

1903.

VICTORIA.

REPORT

OF

PROCEEDINGS TAKEN UNDER THE PROVISIONS

OF

THE LAND ACT 1901

(PARTS I. AND II.)

DURING THE YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER,

1902.

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

By Authority:

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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, 12th December, 1903.

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 Act 1901* during the year 1902.

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

At the latter part of 1901 the Land Acts were consolidated under the title of the *Land Act 1901*, which came into operation on 31st December, 1901.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient servant,

J. W. TAVERNER,

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

To the Honorable John William Taverner, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey.

Department of Crown Lands and Survey,
Melbourne, 12th December, 1903.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following Report of proceedings taken under the provisions of the *Land Act* 1901 and the *Wattles Act* 1890 during the year 1902.

I.—SETTLEMENT.

The general methods of alienation of Crown lands in Victoria, from the first sales to the 31st December, 1902, are shown in the following Table (A):—

TABLE A.

	BY AUCTION.				BY SELECTION.						General Total. Acres.
	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.	
Under Imperial Acts ...	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.
„ <i>Land Act</i> 1860 ...	392,610	1,273	4,979	398,862	...	410,600	...	...	...	...	3,944,237
„ „ 1862 ...	422,610	2,800	31,295	456,705	...	1,363,243	...	59,992	...	...	809,462
„ „ 1865 ...	639,761	6,709	34,137	680,607	5,900	1,499,910	3,078	559,423	...	753,574	1,879,940
„ „ 1869 ...	986,175	17,229	32,693	1,036,097	65,772	10,480,426	...	...	11,670	182,821	3,493,514
„ „ 1878 ...	...	...	...	...	453	76,100	...	...	401	1,202	11,699,344
„ „ 1884-1890	120,177	31,198	3,924	155,299	4,815	471,238	147	8,755	...	...	77,302
„ „ 1891 ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	134	639	635,292
Totals ...	...	...	...	6,671,807	...	14,301,517	...	628,170	...	938,236	22,539,770
During year—	<i>Land Act</i> 1898-1901.				<i>Land Act</i> 1898-1901.						
1899 ...	3,353	860	...	4,213	...	...	...	...	...	...	4,213
1900 ...	4,977	1,668	...	6,645	657	79,376	532	96,786	198	28,879	211,686
1901 ...	4,080	2,126	...	6,206	1,249	152,262	1,323	297,518	319	50,257	506,243
1902 ...	3,297	2,259	...	5,556	557	70,211	744	166,830	111	17,332	259,929
Totals ...	15,707	6,913	...	22,620	2,563	301,849	2,599	561,134	628	96,468	982,071

Auction 6,694,427 acres

Selection 16,827,374 „

Total 23,521,801 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, 1898 and 1901 on 31st December, 1902, with the area and rental:—

TABLE B.

Section of Act.	No.	Area.	Annual Rental.
<i>Progress Payments.</i>			
Residence—			
		Acres	£
Licences—Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	1,889	158,663	7,933
Section 17, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...	109	1,430	139
Section 22, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...	120	574	45
Section 42, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	2,219	266,997	8,088
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 and section 54, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	2,380	532,309	10,267
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869–1878	13,730	2,145,205	107,261
Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	2,549	319,743	15,988
Section 17, <i>Land Act</i> 1891 ...	24	270	27
Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	604	108,683	3,398
Section 61, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 56, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	738	165,112	3,424
Section 10, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893, and section 322, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	1,351	22,207	1,730
Section 24, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893, and section 335, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	202	8,610	474
Sections 131–363 and sections 344, 345, and 346, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	1,046	48,600	8,727
Non-residence—			
Licences—Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	80	5,007	501
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	352	37,538	1,463
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 54, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	204	51,632	1,265
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869–1878	385	56,814	5,682
Section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	41	4,348	435
Section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 51, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	148	13,045	564
Section 61, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 56, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	6	1,602	72
<i>Licences and Leases other than Agricultural and Grazing—</i>			
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ...	1,163	15,878	1,481
Section 65, <i>Land Act</i> 1890, and section 103, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	4,751	85,678	6,564
Section 145, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ...	2,203	4,232	7,341
Section 91, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	83	731	5,542
<i>Pastoral Occupation—</i>			
Section 16, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...	4	52,150	115
Section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 35, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	6,384	2,846,052	12,697
Section 67, <i>Land Act</i> 1890, and section 105, <i>Land Act</i> 1901	967	277,591	2,278
Section 187, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ...	4,143	5,657,676	16,353
Section 85, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	104	3,901	1,728
Section 80, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...	50	11,475	93
Section 80–103, <i>Land Act</i> 1898 ...	41	4,127	791
Section 5, <i>Wattles Act</i> 1890 ...	9	4,427	60
<i>Mallee Lands—</i>			
Pastoral Leases ...	3,499	7,746,433	11,500
Perpetual Leases ...	860	510,709	3,275
Agricultural Allotment Licences ...	202	115,822	1,930
Total ...	52,643	21,285,271	249,231

SECTION 20, LAND ACT 1869.

This section, the rights of which are preserved by section 2 of *The Land Act* 1901, 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 1902:—

TABLE C.

Grants Gazetted as Approved.	Licenses Gazetted as Approved.	Purchase Completed.	Area	Area	Balance of			Area Leased	Amount		
			Purchased.	Leased.	Purchase Money paid by Licensees.			and afterwards Purchased.	Paid by Lessees as Balance of Purchase money.		
			Acres.	Acres.	£	s.	d.	Acres.	£	s.	d.
<i>nil</i>	2	2,908	486,538	397	<i>nil</i>			486,538	51,322	5	6

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

SECTION 31, LAND ACT 1869.

This section, the rights of which are preserved by section 2 of the *Land Act* 1901, 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 D shows the transactions during 1902:—

TABLE D.

Number of Applications.		Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase Money Received.	Survey Fees Allowed.				
Received.	Approved.								
			Acres.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
14	14	14	636	24	16	0	38	14	0

THE LAND ACT 1901.

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-four applications, representing 868 acres were approved during the year, and the sum of £125 6s. 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 agriculture and grazing.

Section 35 of the *Land Act* 1901 (formerly section 29 of the *Land Act* 1898) provides for the issue of grazing area leases for a term of years expiring not later than the 29th December, 1920, for areas not exceeding 200 acres of 1st class land, or 648 acres of 2nd class land, or 1,280 acres of 3rd class land, or 1,920 acres of 4th class land.

Table E shows the transactions during the year :—

TABLE E.

Number of Applications.		Area Applied for.	Area Leased.	Annual Rental.
Received.	Approved.			
1,182	1,173	Aeres. 664,262	Aeres. 507,403	£ 2,276

Section 42 of the *Land Act* 1890, the rights of which are preserved by section 2 of the *Land Act* 1901, provided for the issue of licences (residential) for agricultural allotments not exceeding 320 acres in extent.

Section 47 of the *Land Act* 1901 (formerly section 42 of the *Land Act* 1890-1898) provides for the issue of licences (residential) for agricultural allotments for 200 acres of 1st class land, or 320 acres of 2nd class land.

Section 50 of the *Land Act* 1901 (formerly section 49 of the *Land Act* 1890-1898) provides for the issue of licences (non-residential) for agricultural allotments for 200 acres of 1st class land, or 320 acres of 2nd class land.

Section 54 of the *Land Act* 1901 (formerly section 50 of the *Land Act* 1898) provides for the issue of licences (residential and non-residential) for grazing allotments for 640 acres of 3rd class land, or 960 acres of 4th class land.

Table F shows the transactions under these sections during the year :—

TABLE F.

Section.	Number of Applications Received.	Area Applied for.	Number of Applications Approved.	Area Licensed.	Annual Rental.
				Aeres.	£. s. d.
42. (Residence) <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ...	Nil ...	Nil ...	19	2,650	132 10 0
47. (Residence) " 1901 ...	} 1,939	} 316,690	592	75,580	2,352 5 9
50. (Non-residence) " 1901 ...			77	6,364	278 19 0
54. (Residence) " 1901 ...			847	203,157	3,046 5 6
54. (Non-residence) " 1901 ...			41	11,751	298 9 6
Total ...	1,939	316,690	1,576	299,502	6,108 9 9

Section 44 of the *Land Act* 1890, the rights of which are preserved by section 2 of the *Land Act* 1901, enables licensees under Division 3, Part I., of the *Land Act* 1890 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 1902 :—

TABLE G.

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 Lessors as Balance of Purchase money.
44	249	117	Aeres. 7,799	Aeres. 15,425	£ s. d. 442 4 0	Aeres. 15,425	£ s. d. 3,144 14 6

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

Table H gives particulars of a like nature under sections 49, 50, and 54 of the *Land Act 1901* during 1902 :—

TABLE II.

Grants Gazetted as Approved.	Leases Gazetted as Approved.	Purchase Completed.	Area	Area	Balance of		Area Leased	Amount
			Purchased.	Lea-nd.	Purchase Money	and	Paid by Lessees	
			Acres.	Acres.	£	s. d.	Acres.	£ s. d.
34	564	158	25,882	118,350	1,447	3 0	21,629	1,683 11 0

Under section 70 a lessee of an agricultural or grazing allotment of land under the Land Acts 1884, 1890, and 1901, 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. Eighty-six orders, representing in all an area of 17,984 acres, were registered during the year.

Section 71 empowers licensees under Part II. of *The Land Act 1869*, and licensees of agricultural or grazing allotments under the Land Acts 1884, 1890, and 1901 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. Thirty-six liens, comprising an area of 5,560 acres, were registered during the year, representing, as advanced on this kind of security, £3,665 12s. 4d.

Division 4, Part I.—Auriferous Lands.

This Division provides for the occupation of Crown lands classed "Auriferous." Under section 103, 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 105, 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 103 and 105 are shown in Table I :—

TABLE I.

Section 103.			Section 105.		
Number of Applications.		Area Licensed.	Number of Applications.		Area Licensed.
Received.	Approved.		Received.	Approved.	
537	245	Acres. 4,584	88	28	Acres. 6,505

WORKED-OUT AURIFEROUS LANDS.

By the 106th section of the *Land Act 1901* 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 fourteen applications under this section were received, and one application was approved for an area of 2 acres, at an annual rental of 12s.

PROGRESS OF SELECTION.

Table J shows the progress of selection under sections 32, 42, 49, and 65 of *The Land Acts* 1884–1890, and sections 29, 42, and 59 of the *Land Act* 1898 and corresponding sections of the *Land Act* 1901 :—

TABLE J.—LAND SELECTED.

Year.	Under Section 32.		Under Sections 42 and 59.		Under Sections 49 and 59. Non-Residence.		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. '98.							
1900	1,558	701,504	1,349	196,127	202	29,042	178	2,946
1901	3,663	1,642,054	2,654	466,034	319	50,257	400	7,085
1902	1,173	507,403	1,459	281,569	118	18,115	245	4,584

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

LICENCES AND LEASES SURRENDERED, REVOKED, OR DECLARED EXPIRED.

The following Table shows the number of licences and leases, under the sections specified, surrendered, revoked, or declared expired during 1902 :—

TABLE K.

	No.	Extent.
		Acres.
Licences—Section 19, <i>Land Acts</i> 1869–1878	2
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869	6
Section 42, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	*230
Section 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	*22
Section 42, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890–1898	35
Section 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890–1898	7
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898	113
Section 65, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	188
Section 67, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	81
Leases—Section 20, <i>Land Acts</i> 1869–1878	18
Section 44, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	*315
Section 50, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	*30
Section 85, <i>Land Acts</i> 1884–1890	8
Section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898	33

* Includes licences and leases surrendered so that holders may obtain concessions allowed by *Land Acts* 1898–1901.

II.—SALES OF CROWN LANDS BY AUCTION.

The principle of deferred payments introduced in Part V. of *The Land Act* 1884, has been continued and extended by the provisions of Division 5, Part I., of the *Land Act* 1901, 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, 5,556 acres were sold for £42,901. Interest to the amount of £1,034 14s. 1d. was paid with the instalments of purchase money as they fell due.

The area of country lands sold at auction during 1902 was 3,297 acres, of which about 2,253 acres were improved, and 1,044 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 106a. 1r. 12p. reverted to the Crown, and the instalments of purchase money already paid thereon, amounting to £2,395 0s. 10d., were forfeited.

Table L 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 L.

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	4,773	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
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	0	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	839	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
1901—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	376	1	11	1,465	16	9	3	18	9
Improved "	1,232	0	37	4,471	13	8	3	12	6
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	661	1	31	2,035	8	0	3	1	6
Improved "	1,809	0	27	6,167	0	10	3	7	9
1902—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land	761	0	15	1,813	14	8	2	8	6
Improved "	1,415	3	1	4,258	8	0	3	8	1
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land	284	3	24	980	5	9	3	9	0
Improved "	837	0	9	3,415	14	0	4	1	7

Table M shows the alienation by auction, during 1902, of town and country lands, and the amounts derived therefrom :—

TABLE M.

Town Lands.				Country Lands.					
Area.		Amount.		Average per Acre.	Area.		Amount.		Average per Acre.
A.	R. P.	£	s. d.	£ s. d.	A.	R. P.	£	s. d.	£ s. d.
2,259	1 4	31,835	14 10	14 1 9	3,296	3 9	11,065	2 5	3 7 1

III.—PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

The sum of £23,197 18s. 9d. was received during the year for grazing licences, under sections 105 and 187 of the *Land Act* 1901.

The amount of pastoral rent paid for each year since 1891 is shown in Table N 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 N.

	£	s.	d.
1892
1893
1894
1895
1896
1897
1898
1899
1900
1901
1902

Section 21 of the *Land Act* 1901 (formerly Section 18 of the *Land Act* 1898) provides for the issue of leases of pastoral allotments for any term of years expiring not later than 29th December, 1909. During the year one application was received for an area of 2,000 acres, and one lease was issued for 12,700 acres at an annual rental of £50.

MALLEE.

The *Land Act* 1901, Part II., deals, *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 :—

	No.	Area.
		A cres
Leases issued	...	...
	{ Agricultural leases	230
	{ Perpetual leases	97
Licences issued	...	63,141
	{ Agricultural allotments	49
	{ Garden, Store, &c.	85
Leases cancelled for non-payment of rent, &c.	...	28,216
	{ Mallee allotments	5
	{ Perpetual leases	2
Leases transferred	...	2,990
	{ Whole allotments	228
	{ Portions of allotments	76
	{ Perpetual leases	6
	{ Agricultural leases	20
Applications received	...	48,617
	{ Perpetual leases	170
	{ Licences	100
Applications granted	...	3,660
	{ Perpetual leases	97
	{ Licences	55
Applications refused	...	12,697
	{ Perpetual leases	73
	{ Licences	45
Applications abandoned	...	2
	{ Perpetual leases	2
	{ Licences	1
Number of Local Land Boards held	...	1
Cases dealt with	...	22
	...	753

On 1st January, 1903, the areas available and held under lease were as follow:—

		No.	Acres.
Available for application ...	Blocks ...	20	1,688,705
	Allotments ...	65	422,291
	Agricultural allotments	451	393,218
Held under lease ...	Blocks ...	54	4,825,208
	Allotments ...	3,445	2,921,225
	Agricultural leases ...	243	238,797
Agricultural allotments held ...	Perpetual leases ...	860	510,709
	Licences ...	202	115,822

The revenue derived was as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
Rents on blocks ...	1,979	12	5
Rents on allotments ...	5,547	18	2
Rents on agricultural allotments ...	2,427	1	10
Rents on grazing licences, &c. ...	485	13	9
Survey fees on blocks ...	25	17	5
Survey fees on allotments ...	320	0	0
Valuation of improvements on allotments ...	955	9	8
Interest on valuation of improvements ...	501	18	2
Fencing rates ...	15	10	10
Fees—			
Application ...	67	10	0
Lease ...	310	0	0
Transfer ...	300	0	0
Mortgage ...	118	0	0
Licence ...	80	0	0
	<hr/>		
	875	10	0
	<hr/>		
	£13,134	12	3

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 ...	545	16	3
North-Eastern Vermin Board ...	315	7	2
North-Western " " ...	235	15	10
Eastern " " ...	197	17	6
Western " " ...	82	5	4
Middle " " ...	281	9	6
Warracknabeal " " ...	275	4	4

IV.—MISCELLANEOUS.

SECTION 63, LAND ACT 1901 (FORMERLY SECTION 80, LAND ACT 1898).

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.

Ten applications were made during the year, for an area of 2,140 acres, and eleven leases were issued for an area of 3,336 acres at an annual rental of £33 1s. 3d.

SECTION 146, LAND ACT 1901 (FORMERLY SECTION 113, LAND ACT 1898).

Under this section provision is made whereby a licensee under section 145 of the Land Act 1901 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 84 applications under this section were granted for an area of 167 acres.

SECTION 184, LAND ACT 1901 (FORMERLY SECTION 76, LAND ACT 1890-1898).

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 872 acres were sold in this manner, realizing the amount of £3,280 17s. 2d.

VERMIN DESTRUCTION.

The following is the expenditure under this head for the year ending 31st December, 1902:—

Subsidy paid shire councils, &c., for destruction of dogs and foxes	...	...	...	...	£2,923	17	10
Wages of men working Crown lands, material, &c.	...	...	...	...	7,791	13	0
Salaries of inspectors and allowances to police rabbit inspectors	...	...	...	...	5,475	9	4
Total	...	...	...	...	£16,191	0	2

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 40 persons exercised the right of purchase thus conferred, the area purchased being 23a. 2r. 23 $\frac{1}{10}$ p., whilst the amount realized was £405 11s. 9d.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. W. SKENE,
Secretary for Lands.

APPENDIX A

PROFESSIONAL DIVISION.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report on the work of the Professional Division for the year ending 31st December, 1902 :—

SURVEY BRANCH.

The effect of amending legislation, referred to in my report for the year 1901, was even more apparent during the year 1902, and the survey work undertaken was exceptionally heavy. The keen demand for the remaining Crown lands, induced by the Land Act classification and reduced charges, has been fully maintained. From 45 to 50 survey parties have been engaged, and much of the land being remote, difficult of access, and rangy, the work has been performed under very unfavorable conditions. Special attention has been given to road requirements.

The four District Surveyors have had to devote much of their time to the work of classification, valuation, and reporting on applications generally, thus limiting the time devoted to field supervision.

Special surveys, comprising topographical work, subdivision of swamp lands, selection of road routes, check surveys, &c., have, as formerly, been carried out by the five staff surveyors.

An alteration of the Regulations under the Land Act relating to survey fees was made, thus limiting the concession as to payment by instalments to those applicants whose circumstances justified the relief being given, and making the deposit one-half of the fee instead of £5, as previously authorized.

SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE ON SURVEYS.

(Including the cost of Staff Surveyors' parties.)

Subdivision of land for sale	£620 15 8
Main road surveys	3,400 17 6
Feature surveys	653 12 3
Check surveys and connexion lines	115 3 8
Resurveys for sale, selection, &c.	872 4 0
Selection surveys	428 11 0
Balances of fees, selection surveys	9,086 10 1
Miscellaneous surveys	174 7 0
Mallee subdivisions	536 3 0
Marking sites for public purposes	71 8 0
	£15,959 12 2

Amount received as instalments on grazing area surveys, and also collected with first rents on previously surveyed allotments, £5,872 0s. 8d.

Amount deposited in Trust Fund Account (collected from applicants), £17,182 14s. 7d.

Payments to authorized surveyors, refunds to applicants, and transfers to revenue amounted to £16,343 8s. 11d.

COMPUTING AND ADJUSTING BRANCH.

In this Branch the work has been largely in excess of former years.

Four hundred and seventy-five plans of new surveys were examined, computations checked, and field notes reviewed, and 1,950 plans of selection surveys were similarly dealt with.

The usual work of preparing certified plans for leases and grants involved dealing with 4,400 cases; 150 certificates of adjustment were issued, the total number of plans and diagrams being 4,500.

Staff: One Officer in charge and fifteen draughtsmen.

DRAUGHTING BRANCH.

The great amount of miscellaneous work which has to be undertaken in this Branch retards the very necessary work of compilation, but, notwithstanding this, a fair result was attained—

Plans compiled, full scale	39
Plans revised and posted for re-issue, full scale	46
Record plans, large tracings, &c.	111
Miscellaneous plans, &c.	178
Plans for certificate of Board of Land and Works	63
Titles Office certificates	143
Technical descriptions for various purposes	527

The miscellaneous work comprised charting road proclamations, reserves, &c., preparing plans and returns connected with railway proposals, drawing diagrams on Crown grants, &c.

LITHOGRAPHIC BRANCH.

The increase of the previous year has been fully maintained. The usual departmental maps, full and half scale, classification maps, plans for sale, &c., were printed to the number of 44,120, and, in addition, the required supplies of circulars, forms, schedules, &c.

Total staff engaged, including draughtsmen, lithographers, printers, and plan-mounter, numbered 33.

ENGRAVING.

One engraver. Satisfactory progress was made with the plate of Geodetic Sheet S.—North division. Sheet K.—North and South divisions—were revised and posted to date.

PHOTOGRAPHY.

One photographer and assistant have performed the ordinary photographic work and preparation of transfers for the departmental maps, and for other Departments; number of transfers, 560.

I have the honour to be,
 Sir,
 Your obedient Servant,
 J. M. REED,
 Surveyor-General.

The Honorable the Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey,

..

APPENDIX B.

FOREST BRANCH.

During the year 1902 this Branch was administered by Mr. H. R. Mackay (then Secretary of the Royal Commission on State Forests, &c.) under the title of Acting Conservator of Forests.

STAFF, ETC.

In March, the senior inspector, Mr. James Blackburne, retired from the service. Otherwise the staff is practically unaltered.

ROYALTY.

The system has been largely extended during the year, the large and valuable forests in the Yarra watershed, Otway Forest, forests in the counties of Bendigo, Gunbower, and Borung having been brought under it. Proclamations were also issued for a number of outlying districts to insure the protection of young and immature timber. All wattle bark is now paid for at royalty rates, the "priced" licence system having been abolished for same throughout the whole of the State.

IMPROVEMENT THINNING.

This has been successfully continued in redgum country at Barmah, Gunbower, and the Grampians. Thinning under licence has also proceeded in the Bendigo, Maryborough, and other gold-field districts. In the Bendigo and Maryborough reserves the limit of the young timber which can be safely taken out has almost been reached, and it will be necessary, while gradually closing such thinned areas against all cutting, to induce the large mining companies concerned to obtain their round timber, and even engine wood, from more distant reserves.

STATE NURSERIES.

The small nurseries at Havelock, and that at Tintarra, have been closed. The main nursery at Macedon and small one at Creswick have continued to issue first-class stock. During the year the output was 61,084 trees, of which 24,735 were issued to 596 applicants, mostly farmers in the dry districts. Tree grants to farmers and others are only made after the requirements of the Department, and those of public, semi-public, religious, and charitable bodies have been satisfied. It is the practice to issue free grants of trees to settlers in Germany, the United States, Canada, and the neighbouring Australian States.

WATTLE AREAS.

The principal areas are being defined, and arrangements made to extend existing plantations and enclose new ones. The fine royalty of £5 1s. per ton was obtained for the bark stripped in the You Yangs plantations.

REVENUE.

The revenue was £16,283, an improvement of £1,377 on that of the previous year, and the expenditure proper to the control, supervision, and working of the forests was £15,076. To this, however, must be added £2,015 expended in relief work in the reserves for the unemployed. This has become an annual charge against this Branch.

WOMBAT STATE FOREST.

Receipts and Expenditure for Year ending 31st December, 1902.

RECEIPTS.			EXPENDITURE.		
	£	s. d.		£	s. d.
Rent—Saw-mills .. ..	..	4 1 8	Salaries and wages of foresters, &c.	830	8 8
„ Special area .. ..	..	78 0 0	Forage allowances, &c. ..	..	303 19 3
„ Residence .. ..	..	1 12 6			
„ Grazing .. ..	..	5 12 6			
Royalty—Saw-mill timber ..	..	158 13 6			
„ Mining timber .. ..	..	490 8 0			
„ Fencing timber .. ..	..	23 13 7			
„ Firewood and charcoal ..	..	200 0 2			
„ Beams, piles, &c. .. ..	..	9 3 0			
Sale of confiscated timber, &c.	..	8 0 8			
		<hr/>			<hr/>
		£979 5 7			£1,134 7 11
		<hr/>			<hr/>

TOTAL REVENUE FOR YEAR ENDING 31ST DECEMBER, 1902.

				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Saw-mills and tramways—rent	..	..	..	877	15	0			
Special timber areas—rent	..	..	..	187	10	0			
Jinker and faller licences	..	..	..	826	2	6			
Saw-mill timber—royalty	..	..	..	1,678	9	3			
							3,569	16	9
Railway sleepers	..	..	..				3,062	4	3
Mining timber	..	..	..				2,620	11	7
Firewood and charcoal—royalty	..	..	..				2,321	0	4
Fencing material	..	..	..				225	12	5
Beams, piles, &c.	..	..	..				1,317	5	8
Wattle-bark	..	..	..				1,151	19	0
Grazing fees	..	..	..				1,396	1	2
Residence fees	..	..	..				8	17	6
Splitters' licences	..	..	..				378	2	6
Sale of confiscated timber, &c.	..	..	..				232	2	6
							£16,283	13	8

The year under review was one of extreme drought, and consequent depression, and it is confidently hoped that, owing to the extension of the royalty principle and re-assessment of grazing areas, the revenue will show an upward tendency in the near future.

The permanent reservation of all areas determined to be necessary for the growth and preservation of timber is again strongly recommended. During the year such means as funds would allow have been taken to prevent or minimize forest fires by making fire-breaks, burning off debris, stacking tops, burning grass, cleaning up generally, and issuing warning fire notices.

A. W. CROOKE,
[for Acting Conservator of Forests.