

1915.  

---

VICTORIA.

---

THE -LAND ACTS.

---

R E P O R T

FOR

THE FINANCIAL YEAR ENDED 30<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 1915,

WITH APPENDICES

---

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

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# R E P O R T.

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*To His Excellency the Honorable Sir Arthur Lyulph Stanley, K.C.M.G.,  
Governor of the State of Victoria and its Dependencies, &c., &c., &c.*

Department of Lands and Survey,  
Melbourne, 28th September, 1915.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to submit the annexed Report by the Secretary for Lands of proceedings under the Land Acts during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915.

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

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

Appendix B gives a detailed report by the Surveyor-General on the Professional Division of the Department.

Appendices A, C, and D furnish information regarding various works under the Control and Management of the Department of Lands and Survey.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

H. S. W. LAWSON,  
Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey,  
and President of the Board of Land and Works.

*To the Honorable Harry Sutherland Wightman Lawson, Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey.*

Department of Lands and Survey,  
Melbourne, 28th September, 1915.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report on the proceedings under the Land Acts and of the general work of the Department during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915. Supplementary reports by the Surveyor-General on the professional work ; by the Chief Inspector, Vermin Destruction Act ; and by the Curator of the Botanic Gardens, are appended :—

## REPORT.

The financial year under notice has to be recorded as the most unfavorable, as regards settlement and production conditions, that this State has ever experienced.

### ADVANCES TO SETTLERS.

A drought extending practically through three seasons of the year most disastrously affected some thousands of the Department's tenants, and necessarily resulted in diminished revenue as well as limiting the demand for Crown Lands. Another disturbing factor was the world-wide war which unhappily has called for the service of thousands of our young men in defence of Empire. The drought was so widespread and the failure so complete that State assistance had to be rendered, and the Seed Advances Act was promptly passed by Parliament, and by authority of this Act a sum of £500,000 was rendered available for loan to farmers for the purchase of seed and fodder. This involved a large amount of work in conducting inquiries, making advances and obtaining securities. By the generous help given in this way large numbers of producers were saved from financial failure, and, encouraged by the ready assistance, a largely increased area was placed under cultivation, giving promise of returns which it is hoped will prove of great benefit to both the individuals and the State. The magnitude of the relief afforded, as compared with previous advances, is shown by the following statement :—

Year.	Amount Advanced.	Amount Repaid.
1903	£93,127	£91,823
1908	£8,030	£7,877
1912	£907	£716
1914	£6,157*	£1,085
1915	£516,000	—

\* The following harvest was a failure through drought.

1915	Number of persons to whom advances were made	...	...	...	3,914
	Approximate number of crop liens registered	...	...	...	5,448
	Approximate area to be cultivated under the advances made	...	(acres)	...	1,220,000

In addition to seed and fodder advances, money was provided for the carrying out of works, thus enabling suffering settlers to earn money to meet pressing needs.

Advances paid as progress payments were also made on the security of additional improvements as they were effected on many of the holdings held under licence or conditional purchase lease. Particulars of these advances will be given in the report of the Lands Purchase and Management Board.

## SETTLEMENT.

As previously indicated the demand for land was limited. The following table gives a summary of the number of holdings and acreage taken up under the principal sections of the Land Acts :—

	Number of Holdings.	Area (Acres).
New selection (not including Mallee) land ...	789	128,149
New selection, Auriferous land—Sec. 103 ...	239	3,715
New selection, under Conditional Purchase Lease ...	78	10,983
New selection, Mallee land ... ..	321	199,934
Selections out of Grazing Area Leaseholds ...	210	56,876
Holdings converted to Selection tenure ...	281	5,013

A considerable extent of Mallee land, which otherwise would have been advertised as available for settlement, had to be withheld on account of the failure of water supply. Water provision and Railway facilities are the two essentials to the settlement of this country, and to act without either is but inviting failure.

Further particulars are set out in the paragraphs following, showing the dealings under the various sections of the Acts.

As railway construction progressed new townships were laid out and allotments sold by auction. The progress of the work of the Country Roads Board and the extension of railway lines in other districts will open up areas not now in demand on account of their inaccessibility. Such lines as the Bairnsdale to Orbost extension and that from Tallangatta to Cudgewa will provide much needed means of transport, and should result in the breaking down of many of the large areas now devoted exclusively to grazing.

The development of much of the remaining high lands of the State can only be accomplished by costly railway and road construction. To alienate such lands in large grazing blocks would be a serious mistake, and by utilizing them as growing grounds for young stock, under the present system of grazing licences without any right of selection, they are being made to serve a very valuable purpose.

## GRAZING FOR STARVING STOCK.

During the drought period the timbered Crown lands proved of great benefit to the owners of starving stock, which had to be removed from the dry northern districts. All the available accessible areas, including reserves, were much in demand and care was exercised in giving grazing privileges, the aim of the Department being to afford relief to sufferers and minimize the stock losses rather than secure revenue. Applicants for grazing rights were required to make statutory declarations as to ownership of stock, numbers, and when purchased. This precaution was taken to check speculative dealings at the expense of drought sufferers. It is satisfactory to know that large numbers of farmers' horses were saved by means of the departmental help. Such areas as Snake Island, Yanakie Run, and the National Park, which are in the charge of Bailiffs of Crown Lands, proved of the utmost value as relief grazing grounds.

## RABBIT DESTRUCTION.

The rabbit pest continues to prove a great menace to settlement, and in the settled hill country of South Gippsland and the County of Polwarth this is particularly the case. Road improvement works, the reduction of areas by private subdivisions, and effective netting of smaller holdings are the desirable means by which much of this country, which has become to a great extent overgrown and in parts practically abandoned, will be again brought into profitable use. Such country, being now so far served by existing railways and having the decided advantage of a good rainfall, presents a wide field for development, but the excessive size of the holdings is a great bar to progress.

The appended report by the Chief Inspector under the Vermin Destruction Act shows that the adoption of what is known as the "free feeding" system, followed by the laying of poisoned baits, has proved a most effective means of rabbit destruction.

#### ARREARS.

The arrears of selection payments have shown a substantial increase as a direct result of the failure of crops and other losses due to drought, as will be seen from the following table:—

<i>Arrears at 30th June, 1914.</i>				<i>Arrears at 30th June, 1915.</i>			
Crown lands ...	...	...	£40,675	Crown lands ...	...	...	£49,203 18 5
Mallee lands ...	...	...	£56,298	Mallee lands ...	...	...	£127,184 1 5

#### INDUSTRIAL SITES.

The large number of industrial sites in and around the metropolis, held under lease and licence, return a very satisfactory revenue. On expiry of old leases valuable properties reverted to the Crown. Most of these are renewed for a term of years varying from 10 to 21 under lease, and good rentals are derived therefrom.

#### WONTHAGGI LANDS.

The conversions from leasehold to freehold tenure by authority of the Wonthaggi Land Act have proceeded freely. The settlement in this township has become more firmly established, and a pleasing feature is the development of so many gardens surrounding the miners' homes.

#### NEW LEGISLATION.

No amending Acts of special importance were passed during the year. The following list comprises a number of Acts, several of which relate only to sites required for particular public purposes:—

- No. 2509, Wire Netting Act.
- No. 2515, Caulfield Land Act (Drill Hall).
- No. 2518, Public Reserves Act.
- No. 2521, St. Kilda Land Act.
- No. 2528, Cobden Temperance Hall Act.
- No. 2549, Land Act 1901 Amendment Act.
- No. 2559, St. Arnaud Market Land Act.
- No. 2560, Warrnambool Land Act.
- No. 2568, Seed Advances Act.

#### PUBLIC RESERVES ACT.

This Act provides for more effective control being given to Trustees and Committees of Management, and will tend to secure the better development of areas throughout the State reserved for various Public purposes. In making new appointments these are limited to a term of three years, thus securing a review of the trust at the end of such term.

#### CLOSER SETTLEMENT OPERATIONS.

On the ordinary staff of the Department devolved a very large amount of the administrative work connected with this class of settlement in the preparation of leases, collection of rents, advances made to settlers, insurance of improvements, &c. A separate report of these proceedings is submitted by the Lands Purchase and Management Board.

## I.—ALIENATION OF CROWN LANDS.

The general methods of alienation of Crown lands in Victoria, from the first sales to the 30th June, 1915, 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	...	753,344	3,493,284
„ „ 1869 ...	986,175	17,229	32,693	1,036,097	Section 19. 65,511   10,460,737		...	...	Section 49. 11,600   181,831		11,678,665
„ „ 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. 4,283   399,975		Section 49. 118   6,232		...	...	561,506
„ „ 1891-1901	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	Sections 22 and 106. 139   657		657
Totals ...	...	...	...	6,671,807	...	14,210,565	...	625,647	...	937,034	22,445,053
During year—	<i>Land Act</i> 1898-1901.				<i>Land Act</i> 1898-1901-1911.						
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
1903 ...	4,936	1,957	...	6,893	675	83,283	679	122,351	217	33,165	245,692
1904 ...	3,154	1,924	...	5,078	747	59,590	586	139,119	143	25,262	229,049
1905 ...	3,267	2,129	...	5,396	727	54,257	417	98,705	108	25,412	183,770
1906 ...	2,060	1,946	...	4,006	946	56,172	300	61,299	123	20,128	141,605
1907 ...	2,776	1,369	...	4,145	901	55,079	263	67,923	168	34,328	161,475
1908 ...	2,805	1,630	...	4,435	824	54,620	355	95,136	123	27,994	182,185
1909 ...	2,729	2,062	...	4,791	734	48,047	372	97,748	143	33,023	183,609
1910 ...	2,469	1,789	...	4,258	749	38,601	341	96,621	189	35,692	175,172
1.1.11 to 30.6.12 ...	2,002	2,147	...	4,149	1,189	51,553	373	97,113	209	41,393	194,208
1912-13 ...	1,173	1,279	...	2,452	759	30,956	225	49,992	117	21,056	104,456
1913-14 ...	790	1,400	...	2,190	662	21,818	200	54,343	127	18,279	96,630
1914-15 ...	962	1,020	...	1,982	562	24,220	301	80,046	109	18,655	124,903
Totals ...	44,830	27,565	...	72,395	11,938	880,045	7,011	1,621,530	2,404	430,855	3,004,825
Auction ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	6,744,202 acres	...	...	...
Selection ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	*18,705,676 „	...	...	...
Total ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	25,449,878 acres.	...	...	...

NOTE.—Forfeitures have been deducted from the area selected.  
\* Exclusive of selection in Mallee Country and Mallee Border.

## 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 the financial year ended 30th June, 1915:—

TABLE B.

Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Area Leased and afterwards Purchased.	Amount Paid by Lessees as Balance of Purchase money.		
	Acres.	Acres.	£	s.	d.
8	964	964	109	16	0

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 C shows the transactions during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915:—

TABLE C.

Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balances of Purchase Money Received.	Survey Fees Allowed.		
	Acres.	£ s. d.	£	s.	d.
4	137	Nil	7	12	6

## SECTION 44, LAND ACT 1890.

This section, 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 the financial year ended 30th June, 1915:—

TABLE D.

Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Area Leased and afterwards Purchased.	Amount Paid by Lessees as Balance of Purchase Money.		
	Acres.	Acres.	£	s.	d.
190	12,538	12,538	812	9	0

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

## 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. Seven applications, representing 111 acres, were approved during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, and the sum of £25 10s. 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, and section 35 of the *Land Act* 1901 provides for the issue of grazing area leases for a term of years expiring not later than the 29th December, 1920.

Table E shows the transactions during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915 :—

TABLE E.

Number of Applications Approved.	Area Leased.	Annual Rental.	
	Acres.	£	s. d.
44	24,501	109	17 8

Sections 47 and 50 provide for the issue of licences of agricultural allotments, and section 54 allows the issue of licences of grazing allotments.

Table F shows the transactions under these sections during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915 :—

TABLE F.

Section.	Number of Applications Approved.	Area Licensed.	Annual Rental.	
		Acres.	£	s. d.
47. (Residence) <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ...	292	11,066	459	16 0
50. (Non-residence) „ 1901 ...	35	2,028	88	3 10
54. (Residence) „ 1901 ..	122	36,800	781	18 10
54. (Non-residence) „ 1901 ...	32	8,451	212	16 4
<b>Total</b> ... ..	<b>481</b>	<b>58,345</b>	<b>1,542</b>	<b>15 0</b>

*Note.*—This Table includes selections of enhanced value.

The transactions under sections 49, 51, and 56 of the *Land Act* 1901 during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, are set forth in Table G.

TABLE G.

Grants Gazetted as Approved.	Leases Gazetted as Approved.	Purchases 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.
			Acres.	Acres.	£ s. d.	Acres.	£ s. d.
418	873	704	69,187	141,132	4,539 13 11	57,311	6,231 11 0

Under section 70 of the *Land Act* 1901 a lessee of an agricultural or grazing allotment 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. Eleven orders, representing in all an area of 2,920 acres, were registered during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915.

Sections 71 and 72 of the *Land Act* 1901 as amended by section 70 of the *Land Act* 1911 empower licensees of agricultural or grazing allotments and lessees of selection-purchase allotments to register liens in the Crown Lands Office upon the security and to the value of, the permanent improvements effected on their holdings. One hundred and ninety liens, comprising an area of 100,885 acres, were registered during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, representing, as advanced on this kind of security, £18,910 14s. 0d.

*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.

In the *Land Act* 1904 provision is made whereby licensees under section 103 of the *Land Act* 1901 can apply to surrender their licences with a view to obtain agricultural or grazing allotment licences in lieu thereof.

The transactions during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, under section 103, are shown in Table H:—

TABLE H.

Section 103.		
Number of Applications Approved.	Area Licensed.	Annual Rental.
239	Acres. 3,715	£   s.   d. 193 13 0

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 financial year ended 30th June, 1915, six applications under this section were approved for an area of 30 acres, at an annual rental of £1 17s. 6d.

PROGRESS OF SELECTION.

Table I. shows the progress of selection under section 65 of *The Land Act* 1890, sections 29, 42, and 59 of the *Land Act* 1898 and corresponding sections of the *Land Act* 1901, and sections 8 and 13 of the *Land Act* 1911. Similar particulars under sections 32, 42, 49, and 65 of the *Land Acts* 1884–1890, from the year 1886 to the year 1898 inclusive, will be found in the departmental Report for 1908:—

TABLE I.—LAND SELECTED.

Year.	Under Section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and Section 35, <i>Land Act</i> 1901.		Under Sections 42, 47, 54, and 59, <i>Land Acts</i> 1898–1901 and section 8, <i>Land Act</i> 1911.		Under Sections 49, 50, 54, and 59, <i>Land Acts</i> 1898–1901 and section 13, <i>Land Act</i> 1911. Non-Residence.		Under Sections 65 and 103.	
	Application Approved.	Acreage.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Applications Approved.	Acreage.	Application Approved.	Acreage.
1899	41	13,591	616	66,998	14	924	116	1,987
1900	1,558	701,504	1,349	196,127	202	29,042	178	2,946
1901	3,663	1,642,054	2,654	466,084	319	50,257	400	7,085
1902	1,173	507,403	1,459	281,569	118	18,115	245	4,584
1903	905	574,482	1,544	251,441	217	33,165	492	7,420
1904	524	290,043	1,455	226,925	156	26,667	689	12,587
1905	372	179,488	1,325	189,442	123	27,977	437	6,952
1906	219	95,647	1,439	149,893	140	23,220	477	8,623
1907	96	28,323	1,321	151,865	197	39,367	517	9,290
1908	178	85,362	1,402	184,942	131	28,941	407	7,145
1909	101	47,791	1,550	214,999	186	42,180	318	5,478
1910	84	36,089	1,527	210,331	213	38,363	304	4,864
1.1.11 to 30.6.12	89	30,279	2,006	229,598	235	44,321	549	9,497
1912-13	55	21,376	1,211	121,052	130	24,387	263	4,336
1913-14	27	11,182	1,080	109,972	143	21,768	145	2,186
1914 15	44	24,501	1,117	144,391	119	21,146	239	3,715

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, (together with areas) under the sections specified, which were surrendered, revoked, or declared expired during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915 :—

TABLE J.

—	No.	Extent.
		Acres.
Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1869 ... ..	3	54
Licences—Section 42, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890-1898, and Section 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	132	14,447
Section 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890-1898, and Section 50, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	5	728
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and Section 54, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 (Residence) ... ..	65	17,167
Section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and Section 54, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 (Non-residence) ... ..	6	1,979
Section 65, <i>Land Act</i> 1890, and Section 103, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	*325	5,762
Section 106, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	1	5
Leases—Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1890 ... ..	1	10
Section 44, <i>Land Act</i> 1890-1898, and Section 49, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	6	16
Section 61, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and Section 56, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 (Residence) ... ..	15	2,948
Section 85, <i>Land Act</i> 1890, and Section 131, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	15	551
Section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and Section 35, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	336	132,964
Section 8, <i>Land Act</i> 1911 ... ..	31	4,819
Section 13, <i>Land Act</i> 1911 ... ..	4	512
Section 37, <i>Land Act</i> 1911 ... ..	7	1,195

\* Includes licences surrendered to enable holders to obtain concessions allowed by Land Acts.

*Land Act* 1901. Part 3.

## VILLAGE COMMUNITY LANDS.

The number of settlers who have completed their term of permissive occupancy and obtained their leases is 4, making a total of 2,546 leases issued since the commencement of the *Settlement on Lands Act* 1893.

During the year 10 transfers of Village Settlement leases have been registered making a total of 866 sanctioned to date. In every case the transferee has been a person eligible to become a Village Settler.

During the year 44 settlers have acquired Crown Grants of their holdings.

Monetary aid to the extent of £978 15s. 8d. was repaid during the year ; the total amount received to 30th June, 1915, being £42,494 16s. 11d.

The total amount advanced since the inception of the *Settlement on Lands Act* 1893 is £67,379 8s. 4d., as set forth hereunder:—

	£	s.	d.
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1894 ... ..	8,873	0	0
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1895 ... ..	27,189	12	6
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1896 ... ..	21,409	7	6
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1897 ... ..	6,527	17	4
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1898 ... ..	2,227	13	6
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1899 ... ..	830	11	0
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1900 ... ..	77	16	6
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1901 ... ..	109	10	0
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1902 ... ..	131	0	0
Total amount of monetary aid advanced for the year ended 30th June, 1903 ... ..	3	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>
	£67,379	8	4
	<hr/>	<hr/>	<hr/>

On reference to Appendix A, it will be seen that 759 settlers are actually residing, and that 101 are improving but non-resident, making a total of 860 in occupation. The number of souls, including wives and children, is 3,653.

## 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 financial year ended 30th June, 1915, 1,982 acres were sold for £27,105. Interest to the amount of £2,927 18s. 3d. was paid with the purchase money or instalments as they fell due.

The area of country lands sold at auction during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, was 962 acres, of which about 517 acres were improved, and 445 acres unimproved.

In consequence of several purchasers having failed to pay the instalments of their purchase money as they became due, as required by the conditions of sale, steps were taken during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, 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 474a. 0r. 6p. reverted to the Crown, and the instalments of purchase money and survey fees already paid thereon, amounting to £981 5s. 3d., were forfeited.

Table K shows the proceeds of sales by auction of country lands during each year from 1901. Similar particulars for each year from the commencement of the *Land Act* 1869 to the year 1891 inclusive will be found in the departmental Report for that year, and for the several subsequent years to 1900 inclusive in the departmental Report for 1903 :—

TABLE K.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1901—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	376	1	11	1,465	16	9	3	18	0
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 ... ..	760	0	15	1,843	14	8	2	8	6
Improved " ... ..	1,415	3	1	4,825	8	0	3	8	1
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	283	3	24	980	5	9	3	9	0
Improved " ... ..	837	0	9	3,415	14	0	4	1	7
1903—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	1,160	3	9	4,160	0	0	3	11	8
Improved " ... ..	2,949	3	20	18,572	18	5	6	6	0
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	431	3	2	1,058	19	4	2	9	0
Improved " ... ..	393	3	17	1,710	13	9	4	6	10
1904—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	779	0	1	1,558	9	9	2	0	0
Improved " ... ..	1,402	1	14	3,081	16	0	2	3	11
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	235	1	35	639	18	9	2	10	3
Improved " ... ..	737	0	0	940	15	3	1	5	6
1905—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	878	2	8	5,242	16	9	5	19	5
Improved " ... ..	599	0	24	1,508	13	7	2	10	4
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	816	3	14	3,569	13	0	4	7	4
Improved " ... ..	972	2	37	2,194	9	6	2	5	1
1906—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	869	0	33	1,816	16	8	2	2	0
Improved " ... ..	578	2	21	1,415	15	0	2	9	0
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	401	1	9	3,303	2	7	8	4	8
Improved " ... ..	211	0	26	718	4	10	3	8	0
1907—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	1,198	1	39	3,544	1	4	2	19	2
Improved " ... ..	895	2	38	10,212	18	1	11	8	0
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	469	2	9	1,666	10	6	3	11	0
Improved " ... ..	212	0	28	763	18	2	3	12	0
1908—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	734	0	39	3,728	7	3	5	1	6
Improved " ... ..	1,138	1	32	18,164	19	2	15	19	2
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	472	0	27	1,833	3	2	3	17	8
Improved " ... ..	460	1	25	1,861	14	3	4	0	10
1909—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	647	1	18	2,462	2	6	3	16	1
Improved " ... ..	483	3	25	4,963	0	7	10	5	1
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	1,245	3	18	4,782	4	0	3	16	9
Improved " ... ..	352	0	8	860	5	6	2	8	10
1910—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	695	1	24	3,926	11	5	5	12	11
Improved " ... ..	1,116	2	16	6,692	0	7	5	19	10
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	318	2	12	1,172	7	2	3	13	7
Improved " ... ..	338	0	35	3,520	15	5	10	8	2
1911—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land ... ..	408	2	9	1,294	2	9	3	3	5
Improved " ... ..	215	2	28	1,843	16	4	8	11	5
" 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land ... ..	356	3	23	1,427	13	11	4	0	0
Improved " ... ..	115	1	7	475	15	6	4	2	7

TABLE K—continued.

Year.	Area Sold.			Amount Realized.			Average per Acre.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1912—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	576	2	27	1,567	2	6	2	14	5
Improved „ .. .. .	328	1	32	1,178	17	1	3	11	10
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	199	3	4	732	14	8	3	13	3
Improved „ .. .. .	72	3	10	235	8	2	3	4	5
1913—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	233	2	15	806	8	7	3	9	2
Improved „ .. .. .	666	3	6	9,039	2	1	13	11	0
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	169	1	2	444	16	9	2	12	8
Improved „ .. .. .	126	1	35	490	18	5	3	17	11
1914—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	376	1	29	1,188	1	6	3	3	2
Improved „ .. .. .	117	2	36	459	15	9	3	17	11
„ 6 months ending 31st December—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	320	1	35	1,100	18	11	3	8	9
Improved „ .. .. .	168	2	8	341	8	4	2	0	7
1915—6 months ending 30th June—									
Unimproved land .. .. .	124	2	14	764	3	7	6	3	3
Improved „ .. .. .	347	2	39	783	17	0	2	0	6

Table L shows the alienation by auction, during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, of town and country lands, and the amounts derived therefrom:—

TABLE L.

Town Lands.			Country Lands.						
Area.		Amount.	Average per Acre.	Area.		Amount.	Average per Acre.		
A.	R.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	A.	R.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.		
1,020	0	38	24,114 7 8	23	12	9	961 1 16	2,990 7 10	3 2 3

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, Closer Settlement Lands of an aggregate area of 1,789a. 2r. 20p. were sold by auction for a total sum of £29,463 5s.

### III.—PASTORAL OCCUPATION.

The sum of £18,290 10s. 1d. was received during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, for licences under section 187 of the *Land Act* 1901.

### IV.—MALLEE.

The *Land Act* 1901, Part II. (as amended by the Land Acts 1904 and 1911), deals with about 11,354,571 acres of land, exclusive of Mildura (62,222 acres), in the north-western district of the State. In addition to the area of 11,354,571 acres, 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 period from 1st July, 1914, to 30th June, 1915, are as under:—

	No.	Area in Acres.
Leases issued or approved ...	210	132,297
{ Agricultural leases ...	4	2,640
{ Perpetual leases ...	285	179,960
{ Selection Purchase leases ...	36	19,974
Licences issued or approved ...	237	—
{ Agricultural allotments ...	28	—
{ Garden, Store, Grazing, &c. ...	250	174,631
Licences and perpetual leases cancelled for non-payment of rent, &c. ...	6	4,098
Leases transferred ...	36	—
{ Agricultural allotments ...	3,420	—
{ Perpetual leases ...		
Number of Local Land Boards held ...		
„ cases dealt with ...		

On 1st July, 1915, the areas available or held under lease and licence were as follow:—

	No.	Area in Acres.	
Available under section 187, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	...	806,538	
Available as agricultural allotments ... ..	...	162,117	
Areas held under section 187, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	201	4,868,746	
Allotments occupied under ...	{ Agricultural leases ... ..	5,581	3,393,536
	{ Perpetual leases ... ..	360	318,427
	{ Agricultural Licences ... ..	1,700	1,124,864
	{ Selection purchase leases ... ..	1,004	665,971

The revenue derived was as follows:—

Rents on perpetual leases ... ..	£	s.	d.
Rents on conditional purchase leases ... ..	284	18	4
Rents on agricultural allotments ... ..	872	9	8
Rents on selection purchase leases ... ..	35,776	4	9
Rents under section 187, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..	1,147	2	2
Valuation of improvements and cost of resumption ... ..	6,697	12	11
Interest on improvements and cost of resumption ... ..	801	15	10
Penalties and Fines ... ..	142	6	0
	695	5	4
Fees—	£	s.	d.
Application ... ..	125	0	0
Licence ... ..	35	0	0
Lease ... ..	420	0	0
Mortgage ... ..	30	0	0
Transfer ... ..	15	0	0
	625	0	0
Total ... ..	£47,042	15	0

Section 222, *Land Act* 1901, enables any licensee, at the expiration of licence, or on obtaining a lease, to demand and obtain a Crown grant at any time upon payment of the difference between the amount of rent actually paid and the balance due according to classification of land. The following Table shows the transactions during the period 1st July, 1914, to 30th June, 1915:—

Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.	Balance of Purchase Money Paid.
	Acres.	£ s. d.
90	39,770	12,291 9 6

Seventy holders of Mallee Agricultural Licences and Selection Purchase Leases were granted exemption from the residence condition during the continuance of the drought.

#### *Murray Settlements Act 1907.*

The irrigation settlements established under the *Murray Settlements Act* 1907 are those of Merbein and Nyah. The Nyah Settlement was to some extent evolved out of the old village settlement, and at first its progress was difficult and slow. Now, however, it is developing more satisfactorily, and gives promise of success, both soil and location being very favorable. Seventeen allotments are available for application.

Merbein is a much larger settlement, its position, contour of ground, and good character of soil are all elements in its favour, and with an effective water supply its development has been highly satisfactory. The progress of very many of the settlers is beyond expectation, and this whole settlement gives promise of being a conspicuous success.

During the year, by division of holdings and some cases of surrender of interest, the settlement has been further consolidated and the number of homes increased.

In the two settlements under notice the number of leases held is 449, comprising an aggregate area of 14,372 acres.

## V.—MISCELLANEOUS.

## SECTION 130, LAND ACT 1901.

Under section 130 of the *Land Act* 1901, three Conditional Purchase Leases were issued for 65 acres of swamp or reclaimed land at an annual rental of £31 15s. 4d.

## SECTION 146, LAND ACT 1901.

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 thereof for a period of five years and erected buildings or made other improvements thereon, credit being given for the amount of rent paid during the period of possession.

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, 112 applications under this section were granted for an area of 266 acres.

SECTION 147, LAND ACT 1901 (as amended by Section 16, *Land Act* 1904, and Section 9, *Land Act* 1905).

## BEE FARMS.

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, five applications were granted for an area of seven acres.

## SECTION 14, LAND ACT 1905.—BEE RANGE AREAS.

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, eight applications were granted in respect of an area of 9,229 acres.

## SECTION 154, LAND ACT 1901.—COMMONS.

Commons were diminished by proclamation to the extent of 3,035 acres, and six commons which were found to be no longer required were formally abolished.

## SECTION 164, LAND ACT 1901.—PENALTIES.

The amount of penalties, at the rate of Five shillings per acre, received during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, for non-improvement by lessees under the *Land Acts* of 1862 and 1865, and interest on rents in arrear, was £1,526 9s. 10d.

## SECTION 184, LAND ACT 1901.

In this section provision is made for the alienation of portions of land not exceeding 20 acres in extent at a price determined by appraisal. During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, 670 acres were ordered to be sold in this manner, the total purchase money being £2,983 13s.

## SECTION 193, LAND ACT 1901.—PUBLIC HEARINGS.

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, 358 sittings of Local Land Boards were held, at which applications for land and other business, comprising in all 6,292 subjects (including applications for mallee lands), were dealt with.

Thirty-nine cases were publicly heard by the Minister during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915.

## SECTIONS 344, 345, AND 346, LAND ACT 1901.

Any holder of a Conditional Purchase Lease under sections 344, 345, and 346 of the *Land Act* 1901 can acquire the fee-simple of the land after the expiration of six years from the issue of the lease, provided all the covenants and conditions thereof are complied with. Table M shows the transactions during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915:—

TABLE M.

Purchases Completed.	Area Purchased.			Balance of Purchase Money Paid.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
24	591	0	0	833	13	10



## THE LAND ACT 1911.—DIVISION 1.—PART 1.

Under this Division provision is made for the issue of Selection Purchase Leases (residential and non-residential) of selection purchase allotments.

Table N shows the transactions under sections 8 and 13 during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915 :—

TABLE N.

Land Act 1911.	Number of Applications Approved.	Area Leased.	Annual Rental.		
		acres.	£	s.	d.
Section 8 (Residential) ...	703	96,525	3,672	0	4
„ 13 (Non-residential) ...	52	10,667	297	8	8
Total	755	107,192	3,969	9	0

## SPECIAL SETTLEMENT AREAS.

## SECTION 37, LAND ACT 1911.

During the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, seventy-five Conditional Purchase Leases were issued for 10,918 acres at an annual rental of £1,290 5s. 8d.

## CROWN GRANTS AND LEASES.

Two thousand four hundred and ninety-four Crown grants and 2,437 leases were prepared and passed from the head office during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915.

## FEES AND CERTIFICATES.

The sum of £11,234 3s. 2d. was received during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915, for certificates and transfers under the Land Acts, and for miscellaneous fees, including those payable for grants, leases, and survey charges.

## REVENUE.

Table O shows in detail the revenue contributed by the Department to the Treasury during the financial year ended 30th June, 1915 :—

TABLE O.

<i>Temporary Occupation.</i>				£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.			
Rents under section 29, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, section 35, <i>Land Act</i> 1901, and section 187, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..				28,834	17	3						
Rents under section 47, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, Divisions 6 and 8, of Part I., <i>Land Acts</i> 1890–1901, permits under section 318, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..				32,175	9	0						
Perpetual Leases, section 80, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, and section 63, <i>Land Act</i> 1901, and Auriferous Licences ... ..							61,010	6	3			
<i>Alienated in Fee simple by Auction and Deferred Payments, also Rents received towards Alienation.</i> A. R. P.												
By auction—Town land ... ..	1,020	0	38	*33,652	18	3						
„ Country land ... ..	961	1	16									
Sundry payments on account of purchase in fee simple ... ..				3,684	8	9						
Rents under sections 42 and 49, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890–1898, section 59, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, sections 47, 50, 54, and 106, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..				86,581	11	10						
Rents and balances of purchase money under section 20, <i>Land Act</i> 1869, section 11, <i>Land Act</i> 1878, section 44, <i>Land Acts</i> 1890–1898, section 61, <i>Land Act</i> 1898, sections 49 and 56, <i>Land Act</i> 1901, and sections 8 and 13, <i>Land Act</i> 1911... ..												
Rents and balances of purchase money under sections 5–10 and 20–24, <i>Settlement on Lands Act</i> 1893, and sections 318–322, 332–335, 344, 345, and 346, <i>Land Act</i> 1901 ... ..										123,918	18	10
Penalties under section 164, <i>Land Act</i> 1901, and interest ... ..				1,526	9	10						
Fees for grants, leases, licences, surveys, &c. ... ..				11,234	3	2						
Sale of plans and sundries ... ..				11,080	4	4						
							23,840	17	4			
Total Revenue ... ..							208,770	2	5			

\*This item includes interest £2,927 18s. 3d., and instalments on account of some sales.

## SPECIAL VOTES.

The Marram Grass Vote of £1,250 was expended partly under the direction of the Department, and partly through the Municipal Councils and local committees controlling marine frontages. A limited supply was introduced into the northern country to arrest sand drift on public roads. This planting has proved a most effective means of preventing the destruction of both Crown and private land by the encroachment of sand, and the expenditure involved, over a series of years, has resulted in the planting of several thousands of acres along the coast line.

## MELBOURNE BOTANIC GARDENS.

On the Botanic Gardens the expenditure for the year was £9,039. These Gardens are well maintained and have reached a very high standard of merit. As a favorite resort they are becoming increasingly popular, and the complete classification and good system of labelling give them an educational importance worthy of special note. By world-wide travellers they are ranked amongst the foremost Gardens of the world. The Curator's detailed report is appended.

## PARKS AND GARDENS VOTE.

A sum of £5,500, voted by Parliament for the improvement of Parks and Gardens, was distributed through the Municipal Councils and Committees of Management. Part of the grant was allocated on a *pro rata* basis on the improvements effected at local expense, and in other cases grants were made conditional on the local expenditure of £1 for £1. There can be no doubt that this latter method stimulates local effort and produces good results.

For the maintenance and improvement of the metropolitan and suburban Parks and Gardens the grant amounted to £4,742, and Governmental representation on the Committees of Management provides for a joint control in the expenditure of this money.

The National Park at Wilson's Promontory, of about 100,000 acres, is being gradually stocked with native animal and bird life, and is under the control of a very representative Committee of Management. For this work a grant of £500 was given.

## TOURIST RESORTS.

An Inter-departmental Committee, representing the Departments of Lands, Works, and Railways, dealt with the grant for the opening up of places of beauty. This grant was on the estimates of the Public Works Department. An amount of £3,981 was allocated during the financial year. Some of the more important works were carried out by the Public Works Department, as at Mount Buffalo; Marysville District; Warburton to Healesville, *via* Mount Donna Buang; and the Grampians. These, with the Buchan Caves, are some of the most important resorts, and the Committee has given special attention to them as the best means of encouraging tourist traffic.

Victoria possesses many places of scenic beauty, and during the few years in which State money has been provided a great deal has been done, but more money is needed, and also more organized effort to encourage tourists to travel within our own State rather than seek their enjoyment elsewhere.

An interesting set of folder maps with notes for tourists has been published by the Department, and are available free of charge at the Tourist Bureau. The Bureau, controlled and maintained by the Railway Department, is doing good work and is the medium of circulating much information regarding our places of resort.

## BUCHAN CAVES.

These interesting features were further opened up, and their development has been carried on to such an extent that two or three days can now be well occupied in exploring the chambers and passages, so full of marvellous formations of exquisite beauty. Every year the Caves are becoming increasingly attractive to visitors. The total admissions for the year numbered 1,787, and with the opening of the railway line to Nowa Nowa the journey to the Caves will be much facilitated. Near the Township of Buchan, and all within the Caves Reserve, are the Fairy, Blackwood, Royal, and Moon Caves, while the Murrindal and Lilly Pilly, 8 miles distant, furnish a fine objective for an interesting trip for visitors.

## EXPEDITIONARY FORCES.

This year's report must contain the added record of the "Honour Roll" of officers who have given their services to King and Country, and for defence of Empire :—

L. E. Trawin, Clerk.	R. D. Howells, Clerk
J. P. Cormack, do.	F. J. Whitfield, do.
R. H. Berry, do.	E. H. Bugg, Gardener
N. H. Gibson, do.	A. W. Bugg, do.
J. J. Walshe, do.	L. G. Robertson, Garden Labourer
F. P. Mountjoy, do.	E. L. Iredale, Pupil Surveyor.
J. D. Jageurs, do.	J. A. Gray, do.
J. A. Mahoney, do.	S. A. Glover, Shorthand and Typewriter.
W. T. Long, do.	W. H. L. McDonald, Draughtsman.
C. C. Burge, do.	
B. O. T. Gibbs, do.	

One of the number—Mr. J. P. Cormack—who took part in the memorable landing of Australian troops at Gallipoli, died of wounds received in action, and Messrs. Trawin, Berry, and Iredale have been reported as wounded in action.

A large addition to this roll has been made subsequent to 30th June, 1915, but these names cannot be here included.

In closing my report, I have to acknowledge the excellent service rendered by the staff generally. The loss of officers due to enlistment, and the urgent and exceptional work which had to be performed in connexion with the drought relief work, and seed and fodder advance, imposed a task on the remaining staff which was cheerfully undertaken and effectively accomplished.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. M. REED,

Secretary for Lands.



## APPENDIX A.

Name of Settlement.	Total Number of Settlers residing.	Number of Children.	Number of Settlers not residing, but improving.	Total Number of Souls residing.	Area Cultivated.	Total Value of Live Stock.			Total Value of Improvements.			Area occupied (in Acres).
						£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	
Arapiles ... ..	6	25	—	31	100	60	0	0	656	0	0	224
Bairnsdale (Eagle Point) ... ..	5	14	—	19	20	120	0	0	350	0	0	57
Bairnsdale (Raymond Island) ... ..	22	55	5	82	22	292	0	0	3,270	0	0	727
Balnarring ... ..	4	5	—	13	60	80	0	0	1,800	0	0	103
Barmah ... ..	7	32	2	48	36	350	0	0	670	0	0	125
Beenak ... ..	4	9	—	22	44	380	0	0	1,700	0	0	176
Blackwood and Trentham ... ..	15	10	—	24	98	120	0	0	2,000	0	0	329
Bullarto (Lyonville) ... ..	9	28	1	42	96	221	0	0	1,565	0	0	287
Bullarto (Section B) ... ..	4	11	—	20	33	520	0	0	785	0	0	79
Bumberrah (Swan Reach) ... ..	2	4	—	9	2	30	0	0	230	0	0	17
Bunbartha ... ..	2	3	2	6	28	65	0	0	339	0	0	73
Bundalong ... ..	2	11	—	15	15	6	0	0	127	0	0	119
Colbinabbin ... ..	4	14	—	21	27	25	0	0	260	0	0	84
Coleraine ... ..	8	26	1	38	14	250	0	0	1,825	0	0	143
Coliban ... ..	11	16	1	35	123	173	0	0	2,145	0	0	268
Condah Swamp ... ..	90	470	12	443	682	8,189	0	0	10,252	0	0	877
Cooma ... ..	6	15	—	24	43	300	0	0	850	0	0	26
Coongulmerang ... ..	2	8	—	12	4	90	0	0	38	0	0	100
Coongulmerang and Wuk Wuk ... ..	4	12	—	16	13	60	0	0	800	0	0	27
Corop ... ..	4	16	1	20	70	260	0	0	860	0	0	52
Darlimurla ... ..	2	4	—	5	2	45	0	0	270	0	0	46
Darnum (Mizpah) ... ..	3	—	—	3	10	20	0	0	500	0	0	190
Dimboola and Wail ... ..	14	58	—	72	711	1,509	0	0	4,175	0	0	430
Drouin (Township) ... ..	7	11	—	23	61	197	0	0	1,680	0	0	168
Drouin West ... ..	6	20	—	31	100	380	0	0	1,800	0	0	321
Echuca North ... ..	15	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	287
Egerton ... ..	9	20	3	34	480	1,092	0	0	3,118	0	0	948
French Island ... ..	11	12	3	32	235	578	0	0	1,305	0	0	650
Fumina ... ..	3	7	—	10	27	133	0	0	918	0	0	183
Ganoo Ganoo ... ..	8	24	—	38	25	350	0	0	1,200	0	0	91
Gracedale ... ..	11	31	2	46	36	480	0	0	2,196	0	0	181
Kamarooka ... ..	7	20	9	34	767	852	0	0	2,645	0	0	1,303
Kaniva ... ..	12	44	1	57	140	800	0	0	1,130	0	0	185
Katamatite ... ..	9	24	1	35	163	185	0	0	1,309	0	0	289
Kialla ... ..	12	32	—	44	30	250	0	0	734	0	0	152
Kiata (Salisbury) ... ..	—	—	3	—	28	—	—	—	90	0	0	32
Kinglake ... ..	1	—	—	2	20	23	0	0	350	0	0	40
Koonoomoo ... ..	23	53	6	92	490	1,810	0	0	5,700	0	0	726
Koo-wee-rup ... ..	141	750	—	1,405	2,600	8,000	0	0	26,000	0	0	4,070
Korumburra ... ..	9	35	—	53	52	581	0	0	3,738	0	0	294
Korumburra (Strezlecki) ... ..	4	4	—	10	8	293	0	0	919	0	0	78
Linton ... ..	7	13	2	27	84	166	0	0	1,916	0	0	389
Macedon and Woodend ... ..	8	18	—	35	56	165	0	0	1,321	0	0	192
Mardan ... ..	4	16	4	20	22	620	0	0	1,265	0	0	57
Marungi ... ..	2	6	—	8	12	30	0	0	210	0	0	52
Meeniyah ... ..	12	21	2	47	77	312	0	0	1,675	0	0	433
Miepoll ... ..	2	2	—	6	16	180	0	0	328	0	0	26
Mirboo North ... ..	3	2	—	5	3	50	0	0	300	0	0	99
Mirboo South ... ..	1	—	—	2	1	20	0	0	290	0	0	49
Moe (Childers) ... ..	4	9	—	16	44	334	0	0	803	0	0	49
Moe Swamp ... ..	6	30	—	42	200	2,000	0	0	3,500	0	0	211
Monbulk ... ..	20	38	1	69	198	590	0	0	6,023	0	0	445
Mooroolbark ... ..	9	37	2	58	95	400	0	0	3,560	0	0	140
Muckatah ... ..	6	18	1	26	99	107	0	0	650	0	0	189
Murrabit West ... ..	7	4	—	18	147	952	0	0	1,720	0	0	172
Neerim and Jindivick ... ..	7	14	—	21	60	230	0	0	1,000	0	0	433
Neerim North ... ..	4	3	—	7	40	200	0	0	1,000	0	0	102
Neerim East ... ..	9	14	—	24	65	250	0	0	920	0	0	438
Newham ... ..	5	21	1	30	44	177	0	0	731	0	0	95
Rosedale ... ..	10	30	8	40	50	150	0	0	1,600	0	0	280
Sale ... ..	12	22	24	40	60	200	0	0	1,500	0	0	130
Sarsfield ... ..	2	10	—	12	10	125	0	0	316	0	0	13
Scoresby ... ..	6	22	—	32	45	270	0	0	2,600	0	0	61
Shepparton ... ..	12	32	2	46	50	500	0	0	3,900	0	0	157
Tarrawarra ... ..	1	—	—	2	3	15	0	0	268	0	0	19
Tarwin ... ..	3	5	—	9	16	140	0	0	476	0	0	200

## APPENDIX A—continued.

Name of Settlement.	Total Number of Settlers residing.	Number of Children.	Number of Settlers not residing, but improving.	Total Number of Souls residing.	Area Cultivated.	Total Value of Live Stock.			Total Value of Improvements.			Area occupied (in Acres).
						Acres.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	
Tatong (Kilfeera Swamp) ...	5	13	—	23	46	485	0	0	956	0	0	121
Tonimbuk East ...	8	10	—	26	60	300	0	0	2,500	0	0	284
Toolamba ...	6	18	—	24	30	400	0	0	820	0	0	69
Tyntynder (Mallee) ...	2	7	—	15	198	500	0	0	634	0	0	411
Wallan Wallan ...	7	19	—	33	60	90	0	0	1,400	0	0	273
Wanalta ...	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	57	0	0	20
Warburton ...	36	115	—	151	480	1,800	0	0	8,600	0	0	350
Yalca ...	4	7	—	11	36	186	0	0	450	0	0	28
Yarragon ...	13	65	—	91	200	900	0	0	900	0	0	347
Totals ..	759	2,574	101	3,653	10,132	42,013	0	0	144,490	0	0	20,861

## APPENDIX B.

Department of Lands and Survey,  
Melbourne, 28th September, 1915.

The Honorable  
The Commissioner of Crown Lands and Survey.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit herewith my report on the operations of the Survey Branch of the Department for the financial year which ended on 30th June last.

Owing to the abnormal conditions resulting from the drought, field operations over the greater part of the State were much hampered during the period under review; to such an extent was this the case in certain localities, that parties had to be withdrawn from pioneering surveys, and also from subdivisional work. However, notwithstanding these adverse circumstances, progress in settlement surveys has been satisfactory, though the total acreage dealt with is somewhat less than last year.

## MALLEE LANDS SURVEYS.

During the year an area of 164,000 acres in 235 allotments has been surveyed, and for such subdivisions as were made available there has been a fair demand.

The land is all capable of being watered, and is also within practical carting distance of railway stations; the essentials of railway communication and water supply being necessarily governing factors in the settlement of these northern lands.

The survey of new townships has been continued at local centres, and subdivisions have been made at Nandaly—the terminus of the Sea Lake extension—and at Woorinen and Miralie, on the Swan Hill to Piangil line, which was opened for traffic during the year.

The extension of the line northerly from Nandaly to Kulwyne has been authorized, and its construction will give access to a considerable area suitable for wheat growing.

Subdivisional surveys have been carried out during the year north of and adjoining the existing settlement along this line to a point several miles beyond the proposed terminus, which is situated on the main through road from Onyen to Manangatang.

Subdivision of the land to be served by the suggested extension from Manangatang towards Euston has also been made as far north as may be considered a practical carting distance from the present terminus at Manangatang.

The country north of these subdivisions is now being featured to obtain the information necessary for its settlement at a later period when railway facilities are provided.

Exploratory surveys have also been carried out northwards from the settled lands at Nypo towards Pine Plains to ascertain the nature of the country and its capabilities for settlement in view of the proposal, which is now before the Railways Standing Committee, to extend the Rainbow—Yaapeet line northerly.

## LANDS OTHER THAN MALLEE.

Of land, other than Mallee, 118,000 acres have been surveyed in 1,664 allotments. This comprised grazing area leases, new selections, auriferous areas, garden licence blocks, a further subdivision of Portland heath land, and excisions from State forests under the provisions of the Forests Act of 1907.

With the exception of Eastern Gippsland, where inquiry for land has again been very limited, areas made available have met with a ready demand.

The survey of new townships has been completed at Bamawm and Colbinabbin.

## CLOSER SETTLEMENT SURVEYS.

The following irrigation areas were subdivided during the year:—

	Allotments.	Acres.
Tongala ... ..	6	208
Tyntynder (Burton's) ... ..	44	1,365
Kyabram and Girgarre (McDonald's) ... ..	97	2,740
Girgarre (Robgill) ... ..	43	2,392
Girgarre (Stanhope) ... ..	88	4,478
Miscellaneous ... ..	4	292
Total ... ..	282	11,555

## DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES.

During the year the printers attached to the Lithographic Branch were transferred to the Government Printer's Staff.

## DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

The District Surveyors have been fully employed during the year in supervising the work of the Contract Surveyors in their respective districts, and in reporting upon and classifying land to be made available for selection.

## STAFF SURVEYORS.

The departmental staff has been engaged on the work of township and selection subdivision, road deviations in Gippsland, and road and feature surveys in back country in advance of settlement. Three have been employed in the Mallee country in featuring land and locating roads and reserves prior to subdivision. Two have been employed in Gippsland, chiefly on road surveys. Two have worked from head office on road, subdivision, and general settlement work, and one has been engaged in featuring and subdividing heath lands west of Portland.

## PUPIL DRAUGHTSMEN AND SURVEYORS.

During the year two of the pupils completed their course of training. Three pupils are obtaining field experience under Staff Surveyors.

## ROLL OF HONOUR.

In response to the Empire's call, six of the field staff joined the Expeditionary Military Forces, the names and positions being as follow:—

E. L. Iredale	...	...	...	...	...	Pupil Surveyor
J. A. Gray	...	...	...	...	...	"Chainman"
H. R. Stafford	...	...	...	...	...	"
T. M. Hall	...	...	...	...	...	"
W. Olive	...	...	...	...	...	Foreman
G. Coleman	...	...	...	...	...	"

## CONTRACT SURVEYS.

The greater part of the settlement surveys of the State is, as formerly, carried out by surveyors who hold assigned districts. Twenty-seven surveyors have been so employed during the year.

The following summary gives the expenditure on surveys (including cost of the work of Staff Surveyors):—

	£	s.	d.
Main road surveys	3,145	19	1
Mallee subdivisions	3,133	17	3
Feature surveys	2,515	1	3
Subdivision of land for sale	1,253	8	4
Selection surveys (departmental)	2,311	17	0
Balance of fees on selection surveys (to be repaid in instalments by applicants)	385	17	6
Check surveys and connexion lines	343	10	8
Re-surveys for sale, selection, &c.	159	14	10
Reserves and other sites	666	1	1
Miscellaneous surveys	620	8	1
	£14,535	15	1
Trust Fund fees collected from applicants	5,333	17	3
	£19,869	12	4
Amount collected and deposited in Trust Fund Account	£8,199	5	6
Payments made to Authorized Surveyors	£12,107	19	8
Amount of survey fees refunded to applicants	403	15	2
Amount of survey fees transferred to Revenue	3,882	2	11
	£16,393	17	9

## OFFICE STAFF.

*Computing and Adjusting Branch.*

In this Branch all Surveyors' plans are examined, compared with field notes, and computations checked.

The following were dealt with during the period under review:—

Plans of surveys of township and country subdivisions, road surveys, Closer Settlement surveys, allotments for sale, &c.	651
Plans of selection surveys	834
Certified plans prepared for leases and grants	2,860
Certificates of adjustment prepared	114

The Staff consisted of Officer in Charge and eight Draftsmen.

*Draughting Branch.*

Township and parish plans compiled, full scale	11
Township and parish plans revised and posted for new issues	91
Large record plans and tracings made	121
Plans of subdivisional surveys drawn from Surveyors' notes	87
Various tracings, chartings, and special plans	1,530
Certificates for Office of Titles	200
Certificated plans for certificate of Board of Land and Works	32
Technical descriptions prepared for proclamations, reservations, &c.	547
Diagrams on Crown grants and leases	4,010



## LITHOGRAPHIC BRANCH.

Coloured plans of lands made available for application, including Crown lands, Closer Settlement estates, Irrigation Settlements, &c., were printed and widely circulated throughout the State.

The usual supply of maps and plans for departmental use and for sale to the public was also printed. These comprised maps of the State, County sheets, Parish and Township plans. Half-scale Parish plans are now in great demand, particularly since the passing of the Federal and State Land Tax Acts. Tourist plans in large numbers were issued, and these are much appreciated by the travelling public.

The aggregate number of plans printed was about 149,000.

## ENGRAVER.

The work of the Engraver consisted of the revision and posting of Geodetic sheet J, south.

## PHOTOGRAPHIC WORK.

The work in this Branch has again been heavy on account of the amount of plan production undertaken for the Commonwealth, and for various State Departments.

The photographic transfers prepared numbered 570, and included all the various departmental maps, as well as a variety of drawings for other Departments.

The combined staff of Draughtsmen, Litho. Draughtsmen, Engraver, Photographers, and Plan Mounter, numbered 33.

For the Commonwealth and other State Departments work was executed representing a value as shown below :—

			£	s.	d.
Commonwealth Military, and Federal Capital maps ...	...	...	66	5	0
Public Works Department—Copying drawings ...	...	...	21	12	4
Country Roads Board ...	...	...	55	0	0
Sundries ...	...	...	1	10	0
			<hr/>		
Total ...	...	...	£144	7	4
			<hr/>		
Amount received as fees on certificates of adjustment was ...	...	...	£842	3	8
			<hr/>		
Amount received for sale of maps, plans, &c. ...	...	...	£448	7	5
			<hr/>		

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

A. B. LANG,  
Surveyor-General.

## APPENDIX C.

## VERMIN DESTRUCTION AND WIRE-NETTING ACTS.

The Secretary,

I have the honour to report as follows as to the above Acts for the financial year 1914-15:—

## RABBIT DESTRUCTION.

The following is the total expenditure for the financial year:—

	£	s.	d.
Votes. { Inspectors' Salaries, Wages, and Material ... ..	31,100	11	3
{ Fox and Wild Dog Subsidy ... ..	322	18	2
{ Expended on private lands (cost charged to owners) ...	15,384	12	5
Total ... ..	46,808	1	10

There were sixty-seven inspectors and an average of 265 men employed; but the latter cannot be definitely stated, as the employment of the men was generally intermittent as circumstances required, varying from one day to the whole year. It will be noted that, while the expenditure shows an amount of £46,808 1s. 10d., the actual vote was £31,423 9s. 5d. The difference of £15,384 12s. 5d. is that which has been compulsorily expended upon landowners in accordance with the powers of the Act, and which has to be repaid to the Crown. The amount of £15,954 13s. 2d. has been expended upon lands for which the Crown is responsible.

Great and continued success attended the operations for rabbit destruction despite the fact that, owing to the dry seasons, the rabbits have had a most favorable season for breeding on all the coastal areas, and country usually so wet that breeding is retarded.

The rabbit is not at all affected by drought in such country except in the inverse ratio to that of benefit to the State. No country in the southern areas ever gets so scant of feed that a rabbit cannot do well on it. Where ordinary stock can hardly exist it will thrive and breed vigorously. This has been specially noticeable in Gippsland, Beech Forest, or such like areas right up to the breaking of the drought. In the northern dry areas, of course, the season has been favorable to our work. It has been too dry there even for such a resourceful animal as "bunny," and full advantage has been taken of the position.

During the financial year 220 tons of carrots and apples, as compared with 140 tons last year, have been used with strychnine in poisoning, and the constant success of this method has been most marked and beneficial. I can only emphasize and repeat what I said in last year's report, that this method is *the* thing in rabbit destruction, and it is very gratifying to find that the number of converts to this system is continually on the increase. A feature in this connexion is the formation of a number of local rabbit leagues formed to work in conjunction with the inspectors. They are really vigilance committees, as shown by the following extract from the rules of many of them:—

It shall be the duty of members of the League and Committee to watch, search for and destroy all vermin on their holdings, to use every endeavour and influence to persuade all other landholders to do likewise, to see that all actions decided upon by the League are carried out in a proper manner; to report at once all cases of neglect to the Secretary, and to do all in their power to exterminate the rabbit pest.

Where these leagues work thoroughly in accord with the inspectors, their value is incalculable. This, I am glad to say, applies to almost all, but a few are inclined to take upon themselves functions that are for the Crown officer only. Of course, a divided authority cannot for a moment be entertained, and, in such cases, the inspectors are instructed to attend to their duties and ignore such interference. It is interesting to note that 25 leagues are going strongly in one inspector's district, 18 in another, 15 in another, and so on. In the last case mentioned, the first league was formed only in February last. Not only do the leagues do splendid work for themselves as well as help the inspectors, but they can club their funds and get material for poisoning at more reasonable rates. I am encouraging them in every possible way, and am constantly assisting in forming new leagues by having my officers attend meetings (often arranging them) and giving field demonstrations. Every one of these demonstrations has had marked success.

During the financial year only ten prosecutions, covering £24 in fines, occurred, as compared with an expenditure of £16,729 in enforcing the Act on private lands.

## FOXES AND WILD DOGS.

The falling off in the number of municipalities paying the bonus is still continuing. There were only 18 for the financial year as compared to 25 for the last, and the number of foxes has gone from 6,412 to 4,885. During the last 12 years there has been a steady fall, from 101 down to the present 18, in the municipalities that give the bonus. Personally I have no hesitation in stating I think very little of the system. The fox is kept down more because of the value of its skin than anything else; and a very significant fact in this connexion is that the districts of the councils which do not pay the bonus are certainly no worse infested than those that do.

Owing, however, to a great decrease in the value of fox skins, I anticipate there will be an increase in the present financial year (1915-16) of the quantity that will be taken to the councils, as the lower the market value the more the bonus will be availed of. The number of wild dogs is still decreasing, being 127 as compared to 148 the previous year.

A large number of certificates under the *Fences Act* 1908 have been issued to landholders who cannot otherwise get adjoining neighbours to bear half the cost of the wire-netting; and in no case has any appeal been made to the Hon. the Minister against the issue of the certificate.

WIRE-NETTING ACT 1909.

In the working of this Act, the inspectors are fully safeguarding the interests of the Crown in seeing that the rebate allowed by the Department has been justified by the proper erection of the netting in the place applied for. Hundreds of cases have been dealt with.

F. E. ALLAN,  
Chief Inspector, Vermin Destruction Act.

28th September, 1915.

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## APPENDIX D.

Botanic and Domain Gardens,  
Melbourne, 28th September, 1915.

The Secretary for Lands,  
Melbourne.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit my report relating to the Botanic Gardens, Domain, Treasury Gardens, and Studley Park for the year ended 30th June, 1915.

The staff was maintained at the recognised requisite standard generally throughout the year, with the exception that some of the officers have been and are still absent on military service.

During the year a new departure in the method of filling vacancies by promotion was inaugurated. For the promotion to vacant positions for gardeners, 1st and 2nd Grade, it was decided to hold an examination of officers to qualify for promotion to such positions. The examination, which consisted of both written and oral questions, was held on 3rd February, 1915. The results were that 4 officers obtained the required marks to qualify for 1st Grade, and 2 officers only the required marks to qualify for 2nd Grade gardener. A great benefit will, it is hoped, accrue to the staff by this new procedure, which it is anticipated will result in good to the gardens, both directly and indirectly. A class for the study of horticulture has already been formed among the officers, and demonstrations, lectures, and papers have already been given and read to the men by myself, the Assistant Curator, the Classifier, and other senior members of the staff.

The Botanic Gardens have been generally well maintained. A long dry summer season necessitated a great amount of labour and careful energy attending to watering arrangements. Notwithstanding extra shifts provided by the Public Works Department at the pumping station, it was evident throughout the summer that it is only by strictly conserving intact the present water supply to the gardens that they can be kept in proper condition during this season of the year.

Without interfering with the general design of the picturesque groupings and landscape effects in the gardens, displays of magnolias, azaleas, roses, cannas, camellias, dahlias, chrysanthemums, and other flowering plants have been made during their respective seasons at suitable spots in various parts of the gardens.

In addition to the general routine work, several important alterations and improvements have been carried out during the year. Hundreds of loads of top-dressing soil have been carted to and spread over the lawns. Many of the rockeries and mounds which have been showing signs of breaking down or being overgrown, in parts, have been repaired or reformed and planted with suitable plants. On the oak lawn, in addition to the collection of oak trees having been carefully gone over and a large amount of pruning and thinning done, some necessary alteration of the groups there have been effected.

On the edge of the lake, close to the Napoleon's willow tree, and also on the margin of the large group between the tea house and the lake, a large number of azaleas which were propagated here have been planted out. These, it is anticipated, will greatly improve and brighten in the flowering season the localities where they are planted.

A source of much anxiety during the year has been the growth of water weeds in the lake, which at times rendered the area very unsightly. Owing to the shallow depths of water the plants luxuriated there, and the attempt at their destruction has necessitated a large amount of labour. It is hoped, however, that by the use of a boat and motor driven weed-cutter, a loan of which has been obtained from the Committee of Management of Albert Park, the problem of the weed destruction in the lake here will be solved.

The Nymphæa lake was emptied of water in July, and the soil renewed in the mounds on which the lilies are planted. This resulted in a good display of blooms on the Nymphæas during the summer season. The lotus lily plants, however, were not so healthy, and did not bloom quite as abundantly as in the previous years. This was attributed to some deleterious substance having found its way to that portion of the lake in which the lily grows. A large number of the Japanese iris plants were also re-planted in suitable masses around the margin of this and the central lake, and made great displays of bloom during the season. These were favorably commented on by the visiting public.

The large area devoted to Australian plants, which extends for a distance of over half a mile around the western and southern boundaries of the garden, from the office gate to the reservoir, has been rendered increasingly attractive to visitors by the addition of a number of plants, and by the gradual removal of some of the larger and more unsightly and ill-shaped specimens. This plantation is much valued by visitors. Our own people appreciate the native plants, and the information contained on the labels, while those from abroad are interested to be able to study and note, in one area, the great variety and distinctive form and other characteristics of the Australian vegetation. The proof of the value of this plantation is to be found in the fact that numerous inquiries are made by letter, and personally at the office, from time to time, as to where Australian plants may be purchased. Nurserymen, too, are frequently intimating to me the receipt of orders for Australian plants. A large number of lovers of plants and amateur gardeners are able to judge by this means of the character of these plants, and are pleased to enrich their own garden collections with many of the more desirable Australian species.

A large number of newly introduced plants have been planted out about the grounds during the year, as well as thousands of others, for the floral embellishment of the gardens at the different seasons.

## CONSERVATORY AND PROPAGATING HOUSES.

The visitors to the Conservatory, which is open to the public from 2 to 4 p.m. every afternoon, including Sundays and holidays, have been numerous, and an interesting show of exotic plants there has been maintained. It is hoped to have the building painted and repaired during next year, a work which is very necessary. The orchid and other glasshouses and nurseries have been kept in good order during the year. Permits have been issued to a large number of interstate and other visitors to view the collections. A fine show of tuberous rooted and climbing begonias, in the Bush House at the Nursery, was made during March, April, and May. The propagation of new rare and stock plants has been carried out by the propagator and his staff.

The floor of the large conservatory at the nursery, which, when the building was being erected by the Public Works Department some years ago, was made quite level, has been altered considerably, and improved, enabling the work of watering and attending to the plants to be performed under much more favorable conditions.

A large number of donations of plants and seeds have been received from various sources during the year. The system of interchange, by which the collections here are maintained and increased, has been continued with good results. Exchanges with similar institutions in other States, New Zealand, Great Britain, Europe, America, South Africa, India, &c., as well as with private individuals interested in botany and horticulture, have been maintained during the year. The value of these will be seen when it is mentioned that of 933 packets of seeds donated to these gardens during the year 275 of them were of species new to the collections. The total number of packets of seeds despatched to correspondents abroad amounted to 679. By means of exchanges with plant lovers, and nurserymen too, interesting and valuable new plants are frequently added to the collections.

*Labelling.*—The system of labelling, which is of such a distinctive and educational value here, has been kept up during the year. In the renewal and additional labelling of plants over 7,000 tablets and labels were painted and written. Requests from other botanic and public gardens for information in regard to the character of our labels and system of labelling adopted here have been received from time to time, and have been complied with.

*Classification Pavilion.*—The collection of plants arranged in the Classification Pavilion for the use of students and others interested in botany has been increased by the addition of numerous species, with the object of maintaining and increasing the value of this important scientific feature of the Gardens.

The usual regular limited supplies of botanical specimens of cut flowers and foliage for the use of students has been made for the classes of botany at the University, Melbourne; the Working Men's College; College of Pharmacy; Education Department; and to the teachers of botany at various public colleges and institutions. In addition, specimens have been supplied for art painting and drawing purposes, from time to time, to various students and others engaged in such work. At times various classes (from Sloyd centres, educational colleges, the Workers' Educational Association of Victoria, scientific and horticultural societies, and other institutions have visited the Gardens during the year, in order to facilitate their members' studies.

By reason of the visit to Australia of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, in August, 1914, a large number of distinguished scientists and students visited the Gardens, and facilities were afforded for their inspecting the various places of interest to them here. On the occasion of the reception given to the Association in the Gardens on 18th August, 1914, the President, Professor Bateson, M.A., F.R.S., testified personally to me his appreciation of the value of the system of labelling he observed in the gardens, and stated that this materially increased the importance of the gardens from both an educational and pleasure stand-point.

At the meeting of the British Association in Melbourne a Research Committee was appointed for the chemical investigation of Natural Plant Products of Victoria. Mr. P. R. H. St. John, one of the officers here, who is well acquainted with our native plants, and myself, were invited, and agreed to act, as members of the committee. This committee has since been continuously making investigations in regard to the valuable products of many of our indigenous plants.

*The Museum of Economic Botany and Plant Products* continues to be attractive to visitors on Tuesday and Friday afternoons, when it is open to the public. At other times, by special permit, individuals and classes have been granted access for inspection, study, and other purposes.

Although the thefts of plants from the gardens are much rarer than in years past, the stealing of both valuable and economic and other plants is still noticeable from time to time, and necessitates vigilance on the part of employees and the watchman on duty.

The behaviour of visitors to the gardens generally is good, but annoyance is occasionally caused on Sunday afternoons by the misconduct of bands of young fellows who engage in ball and other play notwithstanding the efforts of watchmen to prevent same.

Several band performances for charitable purposes have been permitted during the year. The later ones have had a special significance, having been given on behalf of patriotic funds. It is considered that owing to the congestion of enormous crowds of people about the band-house and on the lawns in the immediate vicinity, where so comparatively limited an area is available for the traffic on such occasions, that it may be a question in the near future to provide for such performances to be given in a suitably-selected site in the more open area of the Domain, but adjacent to the Gardens.

Insect pests have been very abundant during the past season. Upon the small herbaceous plants, as well as on the roses, dahlias, chrysanthemums, and other florists' flowers, various shrubs and trees, and even up to the largest of the oak specimens, they have been very active, with injurious results to their hosts. Spraying with various specifics has had to be largely and carefully carried out, and good results, on the whole, have been achieved.

A large number of specimens, for identification here, have been regularly received, as well as inquiries made on such subjects as to the treatment of plants, the most suitable plants for certain districts, the planning and designing for public parks, gardens, reserves and private gardens, and for general information on horticultural and botanical subjects. These and other correspondence relating to exchanges from various parts of the world have been responsible for over 1,200 letters and communications having to be written and despatched during the year.

I have visited various horticultural societies in Melbourne and suburbs during the year, and have addressed the members on different phases of horticultural and gardening matters.

At the annual exhibitions and shows of two or three of the principal horticultural and kindred societies in Melbourne displays of plants and cut flowers have been made for the purposes of public information and education. I have had to refuse to comply with numerous requests for similar displays at suburban and even country societies' shows, as it is impossible to do so without involving a serious loss of material and labour.

In a report prepared for the Metropolitan Hospitals Board of Supplies, towards the close of last year, by the Chief Dispenser at the Melbourne Hospital, the possibilities of growing in Australia many of the exotic plants which possess important medicinal properties, and from which valuable drugs and medicines might be prepared, was called attention to in a striking manner. Newspaper articles subsequently appeared directing attention to the report and urging Government action in the matter. The outcome has been that the Government has appointed a Medicinal Plants Board of Victoria. At its first meeting, held on 21st May last, I was appointed chairman of a sub-committee chosen to consider the question of what medicinal plants could be readily and profitably grown in this State, and the best methods for their cultivation, as well as how to obtain those not already growing in the State. The matter is one of very great importance to the State and the Commonwealth, and I shall only be too glad to assist the Board in every possible way.

*The Domain.*—The ordinary work of maintenance has been carried out, and the place kept in as clean and tidy a park-like appearance as possible. The traffic, both pedestrian and vehicular, is very considerable. The asphalted paths have all been thoroughly repaired and the seats all newly painted during the year.

It having been decided by the Public Works Department to pull down the remaining building of what was formerly known as the Observatory Official Quarters, situated between the National Herbarium and St. Kilda-road, a request was made and approved for its re-erection near to the stables building in the Domain, as a residence for the senior carter.

*Treasury Gardens.*—A very much needed alteration and improvement has, in part, been carried out at the north-west corner of the gardens. The pathway leading from the main path along the northern side of the gardens, to the exit opposite Little Flinders-street, has been altered, regraded, asphalted, and drained, and some hundreds of loads of filling material and earth placed on the adjacent area.

The Japanese Garden and other parts of the area have been generally well maintained. The question of providing a suitable barrier to prevent the formation of tracks caused by the public making short cuts to various spots is under consideration. When the matter has been finally determined I hope to be able to improve the present unsightly appearance of the Spring-street and other frontages to these gardens.

By the exercise of economy a sum of about £650 was saved out of the total vote for the year for the Botanic and Domain Gardens of £9,689.

The total amount of £877 voted for salaries and for the maintenance and improvement of the Treasury Gardens and Studley Park was nearly all expended during the year.

J. CRONIN.