Large Landed Proprietors.		Farmers.		Storekeepers and Publicans.		Solicitors, Auctioneers, Accountants, Agents.		Banking Companies.		Graziers.		Miscellaneous.		Total.	
	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.
Alexandra ...	2	128	8	566	5	897	7	1,004	20	2,264	...	...	28	3,550	70	8,409
Ararat ...	2	66	7	665	7	816	14	1,639	28	2,430	3	229	10	1,347	71	7,192
Bairnsdale ...	1	259	1	20	4	230	11	1,533	31	3,696	5	468	26	2,378	79	8,584
Ballarat ...	2	33	6	448	8	411	32	1,769	38	2,411	...	...	32	2,872	118	7,944
Beechworth ...	4	237	21	3,244	21	1,506	9	1,707	125	13,690	6	634	77	8,208	263	29,226
Benalla ...	1	238	10	1,638	19	3,005	20	3,435	86	12,445	...	...	69	11,411	205	32,172
Castlemaine...	8	851	22	1,831	23	2,595	17	1,699	98	10,136	2	163	110	9,469	280	26,744
Echuca ...	24	5,655	16	3,433	15	2,697	29	4,593	217	41,249	...	...	87	17,203	388	74,830
Geelong ...	16	2,110	22	1,902	22	1,693	40	3,416	39	2,975	17	1,687	103	8,757	259	22,540
Hamilton ...	39	8,290	22	2,926	40	6,085	33	4,736	128	25,421	32	6,401	64	11,317	358	65,176
Horsham ...	14	3,968	15	3,180	11	2,570	33	9,270	126	28,699	3	779	64	16,848	266	65,314
Kerang ...	...	...	...	...	3	468	1	320	11	2,751	2	354	8	1,990	25	5,883
Melbourne ...	16	3,420	6	566	21	3,600	36	4,575	67	10,120	1	320	83	23,925	230	46,526
Omeo ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Sale ...	5	551	9	1,155	15	1,922	25	3,111	63	5,604	29	2,140	40	5,570	186	20,053
Sandhurst ...	1	159	16	2,598	23	2,249	25	2,619	98	11,770	...	...	78	9,954	241	29,349
Seymour ...	1	12	10	1,191	18	1,964	1	1,632	46	4,505	...	...	54	6,445	130	15,749
St. Arnaud ...	2	340	11	1,950	9	2,550	14	3,877	107	21,961	11	2,017	27	6,807	181	39,502
Stawell ...	...	...	1	80	7	370	13	998	8	660	...	...	20	2,802	49	4,910
Total ..	138	26,317	203	27,393	271	35,628	360	51,933	1336	202,787	111	15,192	980	150,853	3399	510,103

APPENDIX D.

SURVEY BRANCH.

I have the honour to report as follows as to the work performed by the Survey Branch of the department during the year ending 31st December, 1885.

SURVEYING.

1. The alteration in the manner of carrying out the surveys required under *The Land Act* 1884, which was referred to in the first section of last year's Report has been adopted, and the surveys for the public are now performed by surveyors authorized to effect all surveys required, within certain defined districts, at a scale of fees determined by the department.

2. There is no change to report in the constitution of the departmental staff.

3. During the year the inspecting district surveyors have made the usual periodical inspections of the surveyors' work; and they report that, on the whole, these gentlemen have performed their duties satisfactorily, and that generally the surveys are fairly up to the standard of accuracy. They have also performed the usual administrative duties of reporting and advising on all important matters affecting their respective districts.

4. The assistant surveyors have been employed in checking and re-surveying old and incorrect surveys and on special surveys, the principal of which are enumerated below.

5. In addition to ordinary routine work, the following surveys have been carried out by the departmental staff, viz. :—

- (a) The contour survey of Melbourne and suburbs, finished.
- (b) The re-survey of Creswick, brought to a close.
- (c) The survey and laying out of streets and water channels in Ballarat, &c.
- (d) The survey of meridian and standard lines in the mallee country.
- (e) Surveys of roads in the several districts.
- (f) Check surveys and re-surveys in the several districts.
- (g) Subdivisions of lands for sale.

6. Departmental expenditure for 1885 has been as follows :—

Subdivision of land for sale	£2,114	13	3
Main road surveys	2,506	6	4
Standard lines, parish boundaries, &c.	960	13	0
Check surveys and connexion lines	1,495	2	8
Re-surveys	1,747	19	5
Topographical and engineering surveys	923	14	3
Surveys of sites for public purposes	275	17	3
	£10,024	6	2

7. The amount received as survey fees during the year on account of surveys made by, and at the expense of, the department was £5,018 5s. 9d.

MALLEE SURVEYS.

8. Fair progress has been made by the contractors with the survey of the boundaries of the holdings under *The Mallee Pastoral Leases Act* 1883, notwithstanding that the dry season has been unfavorable for working in the scrub. About 2,500 miles have been surveyed, out of an estimated 5,000 miles.

COMPUTING AND ADJUSTING.

9. In the computing room, 666 plans, containing from 1 to 150 lots each, have been examined with field notes, and checked. The plans of the mallee surveys have also been examined and accounts checked in this room. The staff has consisted of 5 draughtsmen. In the adjusting room, 1,607 cases of discrepancy have been investigated; 300 certificates of error have been issued; involving altogether the preparation of 2,300 plans and diagrams. The staff has consisted of 7, inclusive of 2 pupils.

DRAUGHTING AND LITHOGRAPHY.

10. During the year the staff has been employed chiefly in preparing maps, on the 2-inch scale, for the working of the new Land Act. These maps are nearly completed, and the ordinary compilation will shortly be resumed.

A few parish plans have been prepared, but not yet published; and a large amount of usual miscellaneous work has been done for this and other departments.

The staff, including lithographers and printers, numbers 38.

ENGRAVING.

11. The work of revising and correcting the general maps of Victoria (4-sheet and 2-sheet) has been effected; the railway lines, with their stations and levels, also the Victorian Water Supply works and levels, telegraph lines, &c., have been inserted.

Additional alterations and corrections to Continental Australia, new explorations, railways, telegraph lines, &c., have been made.

The preparation of the annual rainfall map for 1884, over south-eastern Australia and Tasmania, showing the various grades in one printing, has been performed by this branch.

One sheet of the $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch map of Victoria, in connexion with the geodetic survey, has been completed, and others are in progress.

The staff consists of 2 engravers.

TITLES BRANCH.

12. The business of this branch has largely increased during the year and is still increasing.

The number of cases passed through during the year was	...	...	23,051
Do. do. in 1884...	...	...	19,021
Increase	...	...	4,030
The total number of diagrams paid for	...	...	83,871
Do. do. do. in 1884	...	...	66,688
Increase	...	...	17,183

The total staff employed, including the Chief Surveyor and Draughtsman, was 23, as against 14 during the previous year.

Since the re-organization of the branch and its management by this department, the work generally has been performed with greater accuracy and also more expeditiously, on the whole, than was ever previously the case; but there is still room for improvement.

At present the office labours under disadvantages in the want of proper record plans, and of a properly trained permanent staff. These are serious drawbacks to the working of the office, to which I have drawn attention elsewhere. During the year we have had to depend largely on temporary assistance obtained under clause 33 of *The Public Service Act*; but this is very unsatisfactory, as it takes new men some time to learn their duties, and in the meantime delays and mistakes are made, causing trouble to both the office and the public.

The Act No. 855, passed with a view to remove some of the technical difficulties surveyors laboured under in dealing with surveys for the Office of Titles, has had the effect of increasing the work of this branch, by facilitating the correction of erroneous certificates; and from the number of erroneous certificates in existence, the work of amending them may be expected to assume very large proportions. It is therefore probable, unless a radical change is made in the method of defining parcels under *The Transfer of Land Statute*, that the staff of this branch will have to be largely increased.

A. BLACK,
Assistant Surveyor-General.

APPENDIX E.

EXTERMINATION OF RABBITS.

The great importance of the rabbit question is quickly and surely making itself felt throughout the colony, and the necessity for thoroughly eradicating this curse to the farming and grazing population is admitted by all persons. Many private owners, unable to bear the expense of clearing their lands, are selling out to men of larger means, and this cannot but injuriously affect the prosperity of the country. It is therefore imperative, if this calamity is to be averted, that no reasonable expense be spared in effectually clearing all lands for which the Government is liable, and in taking such steps as may be required to compel the clearing of private holdings, commons, leased and licensed lands, if the councils fail to satisfactorily enforce the provisions of the present Acts.

As mentioned in my last report on this subject, proclamations under section 18 of *The Rabbit Suppression Act* 1884 were issued in January to fifty borough and shire councils, calling upon them to take the necessary measures for the eradication of the rabbit pest on and after the 10th February.

In compliance with the said proclamations, steps were taken by many of the councils to appoint inspectors and serve occupiers and owners with notices to destroy the rabbits on land owned or occupied, and this department used all reasonable means to clear the unoccupied Crown lands in the various districts. The operations were carried on with vigor and success, 304 men being employed at one time, and rabbits destroyed in great numbers.

In some of the districts, land that for years past was barren has, during the spring of 1885, been covered with grass, and, although a large amount of damage has been caused to growing crops, the injury, owing to the action taken, has been far less than in 1884; and had all the councils been in a position to rigidly enforce the provisions of the Act, the injury would have been still less. Great difficulty is, however, experienced in dealing with lands held under short tenures, such as grazing and pastoral licences, occupiers not being inclined to incur the heavy expense necessary to clear lands which would return them but little, if any, profit, and the councils not seeing their way to recover the expenditure if they take action. The commons, many of which are enormously infested, also present a serious difficulty in the way of effectively exterminating these animals, as the revenue from some of them is insufficient to cover the requisite outlay. A number of the commons have been abandoned and abolished, and the expense of clearing the lands of vermin will now devolve on the department. A very large area of hitherto unoccupied land has been taken up under the provisions of *The Land Act* 1884, and this will, when leases have been executed, reduce the area for which the department is responsible; but a great extent will probably remain unselected, and unfortunately this will be the poorest and worst infested land, entailing a heavy expenditure to keep clear till such time as population in these infested districts increases, and each occupier adopts vigorous and persistent means for the destruction of the pest. The rapidity with which these animals breed in this colony is almost incredible, and it is found that they will travel long distances for food; thus land which has been completely cleared is no sooner left undisturbed, than as the grass springs it is as badly infested as before from neighbouring lands which have not been properly worked.

During the year many and various schemes have been propounded for the destruction of the pest, inoculation of a disease (which in my opinion should be strenuously prohibited), importation of the Indian grey fox, ferrets, weasels, and stoats, electricity, various snares, traps, and machines being amongst the plans suggested, but I am confident that the means adopted by the department are equal, if not superior, to

any of those propounded; and, if the one thing wanting to ensure success, viz., simultaneous and continuous action, could be obtained, the pest would be reduced to a comparatively small compass. This united and concerted work—the main thing necessary—is most difficult to enforce, and at present has not been, I regret to say, effectually secured, and I fear will not be until the whole matter is dealt with by the Government, and all land, whether private or Crown, worked under one supervision. Many of the councils, whilst laudably endeavouring to enforce the provisions of the Act, find great difficulty in doing so; for instance, no occupier is to be found in many cases of the worst infested portions, and a great deal of time is lost in discovering the owner, who is frequently not in a position to pay the council the amount requisite to clear the land. In the meantime the adjoining owners, in compliance with notice, have cleared their allotments; and should the occupier or the council eventually take steps to clear the land first mentioned, the rabbits leave in swarms and settle on the adjoining land, which has already been attended to. The only effectual remedy to prevent this is simultaneous action, clearing the district on a face from north to south and from east to west, irrespective of owner or occupier. The expenditure necessary to carry this out would, of course, be exceedingly heavy, but it is the only effectual way to ensure the complete destruction of the pest. As before stated, the measures which have been adopted were successful, destroying large numbers of rabbits and greatly reducing the damage to crops and grass. So far as can be gathered, more good was done than has been effected by a far larger expenditure in any of the infested colonies, South Australia alone having expended, under an Act passed in 1884 by the Parliament of that colony, over £70,000 in the purchase of scalps only, and the comparatively small portion of New Zealand (South Island) infested has entailed an outlay of about £40,000 per annum for years past, whilst, according to some recent reports published, the pest is as bad as ever.

Action is being taken to issue proclamations to 25 additional councils, and to request the 50 councils to whom proclamations were issued in January, 1885, making 75 in all, to use united efforts on the 21st of January, 1886, to destroy the pest; and I trust that the proclamations and requests will be willingly responded to and the provisions of the Acts rigidly enforced. If this be done, the next report will be of a more favorable character. The department has every reason to be satisfied with the work accomplished on unoccupied Crown lands, and the success which has attended its efforts to destroy the vermin thereon, and no effort will be spared (so far as the funds provided will permit) to ensure the success of operations for the year 1886.

The expenditure incurred during the financial year ending 30th June, 1885, was £22,176 19s. 9d., and for the year ending 31st December, 1885, £27,738 1s. 9d., exclusive of accounts still to come in. The subsidies paid to councils on account of rabbits for the year 1885 were £2,865 15s. 2d. for 2,751,120 rabbits, and £196 7s. 6d. for 353 wild dogs destroyed.

The subsidy on the purchase of rabbit scalps, not tending towards the effectual destruction of the pest, was discontinued since February last, and has not been resumed. The quantity of bisulphide of carbon purchased during the financial year 1885-6 was 92,254 lbs.; 18,796 lbs. of cotton waste and 7½ tons of arsenic were purchased during the same period.

In conclusion, I may state that the means used are those mentioned in my last report, and, although two or three schemes were, at the urgent request of the inventors, fairly tried, none of them were found effectual or equal to those at present adopted. Should the weather during the next three months prove hot and dry, an immense number of the rabbits will be destroyed by the use of chaff and bran mixed with arsenic and strychnine, but, if otherwise, carbon will be the principal agent employed; and this chemical can now be obtained in quantity and at a price which places it within the reach of all persons. If private owners will combine with the department in vigorous operations during the ensuing summer, a great diminution of the rabbit pest will be effected.

2nd January, 1886.

A. MORRAH,
Secretary for Lands.