

1901.
—
VICTORIA.

REPORT

OF

PROCEEDINGS TAKEN UNDER THE PROVISIONS

OF

THE LAND ACTS AND THE WATTLES ACT 1890

DURING THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER,

1900.

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

By Authority:

ROBT. S. BRAIN, GOVERNMENT PRINTER, MELBOURNE.

REPORT.

To His Excellency the Honorable Sir John Madden, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Lieutenant-Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.

Department of Lands and Survey,
Melbourne, 4th December, 1901.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to submit the annexed Report by the Secretary for Lands of proceedings taken under the provisions of the Land Acts and the *Wattles Act* 1890 during the year 1900.

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

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| I.—Settlement. | III.—Pastoral occupation. |
| II.—Sales by auction. | IV.—Miscellaneous. |

Appendices B and C give a detailed account of the work done in the Professional Division and the Forest Branch of the Department.

The personnel of the staff of the Department remained unchanged, except that in the latter part of December the position of Conservator of Forests became vacant owing to the sudden demise of Mr. G. S. Perrin, who had occupied the position since 14th June, 1888, with credit to himself and advantage to the State.

I have the honour to be,
Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

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

*To the Honorable Daniel Joseph Duggan, Commissioner of Crown Lands
and Survey.*

Department of Crown Lands and Survey,
Melbourne, 4th December, 1901.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following Report of proceedings taken under the provisions of the Land Acts and the *Wattles Act* 1890 during the year 1900.

I.—SETTLEMENT.

The general methods of alienation of Crown lands in Victoria, from the first sales to the 31st December, 1900, are shown in the following Table (A):—

TABLE A.

	BY AUCTION.				BY SELECTION.						General Total. Area.
	Country Lands.	Town Lands.	Suburban Lands.	Totals by Auction, &c.	Selection and Lease.		Certificate Selection.		42nd Section, Act 1865, &c.		
					No.	Area.	No.	Area.	No.	Area.	
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.		Acres.		Acres.		Acres.	Acres.
Under Imperial Acts ...	...	...	...	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	...	1,363,243	...	59,992	...	...	1,879,940
" " 1865 ...	639,761	6,709	34,137	680,607	5,900	1,499,910	3,078	559,423	...	753,574	3,493,514
" " 1869 ...	986,175	17,229	32,693	1,036,097	Section 19. 65,815 | 10,487,844		...	...	Section 49. 11,685 | 183,057		11,706,998
" " 1878 ...	...	...	...	...	Section 11. 453 | 76,100		...	...	Section 10. 401 | 1,202		77,302
" " 1884-1890	120,177	31,198	3,924	155,299	Section 42. 6,315 | 702,407		Section 49. 256 | 17,916		...	...	875,622
" " 1891 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Section 22. 126 | 597		597
Totals ...	...	...	...	6,671,807	...	14,540,104	...	637,331	...	938,430	22,787,672
During year—	<i>Land Act 1898.</i>				<i>Land Act 1898.</i>						
1899 ...	3,353	860	...	4,213	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,213
1900 ...	4,977	1,668	...	6,645	Section 42. 657 | 79,376		Section 59. 532 | 96,786		Sections 49 and 59. Non-residence. 198 | 28,879		211,686
Totals ...	8,330	2,528	...	10,858	657	79,376	532	96,786	198	28,879	215,899

Auction	...	...	...	...	6,682,665 acres
Selection	...	...	...	...	16,320,906 „
Total					23,003,571 acres.

NOTE.—Forfeitures have in every case been deducted from the area selected.

Table B shows the number of leases and licences under the Land Acts 1869, 1878, 1890, 1891, and 1898 on 31st December, 1900, with the area and rental:—

TABLE B.

Section of Act.	No.	Area.	Annual Rental.	
<i>Progress Payments.</i>				
Residence—				
Licences—Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		3,727	356,648	17,832
Section 17, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...		100	1,170	117
Section 22, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...		124	588	47
Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		657	79,376	2,096
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		532	96,786	2,146
Section 9, <i>Wattles Act</i> 1890 ...		1	131	7
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869–1878		18,902	3,013,873	150,694
Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		2,458	366,734	18,337
Section 17, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...		10	120	12
Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		27	4,932	168
Section 61, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		21	4,199	91
Section 10, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893		1,181	17,672	1,859
Section 24, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893		198	8,731	401
Non-residence—				
Licences—Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		173	10,138	1,014
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		143	15,833	618
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		55	13,046	296
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869–1878		388	56,861	5,686
Section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		89	10,264	1,027
Section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		10	1,120	49
<i>Licences and Leases other than Agricultural and Grazing—</i>				
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...		1,283	17,828	1,680
Section 65, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		4,413	79,725	6,316
Section 99, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		2,211	4,348	5,137
Section 91, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		84	732	5,577
<i>Pastoral Occupation—</i>				
Section 16, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		2	17,620	46
Section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		1,558	701,504	3,077
Section 67, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		1,010	294,178	2,421
Section 123, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		3,830	7,561,908	15,291
Section 85, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...		103	3,800	1,698
Section 80, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...		15	2,276	26
Section 5, <i>Wattles Act</i> 1890 ...		18	8,007	125
Section 10, <i>Wattles Act</i> 1890 ...		1	412	2
<i>Mallee Lands—</i>				
Pastoral Leases ...		3,528	8,332,558	12,000
Perpetual Leases ...		463	275,567	2,296
Agricultural Allotment Leases ...		100	59,710	2,985
Total ...		47,415	21,418,395	261,175

SECTION 20, LAND ACT 1869.

This section, the rights of which were preserved by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1884, and are continued by section 2 of the *Land Act* 1890, bestowed on licensees under Part II. of *The Land Act* 1869 the right to acquire, on expiration of the term of their licences, the fee-simple of their selections, either by paying the balance of purchase money in one sum, or by deferred payments under lease.

The following Table shows the transactions during 1900:—

TABLE C.

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 Licensees as Balance of Purchase money.
Lodged.	Dealt with.								
11	10	2	8	2,706	Acres. 482,362	Acres. 1,831	£ s. d. nil	Acres. 482,362	£ s. d. 49,345 13 9

NOTE.—The transactions of a like nature under section 11, *Land Act* 1878, are included in this Table.

Table D shows the number of applications under section 20 of *The Land Act* 1869 of holdings varying in extent from 80 acres and under to 320 acres, which were approved during 1900:—

TABLE D.

80 acres and under	...	...	...	...	2
Over 80 and under 160	...	...	...	...	3
Over 160 and not exceeding 240	...	...	...	...	2
Over 240 and not exceeding 320	...	...	...	...	3
Total	...	...	...	...	10

NOTE.—This Table includes particulars of a like nature under section 11, *Land Act* 1878.

SECTION 31, LAND ACT 1869.

This section, the rights of which were preserved by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1884, and are continued by section 2 of the *Land Act* 1890, 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 E shows the transactions during 1900:—

TABLE E.

Number of Applications.		Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase Money Received.			Survey Fees Allowed.		
Received.	Approved.			£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
12	12	12	Acres. 466	27	2	6	23	10	0

THE LAND ACT 1890.

Division 1, Part I.

Section 18 of this Act confers 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. Fifty applications, representing 851 acres were approved during the year, and the sum of £305 11s. 6d. was received.

Division 3, Part I.—Agricultural and Grazing Lands.

Under this Division provision is made for the occupation of Crown lands for the combined purposes of grazing and agriculture.

Sections 42 and 49 provide for the issue of licences for agricultural allotments not exceeding 320 acres in extent. Table G shows the transactions under these sections during the year:—

TABLE G.

Section.	Number of Applications.		Area Applied for.	Area Licensed.	Fees Payable Yearly.		
	Received.	Approved.			£	s.	d.
42—Residence	139	160	Acres. 10,870	Acres. 19,945	1,000	16	0
49—Non-residence	25	4	2,075	163	16	6	0

Section 44 enables licensees under section 42 of this Division of the Land Act to acquire, on expiration of the term of their licences, the fee-simple of their licensed holdings either by paying the balance of purchase money in one sum or by deferred payments under lease. The following Table shows the transactions during 1900:—

TABLE II.

Applications.		Grants Gazetted as Approved.	Licenses 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.		£	s.	d.
651	466	58	408	73	Acres. 3,330	Acres. 35,849	909	4	10	Acres. 2,079	1,150	10	9

NOTE.—This Table includes particulars of a like nature under section 50, *Land Act 1890*.

Table I. shows the number of Crown Grants under section 44 of the *Land Act 1890* of licensed holdings varying in extent from 80 acres and under to 320 acres, the issue of which was approved during 1900:—

TABLE I.

80 acres and under ...	...	...	...	...	53
Over 80 and under 160 ...	...	...	...	...	3
Over 160 and not exceeding 240 ...	...	...	...	...	1
Over 240 and not exceeding 320 ...	...	...	...	...	1
Total ...	...	...	...	...	58

NOTE.—This Table includes particulars of a like nature under section 50, *Land Act 1890*.

Under section 56 a lessee of an agricultural allotment of land under *The Land Acts 1884–1890*, 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. Forty-eight orders, representing in all an area of 9,713 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 Acts 1884–1890*, 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. Twenty-nine liens, comprising an area of 2,645 acres, were registered during the year, representing, as advanced on this kind of security, £2,170.

Division 4, Part I.—Auriferous Lands.

This Division provides for the occupation of Crown lands classed “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; therefore, all occupiers of the public estate under this Division are in the relation of annual tenants, and their occupation is subordinate to that for mining purposes.

The transactions during the year under sections 65 and 67 are shown in Table J:—

TABLE J.

Section 65.			Section 67.		
Number of Applications.		Area Licensed.	Number of Applications.		Area Licensed.
Received.	Approved.		Received.	Approved.	
786	178	Acres. 2,946	138	72	Acres. 25,484

WORKED-OUT AURIFEROUS LANDS.

By the 22nd section of the *Land Act* 1891 it is provided that whenever it appears to be no longer profitable to mine for gold within 50 feet of the surface of any unalienated lands of the Crown, such lands may, after inquiry by a warden, be declared to be "worked-out auriferous lands," and licensed in allotments not exceeding five (5) acres in extent. Every licensee who shall have complied with the conditions of his licence will, at the expiration of seven (7) years, be entitled to the fee-simple of the land at a price to be fixed by the Board of Land and Works, and the amount paid as annual licence-fees will be deducted from the purchase money payable.

During the year four applications under this section were received, but no applications were approved.

PROGRESS OF SELECTION.

Table K shows the progress of selection under sections 32, 42, 49, and 65 of *The Land Acts* 1884-1890 :—

TABLE K.—LAND SELECTED.

Year.	Under Section 32.		Under Section 42.		Under Section 49.		Under Section 65.	
	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.
1886	1,493	591,138	...	...	...	...	48	937
1887	3,621	1,328,169	83	11,310	...	...	198	3,742
1888	3,813	1,545,612	296	50,758	...	...	421	7,936
1889	2,348	925,939	418	65,862	41	5,383	627	11,578
1890	1,612	606,185	518	94,898	33	4,409	1,057	19,154
1891	1,288	479,657	539	95,634	37	3,597	560	10,220
1892	949	347,201	538	84,924	30	3,799	524	9,530
1893	584	211,401	845	115,611	25	2,403	597	11,002
1894	636	189,874	1,014	112,607	99	4,635	646	11,474
1895	374	91,227	771	72,090	39	1,896	305	5,376
1896	251	67,275	796	43,284	34	1,272	215	3,730
1897	262	73,499	653	54,115	20	808	110	1,895
1898	222	81,288	605	59,380	26	1,931	125	2,006
1899	41	13,591	616	66,998	14	924	116	1,987
	Section 29, L.A. '95.							
1900	1,558	701,504	1,349	196,127	202	29,042	178	2,946

NOTE.—This Table includes selections under section 17, *Land Act* 1891.

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.

LICENCES AND LEASES REVOKED OR DECLARED EXPIRED.

The following Table shows the number of licences and leases, under the sections specified, revoked or declared expired during 1900 :—

TABLE L.

	No.	Extent.
		Acres.
Licences—Section 19, <i>Land Acts</i> 1869-1878 ...	3	471
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	11	172
Section 42, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	677	108,965
Section 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	34	2,563
Section 65, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	94	1,573
Section 67, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	84	36,979
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869-1878 ...	20	2,816
Section 21, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	12	153,148
Section 32, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884-1890 ...	1,739	191,550

NOTE.—The Treasury profited to the extent of £2,176 7s. 7d. through revocations and forfeitures during 1900.

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

TABLE M.

	At Licensee's or Lessee's request.	Non-payment of Rent.	Non-compliance with Conditions.	Declared Expired.	Land Sold.	Land Abandoned.	Licences and Leases Surrendered.	Total.
Licences—Section 19, <i>Land Acts</i> 1869–1878	2	1	...	...	3
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869	...	1	9	1	...	...	...	11
Section 42, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	...	12	40	19	30	1	563	677
Section 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	...	1	1	...	1	...	30	34
Section 65, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	...	33	43	2	14	...	2	94
Section 67, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	...	14	30	...	34	...	6	84
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Acts</i> 1869–1878	...	4	15	...	...	...	1	20
Section 21, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	9	...	3	...	...	12
Section 32, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	...	5	90	5	1	...	5	1,739
Totals	...	70	237	26	86	14	15	2,226
								2,674

II.—SALES OF CROWN LANDS BY AUCTION.

The principle of deferred payments introduced in Part V. of *The Land Act* 1884, now Division 5, Part I., *Land Act* 1890, has been extended by the provisions of Division 6 of the *Land Act* 1898, one-eighth of the price bid being paid at the time of sale, and the remaining seven-eighths spread over a period not exceeding twenty years, payable half-yearly, in instalments of equal amounts, bearing interest at the rate of £4 per centum per annum.

During the year, 6,645 acres were sold for £36,082. Interest to the amount of £990 2s. 4d. was paid with the instalments of purchase money as they fell due.

The area of country lands sold at auction during 1900 was 4,977 acres, of which about 4,531 acres were improved and subject to valuation, and 446 acres unimproved.

In consequence of a large number of purchasers having failed to pay up the instalments of their purchase money as they became due, as required by the conditions of sale, steps were taken during the year to forfeit to the Crown the amounts already paid and declare the sales void.

As a result of this action, which was not taken until after repeated and fruitless notices to the purchasers, an area of 187a. 1r. reverted to the Crown, and the instalments of purchase money already paid thereon, amounting to £1,144 19s. 9d., were forfeited.

Table N shows the proceeds of sales by auction of country lands during each year from 1892. Similar particulars for each year from the commencement of *The Land Act* 1869 will be found in the departmental Report for 1891:—

TABLE N.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1892—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	1,297	1	36	3,045	17	10	2	6	11
Improved „	2,738	0	24	3,265	9	6	1	3	10
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	886	0	4	1,725	3	6	1	18	10
Improved „	2,759	1	31	3,167	0	10	1	2	11
1893—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	923	2	24	1,826	14	0	1	19	6
Improved „	1,426	1	26	2,017	13	8	1	8	3
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	625	2	35	880	18	9	1	8	2
Improved „	472	0	38	1,264	18	4	2	13	6
1894—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	1,648	0	0	2,472	0	0	1	10	0
Improved „	920	0	0	1,058	0	0	1	3	0
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	1,032	0	0	1,651	0	0	1	12	0
Improved „	1,137	0	0	1,279	2	6	1	2	6
1895—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	449	3	14	1,025	12	8	2	5	7
Improved „	1,000	0	39	4,375	12	8	4	7	6
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	280	3	2	1,288	9	9	4	11	9
Improved „	172	3	31	623	14	6	3	12	1
1896—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	410	0	26	1,205	2	3	2	18	9
Improved „	484	1	25	772	15	3	1	12	1

Table N—continued.

Year.	Area Sold.		Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R. P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1896—6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land	127	2 33	364	5	8	2	17	4
Improved	448	2 14	631	7	6	1	8	2
1897—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land	391	1 10	1,143	3	5	2	18	6
Improved	997	1 34	2,606	4	10	2	12	3
" 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land	142	0 38	439	19	3	3	2	0
Improved	1,145	1 23	1,559	0	5	1	7	3
1898—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land	247	2 15	469	0	11	1	18	0
Improved	1,348	0 26	4,488	4	3	3	6	6
" 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land	98	0 22	389	11	0	3	19	3
Improved	518	2 17	711	8	9	1	7	6
1899—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land	461	2 35	2,152	7	11	4	13	4
Improved	651	2 8	899	13	6	1	5	9
" 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land	267	0 0	837	9	9	3	2	9
Improved	3,086	1 27	15,905	18	1	5	3	1
1900—6 months ending 30th June—								
Unimproved land	285	2 12	863	19	9	3	0	6
Improved	3,756	1 11	13,231	4	9	3	10	5
" 6 months ending 31st December—								
Unimproved land	160	0 38	737	0	4	4	12	1
Improved	774	1 39	3,369	7	7	4	7	0

Table O shows the alienation by auction, during 1900, of town and country lands, and the amounts derived therefrom:—

TABLE O.

Town Lands.			Country Lands.				
Area.		Average per Acre.	Area.		Average per Acre.		
A.	R. P.	£ s. d.	A.	R. P.	£ s. d.		
1,667	3 39	18,600 0 5	11	3 0	4,976 2 20	18,201 12 5	3 13 1

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.

The sum of £18,269 17s. 11d. was received during the year for grazing licences, under sections 3, 67, and 123 of *The Land Acts* 1884–1890.

The area of runs formerly held under pastoral licence under *The Land Act* 1869, and occupation of which was renewed under the provisions of section 3 of *The Land Act* 1884, was on the 31st December, 1899, 184,282 acres, but by the operation of section 4, *Land Act* 1898, the occupation of these runs ceased on that date.

The amount of pastoral rent paid for each year since 1891 is shown in Table P below. Similar information for each year from the passing of *The Land Act* 1869 up to the end of 1891 is shown in the departmental Report for 1891.

TABLE P.

	£	s.	d.
1892	3,363	3	2
1893	3,329	2	5
1894	2,661	17	9
1895	3,874	7	10
1896	3,011	11	10
1897	3,462	16	9
1898	3,303	17	6
1899	2,823	16	9
1900	2,275	18	7

For further particulars, reference is invited to Table Q.

TABLE Q.

PASTORAL ALLOTMENTS—SECTION 16 OF THE LAND ACT 1898.

Number of applications received from 1st January to 31st December, 1900	...	19
Area applied for	...	231,398 acres
Number of applications approved from 1st January to 31st December, 1900	...	2
Area leased	...	17,620 acres
Area available on 1st January, 1900, for application	...	4,841,651 "

THE LAND ACT 1891.

This Act came into operation on the 29th December, 1891.

During the current year many applicants for land have availed themselves of the provision made in section 7, whereby grazing areas of 320 acres and less in extent may be at once licensed by the Governor in Council.

Section 16, as extended by section 94 of the *Land Act* 1898, provides that areas not exceeding 50 acres and not contiguous or adjacent to Crown lands and areas not exceeding 3 acres required for church sites or for any charitable purposes may be sold. Under the provisions of this section 52 cases were approved, dealing with an area of 1,245 acres.

Section 17 provides for the application of the "betterment" principle wherever land has been or may be enhanced in value by railways or other public works. Since October, 1893, 100 licences have been issued for an area of 1,170 acres, the rental of which has been increased in accordance with this clause.

MALLEE.

The Land Acts deal, *inter alia*, with about 11,166,793 acres of land, exclusive of Mildura (250,000 acres), in the north-western district of the State. In addition to the area above, 155,207 acres have been laid off as roads, &c., through the mallee to facilitate travelling in this portion of the State, and 397,881 acres have been retained as reserves. The transactions for the year are as under:—

Leases issued	...	...	...	{	Blocks	...	—	Area,	—
				{	Allotments	...	—		—
				{	Perpetual leases	...	56	Area,	30,873 acres
Licences issued	...	...	...	{	Agricultural allotments	...	7	"	3,269 "
				{	Garden, Store, &c.	...	83	"	— "
Leases cancelled for non-payment of rent and for other causes	...	...	...	{	Allotments	...	22	"	14,022 "
				{	Perpetual leases	...	3	"	1,416 "
Licences cancelled	...	...	...	{	...	...	3	"	1,723 "
Leases transferred	...	...	...	{	Whole allotments	...	191	"	138,681 "
				{	Portions of allotments	...	76	"	36,911 "
				{	Perpetual leases	...	5	"	2,480 "
Land subdivided and made available for selection	...	...	...	{	Block	...	1	"	110,586 "
Applications received	...	...	...	{	Allotments	...	18		
				{	Perpetual leases	...	306		
				{	Licences	...	161		
Applications granted	...	...	...	{	Allotments	...	15		
				{	Perpetual leases	...	205		
				{	Licences	...	89		
Applications refused	...	...	...	{	Allotments	...	3		
				{	Perpetual leases	...	101		
				{	Licences	...	72		
Applications abandoned	...	...	...	{	Allotments	...	—		
				{	Perpetual leases	...	6		
				{	Licences	...	—		
Number of Local Land Boards held	...	...	...		...	...	17		
Cases dealt with	...	...	...		...	...	497		

On 1st January, 1901, the areas available and held under lease were as follow:—

Available for application	...	...	{	Blocks	...	14	Area	1,331,840 acres
			{	Allotments	...	63	"	359,727 "
			{	Agricultural allotments	...	495	"	409,510 "
Held under lease	...	...	{	Blocks	...	60	"	5,182,073 "
			{	Allotments	...	3,468	"	3,150,485 "
			{	Perpetual leases	...	463	"	275,567 "
Agricultural allotments held	...	...	{	Licences	...	100	"	59,710 "

The revenue derived was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Rents on blocks	2,522	3	4
Rents on allotments	7,997	11	0
Rents on agricultural allotments	843	1	0
Survey fees on blocks	57	18	6
Survey fees on allotments	6	3	0
Valuation of improvements on allotments	262	0	4
Interest on valuation of improvements	3	16	7
Fencing rates	441	17	3
Fees—			
Application	£122	0	0
Lease	88	0	0
Transfer	300	0	0
Mortgage	287	0	0
Licence	10	0	0
		807	0
Total	£12,941	11	0

VERMIN RATES.

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

	£	s.	d.
Northern Vermin Board	331	9	0
North-Eastern Vermin Board	188	5	3
North-Western " "	61	3	0
Eastern " "	275	1	6
Western " "	216	7	2
Middle " "	345	4	1
Warracknabeal " "	257	4	11

During the year the Department subdivided Mallee block No. 25A, containing 110,586 acres, into 155 agricultural allotments, and made same available for selection; 317 applications were received.

IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

THE LAND ACT 1898.

This Act, which came fully into force on 1st July, 1899, was primarily rendered necessary owing to the terms of all the leases under sections 21 and 32 of the Land Acts 1884 and 1890 expiring by effluxion of time on 29th December, 1898. In addition to dealing with the Crown lands comprised in such leases, and granting great concessions to licensees in regard to their rents, power was taken to acquire private estates for the purpose of closer settlement.

SECTION 16.

Under this section provision is made for the issue of leases of pastoral allotments for any term of years expiring not later than 29th December, 1909. During the year nineteen applications were made for an area of 231,398 acres. Two leases were issued for 17,620 acres at an annual rental of £46.

SECTION 29.

Under this section provision is made for the issue of grazing-area leases for a term of years expiring not later than 29th December, 1920, for areas not exceeding 200 acres of 1st class land, or 640 acres of 2nd class land, or 1,280 acres of 3rd class land, or 1920 of 4th class land.

During the year 3,579 applications were received for an area of 1,933,386 acres, and 1,558 leases were issued for an area of 701,504 acres at an annual rental of £3,077.

SECTION 42.

Under this section provision is made whereby grazing-area lessees and settlers under the *Settlement on Lands Act* 1893 may have a licence for an agricultural or grazing allotment dated in such a way as to cover any residence they may have done on the land during the currency of the original tenure.

One thousand two hundred and ninety-one applications, comprising an area of 175,519 acres, were made under this section during the year, and 657 licences were issued for an area of 79,396 acres, at an annual rental of £2,095 17s. 6d.

SECTION 49.

This section, which amends section 49 of the *Land Act* 1890, provides for the issue of non-residence licences for 1st and 2nd class land at £1 and 15s. per acre respectively, payable by annual instalments of 1s. or 9d. per acre.

One hundred and fifty-seven applications were lodged for an area of 19,746 acres, and 143 licences were issued for 15,833 acres at an annual rental of £617 15s. 3d.

SECTION 59.

This section provides for the issue of a licence (residential or non-residential) to be called a grazing allotment licence to occupy an allotment of 3rd class land not exceeding in the whole 640 acres of 3rd class land or 960 acres of 4th class land for a period of six years at a fee of 6d. an acre per annum.

Under this section, during the year, 1,538 applications were made, covering an area of 354,491 acres, and 532 licences (residence) were issued for an area of 96,786 acres at an annual rental of £2,146 0s. 3d. Fifty-five non-residence licences were also issued for an area of 13,046 acres at a rental of £296 per annum.

SECTION 80.

Under this section perpetual leases may be issued for any Crown lands (whether held under lease or licence or not), swamp or reclaimed lands, mallee or village settlements, limited, however, to an area of 600 acres of 1st class land, 960 acres of 2nd class land, and 1,920 acres of 3rd class land, or 2,880 acres of 4th class land.

Sixty-five applications were made during the year, for an area of 18,843 acres, and fifteen leases were issued for an area of 2,276 acres at an annual rental of £25 11s.

SECTION 113.

Under this section provision is made whereby a licensee under section 99 of the *Land Act* 1890 of a site for a butter factory or creamery, or a site for a residence, garden, inn, store, smithy, or similar building not within the boundaries of any city, may apply for the exclusive right to purchase such site after having been in possession for a period of five years and erected buildings or made other improvements, credit being given for the amount of rent paid during the period of possession.

During the year fourteen applications under this section were granted for an area of 31a. 0r. 23p.

CLOSER SETTLEMENT.

Since the *Land Act* 1898 (Part III.) was passed, 165 estates have been offered to the Government for subdivision for the purposes of Closer Settlement. Of these 152 have been declined, not recommended, or withdrawn; nine are under consideration; and four, containing 28,553 acres, have been purchased at a cost of £147,475 for land; £2,600 for effecting such improvements as roads, water channels, and bridges; and £1,491 for surveys and administration, making a total of £151,566.

The Wando Vale Estate, containing 10,446 acres, was purchased for £63,985 on the 23rd March, 1900, and was made available for application in 66 farm allotments on the 22nd June. Within one month from that date 370 applications were received and dealt with. The unsuccessful applicants were refunded their deposits, the necessary fees were collected from the successful ones, and permits giving immediate occupation were issued.

Fourteen township allotments were submitted for sale on the 8th August, and were all disposed of after brisk competition. £6,260 have been expended by the settlers in buildings, fencing, and cultivation; a State school has been opened, two blacksmiths' shops, a creamery, and a post office have been established. £1,000 has been granted to the Glenelg Shire Council in connexion with this estate for the purpose of road construction. This work is now well in hand, and will be completed during the winter.

The Walmer Estate of 13,769 acres was purchased for £44,750 on 23rd October, 1900, and was made available in 39 farm allotments on the 24th November. A little delay was experienced in disposing of these, owing to the season having too far advanced to permit of "fallowing," and intending applicants being indisposed to effect a purchase without being able to put the land to immediate use. All the allotments have, however, been sold, substantial improvements to the value of £1,200 have been

made, and, notwithstanding the dry autumn experienced in the Wimmera, a considerable area has been put under crop. Every allotment not naturally adapted for water conservation will be provided with a water channel, under the control of the Western Wimmera Irrigation Trust. The Trust engineer is supervising the work on behalf of the Government, which is estimated will cost between £1,200 and £1,300.

The Whitfield Estate, of 4,246 acres, was purchased for £36,000 on the 1st November, 1900, and was subdivided into 36 farm allotments. There are only six allotments now unapplied for, and the work of fencing and building is being pushed forward.

In addition to the purchase of these three estates for Closer *Rural Settlement* a new departure was made to meet the need of the workers in densely populated centres. As the first instalment, an area of 91 acres was purchased for £2,644 at Brunswick, where workmen might devote their spare time and labour to create for themselves comfortable homes under healthy and cheerful conditions. This estate, after necessary excisions had been made for roads and public reserves, was subdivided into 56 workmen's homes allotments and made available for application. These allotments, except one withheld at the request of the Education Department, have all been disposed of, and the appearance of the place has been completely changed. The successful applicants are making good and substantial improvements, and some of the dwellings erected by the workmen themselves will bear comparison with the majority of suburban residences. Plans and specifications have been prepared for two bridges for this estate, and tenders will be invited almost immediately.

The action of the Government in connexion with Closer Settlement has stimulated private enterprise, and the subdivision of several large properties has been made by the owners, and the cutting up of others is in progress.

SECTION 76 OF THE LAND ACT 1890, AS EXTENDED BY SECTION 95 OF THE LAND ACT 1898.

In this section provision is made for the alienation of portions of land not more than 20 acres in extent at a price to be fixed by appraisalment. During the year 400 acres were sold in this manner, realizing the amount of £1,202 14s. 5d.

SECTION 102, LAND ACT 1890.—COMMONS.

Commons were diminished by proclamation to the extent of 237 acres.

Two (2) commons which were found to be no longer required were abolished.

SECTION 117, LAND ACT 1890.—PENALTIES.

The amount of penalties, at the rate of Five shillings per acre, received during 1900 for non-improvement by lessees under the Land Acts of 1862 and 1865, and interest on rents in arrear, was £228 9s. 4d.

SECTION 128, LAND ACT 1890.—PUBLIC HEARINGS.

During the year 1900, 425 sittings of Local Land Boards were held, at which applications for land and other business, comprising in all 7,151 subjects (including applications for mallee lands), were dealt with.

Five hundred and thirty cases were publicly heard by the Minister during the year.

THE WATTLES ACT 1890.

The Wattles Act was passed with a view to afford special facilities for the cultivation of the various species of acacia which have a commercial value, but there were no transactions during the twelve months.

CROWN GRANTS AND LEASES.

Three thousand three hundred and twenty-nine Crown grants and 2,757 leases were prepared and passed from the head office during 1900.

FEES AND CERTIFICATES.

The sum of £19,213 17s. 3d. was received during the year for certificates, transfers, and registrations under the Land Acts 1884–1890, and for miscellaneous fees, including those payable for grants, leases, and survey charges.

ARREARS OF RENT.

The arrears due by Crown lessees and licensees amounted approximately on 31st December, 1900, to £703,175.

REVENUE.

Table R shows in detail the revenue contributed by the Department to the Treasury during 1900:—

TABLE R.

<i>Temporary Occupation.</i>	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Pastoral occupation and grazing licences (including fencing rate, £441 17s. 3d.)	20,987	3	9			
Rents under section 32, Land Acts 1884-1890 and section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898	27,703	8	7			
Rents under section 65, Land Acts 1894-1890	2,813	16	1			
Rents under sections 45 and 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, Part VIII., <i>Land Act</i> 1884, and Division 8 of Part I., <i>Land Act</i> 1890	*30,939	19	0			
Perpetual Leases, section 80, <i>Land Act</i> 1898	191	13	8			
<i>Alienated in Fee simple by Auction and Deferred Payments, also Rents received towards Alienation.</i>						82,636 1 1
By auction—Town land	1,667	3	39	†21,407	17	6
„ Country land	4,976	2	20			
Sundry payments on account of purchase in fee simple	2,582	6	3			
By purchase under section 31, <i>Land Act</i> 1869	27	2	6			
„ „ „ 18, <i>Land Act</i> 1890	305	11	6			
Rents under section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869	351	8	6			
„ „ 19, „ „ as amended by <i>Land Act</i> 1878, section 3, <i>Land Act</i> 1880, section 42, Land Acts 1884-1890, and section 22, <i>Land Act</i> 1891	20,486	14	3			
„ „ 11, „ 1878, and section 49, Land Acts 1884-1890	761	18	6			
Rents and balances of purchase money under section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, section 11, <i>Land Act</i> 1878, section 3, <i>Land Acts Amendment Act</i> 1880, section 4, <i>Land Act</i> 1880, and section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1890	223,611	7	0			
Rents under sections 5 and 20, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893	1,856	19	3			
Penalties under section 117, <i>Land Act</i> 1890, and interest	228	9	4			271,391 5 3
Fees for grants, leases, licences, surveys, &c.	19,213	17	3			
Sale of plans and sundries	7,110	18	3			
						26,553 4 10
Total Revenue						380,580 11 2

* This amount includes arrears of rent due in previous years.

† This item includes interest, £900 2s. 4d., and instalments on account of some sales prior to 1897.

VERMIN DESTRUCTION.

The following is the expenditure under this head for the year ending 31st December, 1900:—

Subsidy paid shire councils, &c., for destruction of dogs and foxes	£1,555	10	9
Wages of men working Crown lands, material, &c.	8,562	19	8
Salaries of inspectors and allowances to police rabbit inspectors	4,798	15	7
Total	£14,917	6	0

SECTION 36 OF THE MINES ACT 1890.

In this section provision is made whereby the holders of registered Miners' Rights may purchase the area occupied by them at a price to be fixed by appraisement.

During the year 26 persons exercised the right of purchase thus conferred, the area purchased being 15a. 1r. 20p., whilst the amount realized was £435 10s. 11d.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. W. SKENE,
Acting Secretary for Lands.

APPENDICES.

APPENDIX A.

REPORT ON THE WORKING OF THE LAND ACT FOR THE YEAR 1900.

District.	Applications Approved.						Report as to the Working of the Land Acts on Holdings under Sections 42 and 65.	Report as to use made of Land leased under Section 29, Land Act 1898.	Report as to Agriculture and New Rural Industries.	Remarks.
	Land Act 1898.			Section 65.						
	No.	Area in Acres.	No	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.				
Alexandra	194	100,215	20	1,984	9	176	<p>The increase in applications to select has been large; the majority of leaseholders who have applied to select from their holdings have (in cases where such holdings have been classed 2nd) succeeded in having classification reduced to 3rd class, the land in this district as a whole being only 3rd class.</p> <p>Applications under section 65 have also increased, and where licences have been issued, the holders are improving their blocks.</p> <p>Several licensees under section 42, L.A. 1890, have successfully applied for surrender of licence and reclassification of their holdings.</p> <p>Section 65, L.A. 1890.— Greater portion used for grazing and wattle-growing; some for viticulture and residence. A desire on part of licensees generally to obtain the freehold, which will doubtless be met by sections 89 of L.A. 1898, and 42 L.A. 1900</p>	<p>The classification of the Crown lands in this district has almost directly resulted in about 57,000 acres of open land being applied for under section 29. This area is all 3rd class land, and was formerly included in pastoral allotments. The existing leaseholds are fenced and otherwise improved</p>	<p>The land in this district, being of a rough and hilly nature, is quite unsuited for agriculture, and is consequently used for grazing.</p> <p>No new industries to report</p>	<p>There is a great extent of rough country (formerly pastoral allotments) at present lying idle, but owing to difficulty of access, &c., is only likely to be taken up in large areas under grazing licence.</p>
Ararat ...	9	2,338	6	317	2	35	<p>Grazing, wattle-growing, bee farming</p>			

APPENDIX A—continued.

District.	Applications Approved.						Report as to the Working of the Land Acts on Holdings under Sections 42 and 65.	Report as to use made of Land leased! under Section 29, Land Act 1898. ...	Report as to Agriculture and New Rural Industries.	Remarks.
	Land Act 1898.									
	Section 29.	Section 42.		Section 65.		Section 65.				
No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.			
Bairnsdale...	95	39,113	29	1,921	...	...	Licensees under section 42 have used their holdings chiefly for grazing, the land being very poor, and not suitable for cultivation	Maize is the principal crop grown on the river flats, very little of the hop land being suitable for cultivation.	
Ballarat ...	12	1,569	25	2,745	52	838	Satisfactory ...	Agricultural operations have been pursued in the localities best adapted for same, with very fair results so far as cereals are concerned. Dairying has become quite a permanent industry, and to those engaged in it, generally successful. No new rural industries to report	Advantage has been freely availed of the provisions for surrender, conversion, and classification of holdings; and general satisfaction has been expressed at the liberal nature of the <i>Land Act</i> 1898 and subsequent amendments.	
Beechworth	223	77,945	16	2,788	45	675	Holders of licences under section 42 have complied fairly with the conditions of their licences. Licenses under section 65 use their holdings principally for grazing, the land being in most cases unfit for cultivation owing to the rangy nature of the country	Land held under section 29 is used exclusively for grazing. In majority of cases the original holders under section 39, <i>Land Act</i> 1884, have applied for renewals under this Act	No new rural industry to report.	
Benalla ...	59	17,538	31	3,968	...	...	Satisfactory ...	Principally used for grazing purposes	Land available of a rangy and inferior character.
Bendigo ...	4	300	19	1,323	7	119	Satisfactory ...	For grazing ...	Land which was hitherto regarded as rather too inferior for occupation is being taken up under the amended <i>Land Act</i> ; the system of classification adopted and the proportional cost of acquiring the freehold being regarded on all sides as most liberal, and calculated to materially assist any struggling settler who is anxious to secure a more extensive area as an outlet for his stock.	
Castlemaine	21	3,507	14	1,473	8	144	Very satisfactory ...	Principally for grazing purposes	Lands which a few years ago were merely abandoned diggings have, by dint of hard work and perseverance, been transferred into thriving vineyards and orchards, and as the district is noted for the quality of its fruit, a ready market for the disposal of the produce is assured.	

Echuca and Kerang	35	7,014	53	5,291	...	In every sense <i>bona fide</i> ...	Grazing	...	...	...	Settlement on the whole progresses satisfactorily, and upon the Gunbower Island, where a large number of families have been located during the last few years, work of a very encouraging nature is being carried on, even with the limited areas at their disposal. Some of the settlers are turning their attention to establishing industries. A bee farm is being profitably worked, and, generally speaking, it is gratifying to find that the enterprise shown by the residents in this part of the district is receiving due recognition.
Geelong, Campdown, and Warmambool	52	11,692	134	19,842	...	The selectors are still doing good work in clearing and sowing with English grasses and cultivating small areas, almost entirely for personal use. In consequence of many new men coming into the district with means, clearing is progressing more actively than it has for some time past. The new prospect of railway communication is also having a good effect in inducing the men to persevere in making improvements	The land under this section is used almost entirely for grazing and residential purposes. Most of the lessees have transferred their holdings to section 42	...	...	...	The effect of the railway now in progress is already having an excellent effect, not only in inducing work to be proceeded with more energy, but greatly enhancing the value of land in its vicinity. Allotments that were not worth £3 per acre will now sell readily at £6. One selection of 320 acres near the terminus lately changed hands for £2,080.
Hamilton	260	175,376	73	13,257	...	Satisfactory ...	Chiefly grazing	...	...	...	The purchase and subdivision of the Wando Vale estate has given every satisfaction, and the good work done by the settlers and the prospects of a comfortable living prove the wisdom of the transaction. With rich land, a fair rainfall, and a good stamp of settler, the settlement is bound to be a success
Horsham	173	100,215	65	5,291	...	No 65th section holdings in the district. General satisfaction with the working of the 42nd section conditions of the <i>Land Act</i> 1898 in particular. The demand for land in this district is at present very keen	Generally used for grazing purposes; in some cases used for cultivation	...	...	...	There has been and still exists a great demand for land in this district. The reduction in price under the classification principles of the Act is accountable in a great measure for this; and now, with a fourth class, the very poorest land will be taken up.
Melbourne	34	7,015	110	11,538	77	Very satisfactory. A great deal of permanent settlement has taken place	Grazing, stock raising, and dairying	...	...	...	The agricultural prospects are better than for some time past, larger areas under cultivation and larger yields per acre being the rule. Although bee-farming cannot be altogether classed as new, it is an industry which is becoming a very considerable and profitable one, profitable both for the State and the individual
Omeo	97	50,108	1	100	80	Section 42.—Satisfactory. Section 65.—The land under this section is chiefly used for grazing purposes	Satisfactory. Land used chiefly for grazing purposes	...	...	...	The established butter factories and creameries are in full work, and new ones are starting throughout the district The wheat and oat crops good. Another saw-mill has started. The dredging company has started operations

APPENDIX A—continued.

District.	Applications Approved.						Remarks.
	Land Act 1896.						
	Section 29.		Section 42.		Section 65.		
No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.		
St. Arnaud	65	15,367	45	3,968	36	605	Report as to Agriculture and New Rural Industries. The returns from crops are, on the whole, satisfactory. There have been no new rural industries started.
Sale ...	100	50,102	31	2,947	...	...	With very few exceptions, agriculturists have had a good season, good yields being obtained in nearly every instance, the principal produce being wheat, oats, and hay. No new rural industry has been started during the year
Seymour ...	105	35,075	6	661	6	102	Under section 29 large areas have been taken up, and a lot of new country occupied. The land has been principally used for grazing and dairying, the latter industry especially having made good progress Solely used for grazing Wheat and oat crops have been particularly good. No new rural industries have been established A large number of selectors are availing themselves of the provisions of the <i>Land Act 1896</i> to select larger areas, and land which would not otherwise have been selected has been applied for.

Report as to the Working of the Land Acts on Holdings under Sections 42 and 65.

Section 89 has permitted the selection of land under sections 42 and 59, which was previously objected to by Mining Department. Applications under section 65 have largely increased owing to the Department granting licences when land is not used for mining, although Mining Board had objected.

Owing to the liberal terms under which selections can now be secured, a large number of applications under sections 42 and 59 have been made during the year. Large areas of land that have previously lain idle have now been selected, and should fair seasons ensue, many new settlers should be firmly established on these holdings. The area of auriferous land in this district being limited, and distant from centres of settlement, very few applications under section 65 have been dealt with

Report as to use made of Land leased under Section 29, Land Act 1908.

The greater part of land in this district held under section 29 is 3rd class, and only fit for grazing

Under section 29 large areas have been taken up, and a lot of new country occupied. The land has been principally used for grazing and dairying, the latter industry especially having made good progress

Report as to Agriculture and New Rural Industries.

The returns from crops are, on the whole, satisfactory. There have been no new rural industries started.

With very few exceptions, agriculturists have had a good season, good yields being obtained in nearly every instance, the principal produce being wheat, oats, and hay. No new rural industry has been started during the year

Wheat and oat crops have been particularly good. No new rural industries have been established

A large number of selectors are availing themselves of the provisions of the *Land Act 1896* to select larger areas, and land which would not otherwise have been selected has been applied for.

Stawell ...	20	7,015	8	382	5	95	<p>Section 42, Land Acts 1890-98.—Several applications for surrender of licence and reclassification of land held under this section have been lodged, and reference to Land Classification Board has resulted in areas being placed in 2nd or 3rd class Section 65, <i>Land Act</i> 1890.—Several holdings have been transferred to 42nd section, and selected. Concessions granted under section 42 of <i>Land Act</i> 1900 and section 89, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 will increase the desire for such transfers.</p> <p>No 65th section holdings in district. General satisfaction with the working of the 42nd section conditions, especially with the liberal concessions of the <i>Land Act</i> 1898</p>	<p>Grazing, wattle growing, and bee-keeping</p>	<p>Cereals, viues, and fruits of all kinds are successfully grown. In parishes of Ledcourt and Boroka several persons have recently applied for areas under sections 80, 59, and 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, their intention being to combine bee-farming with grazing. The land being timbered with box, messmate, and stringy-bark (all honey-yielding eucalypts), the venture should prove successful.</p>
Warracknabeal*	<p>Without exception these leases are used for cultivation</p>		

* Included in Horsham District.

APPENDIX B.

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION.

I have the honour to submit my Annual Report on the work of the Professional Division for the year ending the 31st December, 1900:—

SURVEY BRANCH.

The system that has been in operation for many years of having selection surveys executed by authorized surveyors operating in defined divisions has been continued, the regulation fees being collected from applicants, and credited to a trust fund account, from which payments to the surveyors are made. As a result of the operation of the *Land Act* 1898, a large extent of Crown land has been dealt with during the year, and owing to the field of selection extending into remote districts, the work of defining road routes has been very considerably increased.

No changes have taken place in the personnel of the permanent survey staff.

The four district surveyors have had to devote much of their time to the duty of land classification and administrative work, and thereby have been prevented from giving that attention to the actual field operations which is desirable.

The five assistant or staff surveyors have been engaged on work of a special character, comprising the subdivision of estates for closer settlement, grading new roads in difficult rangy country, topographical surveys, township subdivisions, &c. One of the officers has been engaged on the classification of mallee lands for several months.

A very important work of roading a large extent of rangy country in South Gippsland, hitherto practically unoccupied on account of its inaccessibility, has been in progress. These roads have been carefully graded by one of the staff surveyors, and the work of clearing and forming has been carried on by the Public Works Department. As a result of this improvement, a valuable area of Crown land is being made available for occupation, and is in great demand.

The expenditure on departmental surveys for the year has been as follows (this includes the cost of staff surveyors' parties):—

Subdivision of land for sale	...	...	...	...	£694	0	7
Main road surveys	...	...	...	...	1,923	12	11
Feature surveys	...	...	...	...	251	18	10
Check surveys and connecting lines	...	...	...	...	168	3	0
Re-surveys for sale, selection, &c.	...	...	...	...	268	3	10
Selection surveys	...	...	...	...	372	10	8
Village and closer settlement surveys	...	...	...	...	878	16	10
Balances of fees, selection surveys	...	...	...	...	2,277	9	1
Miscellaneous surveys	...	...	...	...	409	15	0
Mallee investigation	...	...	...	...	190	19	3
					<hr/>		
					£7,435	10	0

The amount received as instalments on grazing area surveys, together with survey fees collected with first rents on surveyed allotments, was £3,030 13s. 5d.

The amount paid as survey fees into Trust Fund Account by selectors and others for the year was £17,899 17s. 6d.

Payments to authorized surveyors, refunds to applicants, and transfers to revenue amounted to £7,411 4s. 11d.

COMPUTING AND ADJUSTING BRANCH.

The work performed in this Branch shows a material increase for the year. Four hundred and fifty-three plans of new surveys were examined and computations checked.

In the adjusting-room 3,370 cases were dealt with for the purpose of the issue of leases and grants. These involved the preparation of 3,478 plans and diagrams.

The present staff consists of one officer in charge and eight assistants.

DRAUGHTING AND LITHOGRAPHIC BRANCH.

An exceptionally large amount of work other than that of compilation had to be undertaken during the year, and this necessarily limited the number of parish plans compiled and issued. Seventeen such plans were compiled and nine revised for re-issue.

The preparatory work for the taking of the census involved the preparation of a large number of special plans; these occupied nine draughtsmen for an average period of 52 days each.

The miscellaneous work of this Branch comprised diagrams for titles; technical descriptions for reservations; road alterations, &c.; certified plans for legal actions; special tracings and plans for country offices.

Large plans of Wando Vale and Walmer Estates, acquired and subdivided for closer settlement, were prepared and issued, with full descriptive notes, in pamphlet form.

The usual varied requisitions from other Departments, municipal councils, &c., were complied with.

The work of the lithographic and printing divisions also showed an increase for the year. It comprised a large number of the ordinary departmental maps published for sale, coloured maps of classified lands, closer settlement estate plans, circulars, &c., together with various plans for other Departments.

The permanent staff, including lithographers, printers, and plan moulder, number 20; and in addition a temporary staff of ten draughtsmen, one lithographer, and one printer was employed.

ENGRAVING.

Only one officer was engaged on this work, and progress was necessarily slow.

Additions were made to the Map of Victoria, plan of the Geodetic Survey of Victoria, Sheet "G" was posted and printed for revision, Sheet "S" (North Division) was further advanced.

PHOTOGRAPHY.

The ordinary work of preparing transfers for departmental plans has proceeded, and, as required, work has been done for Public Works, Mines and Water Supply, Defence, and Railway Departments.

The staff consists of one photographer and one assistant.

J. M. REED,
Surveyor-General.

APPENDIX C.

FOREST BRANCH.

The late Conservator of Forests died in December, 1900, and the writer was placed temporarily in charge of the branch pending the appointment of Mr. Perrin's successor. As I have been in charge for less than a week of the period under review—the twelve months ending 31st December, 1900—I propose principally to confine myself to facts and figures, and curtail remarks so far as the necessities of the case will permit.

STAFF, ETC.

During the year the field staff has been slightly increased, but it is still too small for the proper performance of the work devolving upon it.

It consists of 1 conservator (vacant), 1 chief inspector, 1 inspector, 23 foresters, 2 acting foresters, 15 forest foremen, 2 superintendents of plantations and nurseries, 4 nurserymen, 8 assistant nurserymen, 6 trainees, and 5 caretakers. Gangers, labourers, and forest-thinners are employed when necessary, and funds permit. The police throughout the State, who are Crown Lands Bailiffs, assist the branch greatly, the aid rendered by Constables Gleeson (of Heywood), Moore (of Dartmoor), Minter (of Ballan), Brown (of Mitiamo), and Hoeking (of Healesville) calling for special mention.

An immediate urgent necessity is the appointment of two additional inspectors.

There is no alteration in the office staff, though additions will be necessary when the royalty system becomes extended. The Royal Commission on State Forests, &c., sat continuously throughout the year, and produced a further number of progress reports.

ROYALTY.

Redgun timber for all purposes, and sleepers from all kinds of timber throughout the State are now sold by royalty. The Wombat State Forest and the reserves in the Heathcote and Rushworth districts are exclusively worked under this system, as is the disposal of mining timber in all reserves in the State. It will be a great advance in the right direction when "priced" licences of all kinds are a thing of the past. The cost of supervision under royalty will be greater, but the resulting good to the forests will quite outweigh the extra expenditure. The late conservator strongly and persistently recommended the adoption of royalty from the first year of his assuming office.

WOMBAT STATE FOREST.

Receipts and Expenditure for Year ending 31st December, 1900.

<i>Receipts.</i>				<i>Expenditure.</i>				
		£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Rent—Saw-mills...	...	82	0	0	Salaries and wages of foresters, &c....	832	2	10
„ Special area	...	63	0	0	Forage allowances, &c. ...	320	11	5
„ Residence	...	3	10	0	Improvement thinning ...	1,587	18	1
„ Grazing ...	...	4	10	0				
Royalty—Saw-mill timber ...	...	223	14	1				
„ Mining timber ...	...	406	17	3				
„ Fencing timber ...	...	4	3	11				
„ Firewood and charcoal ...	...	154	2	4				
„ Beams, piles, &c. ...	...	34	11	9				
Sale of confiscated timber ...	...	2	1	0				
		978	10	4		2,740	12	4

NOTE.—This is the only State forest worked exclusively under royalty, and with an exclusive staff.

TOTAL REVENUE FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1900.

	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Saw-mills and tramways, rent	1,410	19	2			
Special timber areas, "	205	10	0			
Jinker and faller licences	1,085	0	0			
Saw-mill timber—royalty	2,459	16	8			
				5,161	5	10
Railway sleepers "				2,655	12	0
Mining timber "				1,875	10	5
Firewood "				1,164	9	5
Fencing material "				88	7	4
Beams, piles, &c. "				740	18	6
Wattle-bark "				766	14	1
Grazing fees				1,364	17	1
Residence fees				18	10	0
Splitters' licences				412	0	0
Sale of confiscated timber, &c.				142	0	6
				14,390	5	2

IMPROVEMENT THINNING.

Improvement thinning has been continued at Wombat, Barnah, Gunbower, St. Arnaud, Creswick, Enfield, Lynchfield, and other forests. The work has been better done, and at less cost, than in former years. For reasons of State, gangs from Melbourne have been employed in conjunction with gangs of local men. The former have worked well, and have done their best, but if economy and effectiveness were the sole considerations, the latter should be exclusively selected. In addition to the thinning done by day labour, many thousands of acres have been splendidly thinned by firewood and prop getters under the thinning licence regulations.

NURSERIES AND PLANTATIONS.

The work at these establishments continues to be of a high standard, the chief nursery at Macedon having turned out 104,000 trees, hardened off and ready for transplanting, during the year. The free distribution continues to be very popular, and did funds permit, twice the number now grown would be readily accepted by the public. Besides the Government plantations, trees were grown for all the public and semi-public institutions, for the railway stations, and for the annual district arbor day of the Department of Education.

The stock in the various plantations continues to show satisfactory growth, and has been increased during the year by the addition of many thousands of the better class of eucalyptus and exotic trees. The growing of the bluegum and *pinus insignis* by the late conservator has been somewhat unnecessarily criticised of late. It is correct to say that there is probably no Australian or introduced tree that will give as good commercial results within a reasonable time as the bluegum when sown in suitable places. It has not proved itself a good avenue tree. The *pinus insignis*, for purposes of shade and shelter from its density of foliage and quickness of growth, has no superior known to this branch, and it is still strongly recommended to farmers for those purposes. It is bare justice to the late Mr. Perrin, however, to state that, recognising it as only a second-class timber tree, he instructed that the output be reduced from 25,000 to 5,000 per annum. However, for some purposes, even as a timber tree, it is extremely useful, and excellent samples of flooring and weather boards may be seen at this office, cut from trees grown on the reserve of the Ballarat Water Commission, where this pine and the bluegum were largely raised by the then curator, Mr. C. Mudd, F.L.S., &c.

The sowing of wattle seed broadcast has been continued throughout the year, and it is in contemplation to supersede the planting by hand of other trees, to a large extent, in favour of broadcast sowing.

CONCLUSION.

In conclusion, I would respectfully urge the great necessity for the permanent reservation of all forest lands thought deserving of such. Temporary reservation is a fruitful source of trouble and vexation. It invites applications from persons desirous of obtaining forest lands for other purposes, claims a considerable portion of the time of the officers of the Branch and of the Department generally, and has in the past led to the great loss, from a forest point of view, of such reserves as Mount Fatigue, Niindoo, &c., &c. In this connexion, I feel it my express duty to point out that, in my opinion, the 1,900,000 acres recommended for perpetual reservation by the Royal Commission on State Forests, &c., is wholly inadequate, considering that the whole area of the State is more than 56,000,000 acres, that one of its chief industries—mining—is such a huge timber consumer, and our comparatively small ascertained quantity of other fuel.

A. W. CROOKE,
Officer in Charge.