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1895.

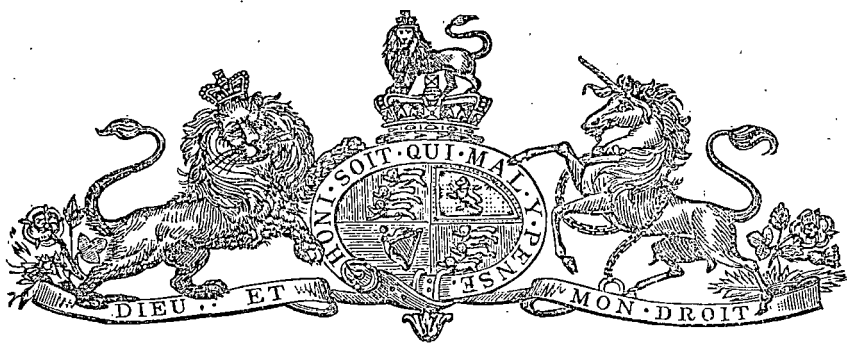
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS :

REPORT OF SURVEYOR-GENERAL AND SECRETARY FOR
LANDS FOR 1894.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

Cost of printing—£11 11s.



Department of Lands and Surveys, 10th July, 1895.

SIR,
I HAVE the honor to submit to you the following Report on the operation of the Department of Lands and Surveys for the twelve months ending June 30th, 1895.

REVENUE.

The estimate of revenue made in this Office in July last for the year 1894 was £30,000, and the amount actually received was £34,885, showing an increase of receipts over estimate of £4885—such increase being mainly due to the arrears of land instalments collected during the latter half of the year. The revenue collected for the six months ending June 30th, 1895, is £19,584, and amount estimated for the whole year is £36,000. The total must necessarily be affected by the postponement of instalments on credit purchases, and is taken into account accordingly.

LANDS.

During the year which closed on June 30th ult. the Crown lands purchased, leased for pastoral purposes, and occupied under yearly licences have been dealt with under "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," the Amendment Acts of 1893 and 1894 respectively, and "The Residence Areas Acts, 1891 and 1893." "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," being repealed by "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," except in regard to any transactions pending thereunder at the time of its repeal, only 14 lots, containing 1006 acres, have been selected by virtue of its provisions; but 113 lots, containing an area of 7081 acres, have been selected under "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," as against 245, containing 12,891 acres, for the previous 12 months. Under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," which came into operation on November 14th of that year, 309 selections have been made, extending over an area of 12,827 acres, or an average of 40 acres each. The total number of lots selected, and upon which deposits have been paid into the Treasury during the year, is 436, comprising an area of 20,915 acres; and the number of lots for the previous year is 286, containing 15,595 acres,—showing an increase for the year just ended of 5320 acres, in 150 selections. These increases, especially in regard to the smaller areas, are encouraging, as indicating that good agricultural lands are in growing demand by *bonâ fide* settlers. This view is fully corroborated by the following comparative statement of one year's operations under "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," and the amended Act, 1893.

COMPARATIVE Statement of Selections under Crown Lands Act, 1890, and Crown Lands Amended Act, 1893, from 30th June, 1894, to 30th June, 1895.

	Crown Lands Act, 1890.					Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893.				
	No. of Applications received.	Total Area applied for.	No. of Applications on which Survey Fee paid.	Area on which Survey Fee paid.	Amount of Survey Fees paid by Applicants.	No. of Applications received.	Total Area applied for.	No. of Applications on which Survey Fee paid.	Area on which Survey Fee paid.	Amount of Survey Fees paid by Applicants.
	No.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	£ s. d.	No.	Acres.	No.	Acres.	£ s. d.
Buckingham ...	33	3499	11	386	60 5 0	87	3207	27	846	88 0 0
Cornwall.....	24	1047	10	243	42 5 0	22	862	5	205	18 10 0
Cumberland ...	11	388	4	146	23 0 0	1	20	1	20	4 0 0
Devon.....	59	6078	8	292	43 10 0	92	3853	23	925	77 10 0
Dorset.....	47	3054	15	727	92 0 0	47	1851	11	426	41 0 0
Glamorgan.....	1	90	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	8	375	4	175	7 0 0
Kent.....	10	1191	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	33	1844	14	1030	66 0 0
Lincoln.....	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	50	1	50	6 5 0
Monmouth.....	17	1072	10	535	67 15 0	13	418	4	89	14 7 6
Pembroke.....	23	1411	10	295	45 10 0	25	972	9	290	20 2 6
Somerset.....	1	50	1	50	6 5 0	2	100	1	50	6 5 0
Wellington.....	36	3352	10	950	88 10 0	29	1294	7	325	31 1 0
Flinders Island...	4	90	1	20	4 0 0	11	445	9	345	14 5 0
King's Island...	4	604	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	1	50	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Westmorland...	11	951	3	307	31 5 0	10	373	2	40	5 0 0
TOTAL.....	281	22,877	83	3951	504 5 0	382	15,714	118	4816	399 6 0

MINING RESERVES.

Reference was made in a former report to the very large proportion (or about one-half) of the Crown lands of the Colony being withdrawn from agricultural selection in the interest of the mining industry. During the year 353,670 acres of the mining reserves have been thrown open under the provisions of Part IV. of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," extending to 13 districts of the Colony. The principal areas are in the Counties of Dorset and Montagu,—being respectively 268,700 acres and 43,000 acres. Of this area 7125 acres have been applied for in selections not exceeding 100 acres each.

LAND LEGISLATION.

The greater proportion of the annual instalments paid into the Treasury are still placed to the credit of selections under "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," 34 Vict. No. 10. The three principal features of this Act were—(1), free selection at £1 per acre, with $\frac{1}{3}$ added by way of premium for credit; (2), deferred payments extending over a period of 14 years; and (3), the disposal of one-half the purchase money upon the construction of roads and bridges. The object of the measure was to encourage an industrious class of people without capital to make homes for themselves on the heavily timbered agricultural Crown lands of the Colony. It gave the right to every adult of selecting a maximum area of 320 acres, and provided for residence thereon by *the selector, tenant, or servant*, until the land was paid for. Experience has shown that the yearly payment upon a 320-acre block of land was more than the ordinary settler could compass; and, as the residential clauses of the Act were never enforced, the liberal provisions it contained were only partially successful. Recognising the failure of the Act of 1870 and amendments thereof to secure *bonâ fide* settlement in proportion to the area selected, it was repealed by the Consolidated Crown Lands Act of 1890, after being in operation for 20 years. The points of difference between the Acts of 1870 and 1890 in regard to ordinary selection were, that the latter measure rendered it compulsory for every individual selector or *a member of his family* to "habitually" reside on his allotment until the whole of the purchase money was paid, and to effect substantial improvements thereon to the value of 2s. 6d. an acre per year for eight consecutive years from the signing of the contract before a grant deed could be issued for such allotment. There can be no doubt that this Act has gone further towards insuring *bonâ fide* settlement on the land than any Act that has preceded it; and yet, in some instances, it has been evaded.

It has been held for some years that settlement in the agricultural districts was being seriously impeded by land speculations, and in 1893 I was instructed to make a general report upon the land system of the Colony, with a view to ascertaining what proportion of credit lands were being improved in accordance with the requirements of the Act under which they had been selected, and to make suggestions for future legislation. Special reports were obtained from the various District Surveyors, which, although not absolutely accurate, being in some cases made without actual inspection of the lands reported upon, showed conclusively that there were some 1200 lots, comprising an area of over 130,000 acres, throughout the Island lying in an untenanted, unimproved, and therefore unproductive condition, and seriously in arrears with instalments, whilst large sums of public money had been expended in the construction of roads, bridges, &c. for the benefit of selectors, many of whom were not residing on their allotments. Realising, for the first time in the history of the Colony, the position of affairs in regard to settlement and selection, notices were forthwith issued to selectors calling upon them to take immediate steps to comply with the conditions of their purchases, but with little result. In the meantime the prevailing depression had set in, and on looking into the case it was at once apparent that a rigid enforcement of the provisions of the Land Act would inflict very severe hardship upon a large proportion of selectors, and in many cases absolutely deprive poor, industrious, and deserving people of their homes. The Legislature was again appealed to, and the result was the passing of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act" of 1894, 58 Vict. No. 13. This Act contained two enabling clauses, which authorised the Governor in Council to postpone the payment of any instalment for a period not exceeding 5 years, on the payment of interest thereon at the rate of £5 per cent. per annum, or to offer to the selector, on certain conditions, the alternative proposal of transferring the instalments paid on the whole to the purchase of any portion thereof, not being less than one-half the allotment.

ADMINISTRATION.

The administration of the Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1894, with a reduced staff, and the obvious difficulties surrounding the position, was a serious and, in the opinion of persons possessing an intimate knowledge on the subject, an impracticable undertaking, consequent on the enormous amount of additional work which it threw upon the office. This Act, under which I was appointed to the charge of the Lands Department with that of the Surveys combined, came into operation in August last; and the amount of £47,600, which was on the books of the office as arrears of instalments and *unprovided for* on 30th June preceding, was reduced to the small total of £12,000 on the 31st May, 1895. It will, I think, be a matter for congratulation that such results could be obtained during the first 10 months' operations.

That a large proportion of selected lands would be forfeited to the Crown for non-payment of instalments was inevitable under the circumstances, and that the risk of forfeiting allotments

that were being resided upon and improved in a *bonâ fide* manner was equally unavoidable, but in no case was action taken to default until at least four notices of the Commissioner's intention to so default had been issued to every individual selector, and in no single instance was any allotment forfeited where the selector made any offer of an arrangement to meet his liabilities. In regard to those who by their neglect have allowed their lands to be forfeited which they were honestly endeavouring to improve in accordance with the requirements of the Land Act, their cases will be submitted for consideration with a view to their being reinstated under special enactment: up to the present I am only aware of 30 such cases.

An analysis of the Return marked 1 in Appendix A. attached to this Report, shows that 1049 lots, comprising an area of 55,570 acres, have reverted to the Crown by forfeiture for non-payment of instalments, and that arrears thereof amounting to £16,832 10s. 5d. were written off the books of the office up to 31st December, 1894. These lands are generally situated in more favoured localities than other agricultural Crown lands, and are being steadily re-applied for. Return No. 2 forms a statement of monthly postponements of instalments at interest under the provisions of Sections 5 and 6 of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1894," from the date of its coming into operation to 30th June, 1895. The total area upon which payments have been postponed (for various periods not exceeding one year) is 113,265 acres, and the total amount of the purchase money due thereon is £24,584 4s. 11d., upon which the interest paid amounts to £691 8s. 2d. Nineteen persons have availed themselves of the provisions of Section 10 of the Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1894, by which the instalments paid on any selection may be transferred to the purchase of any portion not being less than one-half of the original allotment. The area so purchased is 1406½ acres. On May 31st of this year there were held upon credit throughout Tasmania 5671 allotments, containing an aggregate area of 316,325 acres.

AGRICULTURE.

Reference is frequently made to agriculture as being in a languishing condition, and I regret to say that under the low prices ruling for produce agriculturists are passing through a trying period, but only in common with those engaged in other pursuits. To those, however, acquainted with the subject, it is apparent that one of the main factors which operates against the profitable development of this all-important and national industry is the comparatively large holdings which prevail. Especially is this the case in the older settled districts, which have been provided with convenient railway communication to populous centres. Thus a large proportion of the richest agricultural lands of the Colony is locked up in sheep or cattle runs, and barely producing any return to the proprietors, whilst there is a surplus of labour everywhere, and the industrious settler, who could and would turn such lands to fruitful account if available to him on reasonable terms, is driven into the rougher back country to carve out a home for himself in the primeval forest. And the question suggests itself for consideration whether a re-purchase of alienated lands would not prove a remunerative investment to the State and a permanent benefit to the people.

Notwithstanding these impediments to progress, selection gradually extends year by year, and although I am unable to find space for more than a brief reference to the subject in this Report, it is of importance to note that the densely scrubbed lands at Ringarooma have been selected for purchase by *bonâ fide* settlers at from £1 11s. to £3 1s. per acre, in small farm allotments. The land to which I refer is of basaltic origin, and scarcely to be surpassed in the Island for the growth of artificial grasses and root crops.

Although it is shown by a reference to Return No. 4, Appendix A., that the area of Crown lands sold during the year under review has fallen considerably as compared with former years prior to 1893, yet it will be seen that the average price per acre realised for country lands has reached a higher figure than in any year during the last decade, while for town lands during the same period only in 1892 has the average price been exceeded as compared with results for 1894.

VILLAGE SETTLEMENT.

Under the provisions of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," a 500-acre section of land has been selected by a committee of ladies at Southport, on D'Entrecasteaux Channel, 50 miles from Hobart, for the purpose of forming a Village Settlement. A sum of £400 was raised by the Committee by voluntary subscriptions and otherwise,—such sum being subsidised by the State under the authority of Act 58 Vict. No. 24, in the proportion of £1 10s. for every £1 subscribed privately. The Settlement has been started on co-operative lines, and is the first recognised effort that has been made to permanently "settle the unemployed on the land" in Tasmania. As such it is entitled to all the success it may achieve, and the promoters to the good wishes of the community for an honest endeavour made to relieve distress. The time not having yet expired in which an official report is to be furnished by the Committee, I am unable to give details of proceedings. Twelve Settlement Allotments have however been laid off, containing 25 acres each, portions of which have been scrubbed, burnt off, and small cottages erected thereon. A good crop of potatoes and turnips has been produced from a small area put in in January last. This augurs well at least as a stand-by against actual want; and whatever may be the

ultimate result of this undertaking, in my opinion a practical solution to the labour trouble will be found in applying the efforts of the able-bodied unemployed towards increasing the natural products of the soil. Although fortunes may not be anticipated, the small settler who has made a home on his allotment will not suffer the want of sustenance, nor has he felt the pinch of the prevailing depression in Tasmania so keenly as his less fortunate fellow-toiler in the timber and other industries.

IMPROVEMENTS ON CREDIT LANDS.

The importance of supplying information in reference to the progress of improvements on Credit Lands forms the subject of a new Return to the Appendix to the Annual Report from this Department for the year. It has been compiled from special reports obtained from the Bailiffs of Crown lands for their respective districts. The reports have been in hand for a considerable period, and extend to all the settled districts in the Island with the exception of the Hamilton Municipality—not yet complete. The return cannot be said to be accurate, nor has it been practicable to obtain a fair valuation of the improvements effected without incurring a considerable outlay in expenses, which, in the circumstances, would appear to have been scarcely justifiable. When analysed with other data now available in the Office, the information contained in the return is sufficient to indicate generally a reasonable compliance with the terms of the Act. The figures given show that, out of a total number of 4258 lots inspected, 3167 lots have been to some extent improved, leaving 1091, or say 25 per cent., upon which no improvements have been made.

The number cited as unimproved necessarily includes a very large proportion of 1049 lots which have recently reverted to the Crown by forfeiture and otherwise. It also includes selections that may have been surveyed but upon which the time allotted to commence clearing had not expired. Apart from the considerations stated above, the Statutory Declaration (as to the details of improvements), which all selectors applying for concessions under the Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1894 are compelled to furnish to the Lands Department before their cases can be sent on for consideration, must in itself exercise a very material check upon what is being done on the selected lands. The inspections made by the Bailiffs of Crown lands must of necessity have involved a large amount of special travelling to the outlying districts, for which they have only received bare out-pocket expenses; and I am glad to express my appreciation of the satisfactory manner in which they have discharged their arduous duties in this respect. Return No. 5 contains particulars of the number and area of lots inspected.

PASTORAL LANDS.

The pastoral lands of the Colony have also received special attention during the year under review. It has been known for years that our pastoral lands have been in a very unsatisfactory position, and it is difficult to see how they are to be placed on a sound and satisfactory footing so long as the law permits Crown lessees in arrears of rental to re-occupy lands upon which their leases have been forfeited for the non-payment of such arrears. It was therefore not altogether a surprise to find that the accumulated arrears of rental, extending over long periods, amounted to the comparatively large sum of £5650 5s. 10d. on 30th June, 1894. Of this sum only the very small proportion of £330 18s. 4d. was recovered. With this very discouraging result, and all efforts on the part of the Department having utterly failed to further reduce the outstanding item, there was no alternative under the imperative provisions of the Land Act but to cancel the right of occupation. Accordingly the leases of 159 runs, covering an area of 186,051 acres, were forfeited for non-payment of arrears of rent on 26th November, 1894, and rentals to the amount of £4256 5s. 4d. written off the Office account in connection therewith. Notwithstanding the unsatisfactory record of proceedings taken, it is gratifying to observe that the receipts from Pastoral Leases for the year ending 30th June, 1895, are proportionately higher than for any year since 1890. Return No. 1 furnished in Appendix B. shows the total area held under Pastoral Leases—including small islands—and Occupation Licences, on 31st May last, to be 546,217 acres, and the yearly rental thereof £4380 7s. 8d.

Inspection of Pastoral Lands.—An inspection of all unoccupied pastoral lands throughout Tasmania is at present being conducted by the Crown Lands Bailiffs; and although the returns are not yet complete, it appears from those furnished that the provisions of the Acts relating to Pastoral Leases are being fairly complied with.

REPORTS OF DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

The accompanying extracts from the Reports of the various District Surveyors indicate the localities in which good agricultural lands are available for selection and of the general progress of settlement. Reference is also made to classification of the Waste Lands, a subject which was dealt with in my last Annual Report.

Survey District of Buckingham.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. Herbert Combes, District Surveyor, January, 1895:—

In regard to selection, as compared with the two previous years there has been a fair quantity of land taken up under the very liberal provisions of the Crown Land Amendment Act, and, so far as I can tell,

the bulk of these selectors are *bonâ fide*. The principal localities chosen for settlement are Throckmorton, vicinity of Crab Tree Rivulet, Ranelagh, and Coningham; in the other portions of the District selections have been few and far between.

The completion of a good road from Oyster Cove to Port Cygnet is the only marked feature in road construction that has taken place in my District during the year under review.

Survey District of *Cumberland*.—Extracts from the Report of the District Surveyor, Mr. Thos. Frodsham, January, 1895 :—

During the past year I have surveyed 18 lots, amounting to an area of 1010 acres. The almost universal depression that has existed during the past year, and consequently the very low price of all produce, I believe accounts for the small amount of land selected during 1894.

In the Florentine Valley I have been over an estimated area of 12,000 acres of first-class land, and about 6000 acres of medium quality. For a detailed account I would refer you to my Report of March, 1890, published in the last issue of the Crown Lands Guide.

This land will never be taken up unless a sum of money is spent in opening it up either by means of a road or tramway, and if this were done I believe it would be a reproductive work. I can point to the fact that any expenditure in the past in my District in cutting tracks to Crown lands has always been a reproductive work. The distance from the end of existing road at Russell's Falls into this land would be about 15 miles, and a short track to the south from this road near Russell's Falls River would also open up some thousands of acres of first-class Crown land at Russell's Falls.

I believe about from two to three thousand acres of good land to the south of the land at present selected will be found in the locality of Uxbridge; of course it is impossible to give a correct estimate of the area without a rough survey.

In my District thousands of acres of second and third class land exist which will never be selected at the present price of £1 per acre, but which would readily be taken up at from 5s. to 12s. per acre, according to quality, and would be improved by the purchaser. It seems to me to be absurd to class all Crown lands at the same price, as the land varies so much, some lands being first-class alluvial soil, and others barren stony ridges. The Crown will never receive any benefit from this latter land, as it will never be taken up at the present price, but if reduced, many thousand acres would be taken up and improved; and the same principle applies to other parts of the colony.

The cost of classifying the lands need hardly be taken into consideration, as most District Surveyors will be able to afford the necessary information, and the report upon plans of surveys would be a good index to the value of the land.

Survey District of *Deloraine*.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. John A. Sorell, District Surveyor, January, 1895 :—

Settlement on the Crown lands in the Survey District in my charge has progressed very slowly during the past twelve months. Under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," thirty-seven small selections of inferior land were made, but with the subsequent alteration of this Act these selections practically ceased. Had the Government continued to pay the survey fees for intending purchasers much useful information could doubtless have been gathered from the working of the Act, but, looking at the small number of selections that have been made, it would certainly be premature to draw important inferences therefrom at present. So far the working of the Act has not convinced me of the injudiciousness of classifying the Waste Lands of the Crown; on the contrary, it seems to confirm my opinion that such a step would be the means of raising revenue from these lands where now little or no revenue is being raised, by promoting further settlement and assisting many of the present small holders. The classification of our unalienated lands is by far the most important question in connection with their disposal that could be brought before the Government for its consideration. Unfortunately our bush farmers are slow in making their wants known, and their apparent acquiescence in the present land laws might naturally be taken as good evidence that they desire no further alterations in them; but the fact is quite otherwise, and I venture to predict that before very long our settlers in the bush who have acquired small holdings will agitate for the classification of the Crown lands available for selection wherever they have succeeded in making permanent homes for themselves.

In regard to the lands most suitable for selection, I have the honor to state that there appears to be a somewhat large area of good agricultural land lying to the south and south-east of Quamby Bluff, between the Bluff and the Western Mountains. I spent a day exploring it along the foot of the mountains, and passed over some very good land covered with heavy timber and dense scrub, and looking northwards from the rising ground on the Tiers there seemed to be a large tract of land similar to what I had passed through. It may be worth mentioning that a track from John Smith's lot on Warner's Creek has been opened to the Great Lake by the Deloraine Improvement Committee, and that this track is now a practicable bridle path.

Survey District of *Dorset*.—Extracts from Report of the District Surveyor, Mr. George T. Eddie, January, 1895 :—

There remains now but very little land of any value suitable for selection anywhere within easy access of a railway or good road. During the year I have surveyed over 1800 acres under Mount Barrow to the S.E. It is generally good land and heavily scrubbed. It is situated at a high elevation, nearly 3000 feet above the sea. Some of the applicants (the Whittles) are clearing the land, and if it is found that the winters are not too rigorous many more will, I believe, take up land there. A portion of the road from White Hills, called the Steppes, through a gorge in the North Esk, has now been made, and a bridge put over the river, and there is practically a fair road as far as about the north angle of 2560 granted to James Cox; beyond that it is bush and sideling.

During the year I have surveyed 2634 acres agricultural land in 31 lots; 645 acres under gold leases in 67 lots; 30½ acres township lands in 4 lots; and 8 residence areas at Lefroy.

Survey District of *Fingal*.—Extracts from Report of Mr. G. C. Smith, District Surveyor, January, 1895 :—

There is a tract of good land suitable for selection, comprising 1000 acres at least, about a mile or a mile and a half south east of F. J. Elwin, 111½ acres, on Dunn's Creek, Parish of Monna. There is also a considerable area on and in the vicinity of Maurice Town Reserve. The soil is excellent, and the timber and undergrowth of the usual character. There is no prospect of a town reserve of any extent being needed in this locality, and lots of larger area than 10 acres should be allowed. This is the only locality in the district where much selection may be expected at present. Lots 5977 and 3978, 450 acres would sell readily.

Near Weldborough there is land of good quality, of which some may be taken up. In the vicinity of the Upper George River there is a considerable tract of land fit for selection. In the Parish of Weld about 3000 acres may be found of good basaltic soil, stony in places, with the usual heavy timber and dense undergrowth. This land would be reached by a road from the present road between St. Helen's and the George settlement, opposite Brown's, to Weldborough.

In the parishes of Lunta and Lowelly I believe about 7000 acres fit for cultivation may be found. The soil is good; the timber, swamp gum, myrtle, and sassafras, with some blackwood; the undergrowth dense. The height above sea level and the steepness of the hills are the drawbacks to the fitness for selection of this land.

In the N.E. portion of the Parish of Gould there is a large area of second-class agricultural land, but there is no chance of selection at present in this locality.

There is a large extent of land, heavily timbered and with dense scrub, between Urana and Hogan's Track. This is of second class quality, and the soil consists of decomposed granite.

On the Tyne there are probably 1000 acres, easy of access.

On the head of the Don River 1000 acres of good soil might be found along the valley. Nothing, however, has been done on the lots selected N.W. of Harper's property, which appear to be practically abandoned.

About St. Mary's there are many small patches of good land in exceedingly broken country; but in nearly all cases to secure 10 acres of land fit for cultivation 30 acres at least would have to be taken up, making the price of the useful land very high, especially now, when land is worth less by at least 30 per cent. than it was a few years ago.

As I stated before, I regret that a provision permitting the sale of land in certain cases at a lower price than £1 per acre did not meet with the approval of the Legislature. The steep stony land, of which there is much about St. Mary's, might be improved by ringing and burning, &c., but will never be taken up at £1 per acre. Such land is unfit for homesteads, and would be of use to those only who already hold adjoining or neighbouring lots. If the price were made 10s. per acre much of this land might be taken up and roughly improved for pasture, while as long as £1 is the minimum price per acre it will remain as it is, and add nothing to the revenue or production of the country.

About Tower Hill (Parish Fonthill) there are some hundreds of acres of fair land in addition to that already selected, but the failure, for the present at any rate, of the mines in the immediate vicinity has lessened the prospect of selection hereabouts.

In the Parish of Ben Nevis there are 400 or 500 acres of fair soil of a sandy nature, with the usual heavy timber and dense scrub.

A good deal of the land once surveyed in small lots S.W. of Mangana would, I believe, if available sell readily even now.

North-west of the Huntsman's Cap (Parishes of Egremont and Haslemere) there is land which will be taken up now that it is open for selection, though not, perhaps, for some little time. The soil is fair in places, and there is some tolerably good natural pasturage.

Little progress has been made in settlement during the past year. Few lots have been selected, and not much has been done on those already occupied.

On the George the later selections are still unimproved, and no new selections have been made.

At Blessington the lots surveyed are occupied and are being improved.

In the Parish of Fonthill (Tower Hill) several selectors have built on and cleared a considerable part of their land.

The recent selections under the Crown Lands Amendment Act near St. Mary's are all in course of improvement, and some are built on.

I cannot report particularly as to scattered lots in Glamorgan, &c., but I am satisfied that the few selections made have been made in good faith, with the intention of occupying, or at least of improving and using the land, though in some instances circumstances may have delayed the selectors in doing so.

There is at present small prospect of any large extension of settlement, and few selections will be made except where the selector wishes to establish a home for his family within reach of outside employment for himself. It is impossible for a man without means to clear and improve a bush lot except by the help of wages for part of the year, and with this aid the work of improvement is necessarily slow. Unless there is a rise in the price of produce, or until men are content with the barest subsistence, there will be little selection except near mining or other settlements where there is a local market for some kind of produce and the chance of occasional employment on wages for the selector.

Survey District of *Franklin*.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. E. G. Innes, District Surveyor, January, 1895 :—

During the past 12 months I have surveyed some 47 lots in the district under my charge, in area ranging from 1 acre to 150 acres.

A great number of these lots were selected under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," and did not exceed the 50 acres, the maximum area allowed to be selected under that Act.

As far as it is possible to judge, I should say that nine-tenths of the lots surveyed have been selected for *bonâ fide* settlement purposes, as there is very little useful timber upon them, which is a pretty fair

indication that they have not been selected for the purpose of splitting, sawing, or otherwise removing the timber, which has been done in numerous cases.

As far as I am able to judge from personal observation, the clauses as to improvements, &c. in the Act under which this land has been selected are being fairly well complied with.

As a rule the lots as surveyed have been land of very good quality, and well suited for small holdings, but the drawback to a large number of them is that there are no roads to give access to them, so that after a selector has cleared and planted his potato patch he in too great a number of cases is in a fix to get his crop to a market after it is grown. This is a very serious drawback, and one that retards settlement to a very great extent in a heavily-timbered district like the one under my charge.

Lands suitable for Selection.

Parish of Leithbridge.—This parish still contains a large area of good land, heavily timbered like all the best of our Huon lands, but suited for settlement in small holdings. Unfortunately most of it is locked up at present for want of practicable roads to give access to it.

Parish of Honeywood.—Like the last-mentioned parish there is a large area of unalienated land in Honeywood, but the same disadvantage also applies, viz., that the land is locked up for want of means of access.

Parish of Price.—Here again the foregoing will apply, good land unalienated, heavily timbered, and well watered, but no roads giving access to Crown lands.

Parishes of Thanet and Garrett.—Both these parishes contain very large areas of land suitable for settlement, but it is heavily timbered, and with one or two exceptions, it is difficult for a selector to obtain a block where he has a chance of being near to or fronting upon a made road.

Parishes of Purves and Blakney.—The great bulk of the land in both these parishes is still unalienated, but although in the flats and river bottoms there are some small areas of first class land suitable for growing almost any kind of crops, as a rule the country is very densely timbered, rough and broken, and only suited for the purpose for which it is mainly used viz., timber cutting.

Parishes of Bedford, Pedder, and Bagot.—In neither of these three parishes is there any extent of good unalienated Crown land, and what little there is left is only in small patches, and in many instances very rough and broken, only suitable for those who own the adjoining land; in fact in the parish of Bedford I do not know of one single lot of good land available, and very little poor land also, so that selection thereabouts is practically done.

South Bruni Island.—This island contains a large area of first class land not so heavily timbered as the mainland, well watered, and in many instances selections can be made where the land is fairly level, but then the roads (or want of roads) are a drawback which selectors cannot get over, and also the want of regular steam communication with the City and mainland; these are difficulties which will be surmounted in time, but until they are surmounted I am afraid that South Bruni will to a very large extent remain in a state of nature.

Very little can be said as regards progress of settlement, for owing to the general depression which has prevailed throughout the Colony and Australia in general, I am afraid it will be hard to find much that I can call progress.

In the early part of 1894 "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," gave a slight fillip to selection, but owing to the general lack of money, especially amongst that class of selectors, the improvements have been made at a very slow rate; not only this, but in many cases little homesteads have been temporarily allowed to fall into decay through their owners having had to wander from place to place in search of a living.

At Southport, in the southern portion of the district, a Village Settlement has been started, and is being carried on by a committee of ladies and gentlemen in Hobart; but although the land has been selected, and a start made in the way of clearing, the whole affair is still in its infancy, and until the settlers have been in possession 12 months or more, so as to give them a fair chance of showing what they can do in the farming line, it must remain a matter of doubt whether the Settlement will be a permanent improvement or not.

Survey District of Leven.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. Richard Hall, the District Surveyor, January, 1895:—

I have surveyed, principally under the provisions of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," 2985 acres in 63 lots; under the Mineral Lands Act, 320 acres in four lots, and 60 acres in four lots under Gold Fields Regulations. The larger portion of the agricultural land surveyed was in the Parish of Riana. The applicants were mostly friends or related, and have formed quite a settlement by themselves, and are very rapidly improving their holdings. Some of the surveys have been much scattered from one end of the district to the other. Very few lots have been applied for over 50 acres, the applicants, I presume, wishing to take advantage of the liberal clauses in the last amended Act. It is rather early yet to make remarks relative to the working of the Act, but I think it will be found in the future that the Act has been a very great boon for the selector, and will prove to be good generally, enabling people to select land as homesteads which would not be likely to be taken under other Acts. As far as I have been able to observe, I do not think there will be any greater percentage of forfeiture under this Act than under those which the applicants have to pay survey fee in advance. On the 13th of November I took two men with me for the purpose of examining some country between the rivers Blythe and Leven. I cut a track from the Laurel Mine southerly for some three miles and passed through about 800 to 1000 acres of splendid land, with a fine stream of water flowing on each side of it. I had a camp near the Laurel Creek, at the end of the track, and made several excursions in different directions to examine the country. I was in hopes of being able to report the existence of minerals in the country referred to, but did not find any. I wanted to reach the Leven in a southerly direction, but found it would take too long, having spent altogether nearly a fortnight with two men. I am strongly of opinion that minerals will be found in this locality, and would recommend that a track be cut from the end of the Pine Road towards Mount Tor until the Leven River is reached. You may have records in the Department of persons having visited this neighbourhood, but I

have never heard of any one; and it seems to me there is a large area that no one has ever been on, and has numerous indications of minerals as far as the rocks are concerned.

There are still a few men working for gold at Bell Mount and the bismuth and tin sections are being worked. There are four lots being driven on for gold, with fair indications, I understand. A new discovery has been made near the junction of the Fall River and the Lea, which is reported to be very promising and in some respects important. I hear the gold has been traced for a long distance, and that a good many claims have been marked off.

Survey District of *Mersey*.—Extracts from the Report of the District Surveyor, Mr. H. J. Chalmers, January, 1895.

Both along the Coast and elsewhere values having fallen fully 50 per cent., and produce even below average rates, has led many to rely more upon pastoral than agricultural pursuits; thus it is, rented areas of already cleared and grassed lands have much the advantage over selections from the Crown, and again, the tendency to purchase already improved farms, as against selection of heavily-timbered country remote from market, is increasing every year. It thus becomes no wonder that I have only dealt with five sections, with a total area of 250 acres, three of these at an altitude of over 2000 feet above sea-level.

The County of Westmorland, with the township of Chudleigh as a centre, through which the railway passes, is heavily handicapped by four large estates, the heart and cream of the district, which, could they be purchased and subdivided into 100-acre farms and dealt with either by leases or purchase, would not only return interest on capital, but would increase considerably the traffic returns on the railway. Indeed it is, in my opinion, the one and only way of obtaining a return for the heavy construction expenses. These estates are a serious barrier to the development of all country beyond them. It is but a few miles distant, with easy access, from Chudleigh to the extensive pastoral land extending for many miles from the Western Tiers southerly towards Lake Ada; and were all the land now lying idle in a state of nature on these estates under cultivation, most of this pastoral country would be eagerly sought for as summer runs.

I cannot better illustrate the position of this district than by comparing it with that of Sheffield. In the former, embracing an area of about 40,000 acres, there are less than 200 adult inhabitants, while in the latter, with a somewhat less area, there are over 2000 tenant farmers. The produce grown in the former district bears a like proportion to that of the latter,—the one stagnant and stationary, the other healthy and flourishing. The district, too, is especially gifted with beds of valuable timber, of a quality immeasurably superior to that of other localities. Limestone also occurs in large quantities, and were it possible to work it profitably, would be an untold benefit to the agriculturist in some of the older districts as a fertilizer. It is in this country that the magnificent caves occur, many of which are inaccessible for want of a small amount of capital expended on the roads (there should be some Waste lands money available for this work). However, it seems deplorable to think that this, one of the best agricultural districts in the Island, capable of finding employment for thousands, should be held by such a few.

Since losing the control of the Middlesex portion, after years of hard work encouraging development and assisting in many other ways the miner and the prospector, often at considerable personal expense and inconvenience, I have ceased to take any very great interest in the mining industry. I believe there is a little doing, but so little that it is scarcely worth noting. It is estimated that over 4000 ozs. have been won at this and Belmont field during the last two years. This information is reliable, and speaks for itself.

Extracts from Report on Flinders Island, by H. J. Chalmers :—

I was at first disappointed at the general appearance of the soil, it having a sandy loamy look, but on closer inspection I found that it was heavily charged with lime and other matter essential to rapid growth. The presence of the blue gum (*eucalyptus globulus*) everywhere also surprised me, as I did not expect it so far north. The growth is, however, stunted, and the grain closer than is generally the case in the southern portion of the mainland, leading me to believe in growth it takes more after that found along the Victorian coast. In some parts of the island it grows larger and more uniform, and becomes suitable for splitting purposes.

There are numerous patches of good agricultural and pastoral land, the greatest area in one lot I estimate, unselected, as under five hundred (500) acres (at the head of Marshall Bay), and ranging downwards to fifteen (15) acres. The smaller areas are so numerous, productive, and favoured by climatic advantages that I consider the absence of many large areas rather an advantage than otherwise, as tending to create a larger population, and a class of agriculturist so much desired in all new settlements. The land is very productive, and well adapted for farm produce, and I am credibly informed that potatoes, onions, and all vegetable commodities can be produced at least two months earlier here than on the mainland. I myself saw peas and potatoes well out of the ground in May. In many places also the soil is suitable for fruit-growing; some of the specimens shown me were large, well shaped, and of delicious flavour. An annual visit from anyone able to suggest or advise on matters relating to fruit-growing would not only be accepted as a boon, but would, in my opinion, foster and create a large industry in this direction. I am sure, from what I have gleaned from those who are now interesting themselves in this matter, that the inhabitants would be glad to contribute towards the expense of such an undertaking, by entertaining and forwarding the officer from place to place in exchange for information and suggestions. The land being in most cases open forest country, it can be easily and expeditiously brought under cultivation.

I had some splendid opportunities of inspecting the mineral resources of the Island, and, after a careful examination, I am of opinion, and firmly so, that in tin a large and inexhaustible wealth exists. I do not infer that the mineral is easily discovered or worked; on the contrary, there are many difficulties and obstacles in the way; nevertheless, in my opinion it is there, and can be profitably worked. To old experienced miners, those especially who have no interest in the results of speedy flotation of companies on "shows," might give this locality a good and lengthy trial with advantage to themselves. The formations are distinct and comparatively true to course, and are easily traceable for miles; work and careful study however, must be the order of the day if success is to be assured.

There are three Jetties, one at Lilly's Bay, Settlement Point, one at White Mark, Double Corner Bay, and one locally known as Ferguson's Jetty, near Trousers' Point. The one at Settlement Point has been judiciously placed and built, and is a great convenience both to steamer and craft, and a decided acquisition to settlement; that at White Mark is not yet, or rather was not when I left, finished, but it bids fair to be a great convenience.

From the Grass-tree, indigenous to Flinders Island, there is a gum or resinous matter growing, used in the preparation of varnish, which has hitherto escaped observation, which has lately come into prominence, and likely to be worked by a Sydney or Victorian company. In the past no value has been attached to the grass-tree, and it has been more or less destroyed by bush fires; every facility should be given to this and all other legitimate enterprises as a means towards progress.

I visited Chapel Island during the mutton-bird season, and was much interested in the *modus operandi*, and learned that notwithstanding the large number killed annually, the supply and quality was fully up to the average. Prices, however, have fallen very low, both for the birds and the oil. This I attribute in a measure to the careless curing and hasty packing to catch the early market, and the consequence of "forced sales." Some of the islanders complained of the wholesale destruction of the eggs. This could be easily obviated by limiting the collection to "Babel" or some of the outlying and unoccupied islands. If it is permitted on Chapel Island, I can hardly see how or where limitation is to stop. Under these circumstances, it would be better to discontinue the practice on this, the "main rookery," at Chapel Island.

I also visited Kangaroo, Green, Prime, Seal, and the Sisters' Islands, all of them in occupation, and bearing signs of prosperity; indeed, to a casual observer it is simply wonderful to note the capabilities of some of these smaller islands, brought about by the industry and perseverance of the occupants. The stock are large, healthy, and in splendid condition.

I understand the "close season" for seals expires during this year, but why there should be a close season in connection with Flinders and adjacent Islands I cannot understand, as there are no seals of value on any of them. The "fur seal" is extinct, and has been for very many years, and but very few of the hair species exist, and they are found principally upon Twenty Day and Barren Joey Islands; they are of very little value and scarcely worth the trouble of killing.

Survey District of *Oatlands*.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. W. M. Hardy, District Surveyor. January, 1895:—

There are some small patches of good land still available for selection in the neighbourhood of "Tiger Hill," to which there is a fairly good bush track. This land is situated about six miles west of the Town of Buckland and to the north of the Buckland and Woodsdale road. There are no doubt other small but isolated patches existing, but I have not found it possible to obtain 50 acres of good land in any block surveyed. Generally the good land is less than half the area of the lot.

During the year I had occasion to recommend the subdivision of the coal reserve at Jerusalem, but I wish to state only on the understanding that sufficient and *bonâ fide* applications are received.

I had the honour to draw your attention to the advisability of constructing a road from Buckland to Nugent in my report of 1892. The unemployed are at present engaged in forming portion of this, and I trust it will be finished right through now it is commenced, and also the continuation into Kellevie would appear desirable, inasmuch as these are trunk lines of communication, which I must submit are preferable to so many branch roads that cannot well be extended. During the past year I recommended that the bush track to "Tiger Hill" (mentioned in previous clause) should receive attention in order to attract selection and assist those who have already selected.

Considerable selection has taken place in this district under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1893," but a decided check has been experienced now that the applicant is called upon to first deposit the survey fee. A great number of these selectors appear to be desirous of carrying out the conditions of the agreement they have entered upon. Many of the selectors are already in residence, having erected houses and started to clear and fence; a few, I suspect, intend to hold for speculative purposes, or for the sake of the bark or timber, &c., and some families appear to be holding their land in common or exchanging names, a practice that may be found objectionable to all parties in the future, when the residence clause is enforced or the grant claimed by applicant.

Survey District of *Russell*.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. David Jones, District Surveyor, January, 1895:—

Good land, as in the past, is still recognised as one of the great wants of the West Coast. In the vicinity of Strahan nearly all the good or fairly good land has been applied for; the same may be said of the Big Henty River, now known as the Parish of Matong. Some good land exists on the north side of the Little Henty River, some of which has been selected. At Granville Harbour, Parish of Rotali, there is still open for selection some 1100 or 1200 acres of very fair land, about 400 acres of which is really land of the best quality, but can only be taken up in areas not exceeding 10 acres, as it is within a radius of one mile from the Township Reserve at Granville Harbour. In the neighbourhood of the Pieman Heads only one lot has been selected, and a great deal of land in this locality, say 500 acres, is well adapted for pastoral purposes. There is a large extent of capital land, suitable in every way for agricultural purposes, in the valley of the Huskisson River, but owing to its being so inaccessible it will not be applied for until opened up by road or rail. Near the King River, vicinity of Mount Lyell, Parish of Turrah, in the County of Montagu, a few hundred acres of excellent land will be found to have been recently thrown open for selection under Section 49 of the Crown Lands Act, although in parts it is subject to floods from the rising of the King River in very wet seasons. At Waratah, County of Russell, a large area of really first-rate land (basaltic soil), has been rendered available for selection under the same section of the Crown Lands Act, Sec. 49. The Waratah-Heazlewood Road (macadamised) passes through this land, which is situated to the east and south of the Town of Waratah.

Progress of settlement has not been much during the last twelve months. I only know of three applications for agricultural land. The previous holdings surveyed have been improved very much. At Granville Harbour clearing the land is gradually being done; also in the vicinity of the Big Henty River and Strahan advancement in that direction is steadily and surely going on. Sections under the Mining Act are being regularly applied for, and it may be said that mining generally at Mount Lyell, Zeehan, Dundas, Corinna, vicinity of Long Plains, and Heazlewood is now being pursued in a much more legitimate way than obtained as a rule in former years.

Survey District of Tasman's Peninsula.—Extract from the Report of Mr. Joshua Hinsby, Surveyor, January, 1895:—

With regard to land available for selection in this district, there is still a considerable area of good scrub land on both Tasman's and Forestier's Peninsulas, although it is at present rather inaccessible owing to want of tracks, &c. in many parts. There is also a large area of poor land that would be selected at a smaller figure than the £1 per acre, and I think there is no doubt that much of the land that has been lying idle for years would be taken up at once and become a tax producer if only sold for 5s. or 10s. per acre, and plenty of it is scarcely worth that, but being adjacent to other blocks could be improved somewhat by the stock overrunning it when used as an easement to the adjoining land, and as far as the district in my charge is concerned, I am sure a Crown lands classification clause would suit both the Crown and the people therein.

The Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1893 worked much better than I expected in this district, and I think from what I have seen that most of the selections taken up under that Act are genuine, and the selectors seem to be complying with the clauses of the Act except the Residence Clause, and in many cases it is practically impossible to comply with that; and owing to the lowness of country produce it is also impossible to employ labour.

With regard to timber, there is still a good deal of first-class splitting timber; also some fine light-woods and wattle for staves or sawing purposes.

There are several good saw-mill sites, most of which I described in a special Report to the Surveyor-General some time back. There is one site, however, which I did not mention, that is, a fine patch of blue gum, stringy-bark, lightwood, and myrtle, situated about a mile west of Tasman's Arch, and easily accessible from Eagle Hawk Neck. This bed of timber comprises about 1000 acres, throughout which there are patches of first-class land.

Twenty-three lots of agricultural land have been marked off during the year.

Survey District of Wellington.—Extracts from the Report of Mr. F. E. Windsor, District Surveyor, January 7th, 1895:—

A large amount of work has been done at the Mount Balfour Tin Mines during the year, one Company having spent over £1000, in cutting race, constructing dam, and opening up the face. The quantity of tin sent away has been limited although future prospects are very favourable.

Great efforts have been made in clearing and laying the land under grass on account of the great impetus given to farming by the dairying industry, which has been the only source of profit to the farmers for these last two seasons.

The Table Cape Butter Factory has for the last two or three months been making three quarters of a ton of butter per diem.

There is still very great depression in the district, owing in a large measure to the low prices obtainable for last season's produce. A large amount of additional work is required upon the bush roads to make them at all passable in the winter. Those opened are at best only summer roads.

Parishes of Marrawah and Williams.—Some 4000 acres of first class land available for selection. Most of this land can, comparatively speaking, be easily brought under cultivation, the scrub being open, and the timber, although very large, not so abundant as in other localities.

Only one new selection has taken place, but the old selections have all more or less been improved.

Monbray, Gibson, and Togari.—About 3000 acres of good land suitable for selection still remains in these parishes. The Irish Town Road requires attending to through the section of Mr. O'Halloran, half a mile of metalling being absolutely necessary to enable the produce of the last year to be brought to market. Most of the by-roads have been well opened up.

Numerous small lots have been lately applied for in the Parish of Gibson. Several of the selectors are living on their properties, and improvement has been very general throughout the two former parishes.

Ford and Medwin.—Some 1500 acres still available for selection.

A few selections have taken place in the latter parish, but clearing on the old selections has been extensive, owing in a great measure to the impetus given by the local butter factory.

Emmett and Anderson.—About 1000 acres of good land is known to exist in the parishes still available for selection, but the roads giving access to it are still in a very incomplete state.

No fresh selection has taken place in these parishes.

Dallas and Myalla.—Most of the good Crown land in these parishes has been selected.

A few small lots have been selected, and the old ones have been very much improved, Messrs. Game and Anderson have started a cheese factory here.

Flowerdale and Preleenna.—About 5000 acres of first class land is still available.

Quiggin and Calder.—Some 2000 acres of good agricultural land still remains unselected in these parishes. A branch road from the Calder Road South to the Moore's Plain Road would open up a large area of good land.

A few selections have taken place during the year and improvement has been very general.

Yolla.—Some 4000 acres suitable for selection still exist in this parish to the south of the Calder River.

No fresh selection has taken place during the year.

Lewis and Elliott.—Very little Crown land suitable for selection is left in these parishes. Several new selections have taken place, and a large area has been laid under grass, on the old selections.

Oonah and Takone.—A large area of good land still exists in these parishes. A few selections have been recently applied for, and improvements have been general on old selections.

Stomport and Natone.—Some 2500 acres of first-class agricultural land is still available. During the year the roads have been extended for some considerable distance, and when completed will give access to the recently selected lots and also a large area of Crown land.

Good progress is still being made both on new and old selections.

During the year 27 agricultural selections have been surveyed, containing an area of 1250 acres. 17½ miles of roads and connections have been run, 8 Public Works roads surveyed, two boundary lines of the V.D.L. Co.'s property redefined, 7 town allotments and 5 mineral sections marked off, and one water-race traversed, completes the list of work performed under instructions from the Surveyor-General.

SURVEYS.

In regard to survey matters, I have the honor to gratefully acknowledge your consideration in recommending to the Legislature that all surveys required for public purposes should be by Act of Parliament (58 Vict. No. 13) vested in my control, under the title of Surveyor-General, and to assure you that I shall at all times endeavour to discharge the responsible duties imposed upon me with loyalty to my chief, fairness to the staff, and justice to the public. Since this appointment was confirmed, the abnormal pressure of office work in connection with the arrears in land matters (referred to in the earlier portion of this Report) has prevented my entering upon special duties in relation to the survey division, to which my attention will be directed during the coming year. Steps have, however, been taken to provide that all future surveys shall be ordered from this Office in terms of the Act quoted, and under one uniform system of regulations and instructions. This should obviously result in a considerable saving of time and cost in the office checking of survey plans, as well as being more economical and satisfactory in respect to the field service. Fresh survey regulations have been prepared in manuscript for printing. The following returns show that the total number of selection surveys effected during the year under the Crown Lands Acts is 402, containing 17,198 acres; and for sale at auction, 63 lots, containing 381 acres; and for the Mines Department, 503 lots, containing 10,063 acres.

RETURN of Selection and Auction Surveys received during the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895.

SURVEY DISTRICT.	OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SURVEY DISTRICT.	SELECTION SURVEYS.		AUCTION SURVEYS.		TOTAL.	
		Area in Acres.	No. of Lots.	Area in Acres.	No. of Lots.	Area in Acres.	No. of Lots.
Buckingham	Combes, H.	1299	34	1	10	1300	44
Cumberland	Frodsham, T.	905	17	223	8	1128	25
Dorset	Eddie, G. T.	1627	34	13	10	1640	44
Devon	Hall, R.	2842	62	...	...	2842	62
Deloraine	Sorell, J. A.	1306	28	60	4	1366	32
Franklin	Innes, E. G.	2342	55	5	1	2347	56
Fingal	Smith, G. C.	1628	39	8	9	1636	48
Moorina	Walpole, E. G.	351	7	13	17	364	24
Mersey & Flinders Island	Chalmers, H. J.	1130	24	...	...	1130	24
Russell	Jones, D.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Oatlands	Hardy, W. M.	1265	35	53	3	1318	38
Tasman's Peninsula	Hinsby, J. H.	940	25	...	...	940	25
Wellington	Windsor, F. E.	1363	34	5	1	1368	35
Montagu	Wilson, C. S.	200	8	...	...	200	3
		17,198	402	381	63	17,579	465

Special Surveys—Annual Return for Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895.

Town of Pokana, 96 lots surveyed and permanently marked.

Nine miles of road surveyed for Public Works Department in numerous small sections throughout the country.

RETURN of Surveys effected for Mines Department for Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895, as represented by Receipt of Plans in the Mines Department.

Surveyor.	Area.	No. of Lots.
	Acres.	
Combes, H.	100	1
Frodsham, T.	40	2
Eddie, G. T.	1588	161
Hall, R.	570	19
Sorell, J. A.	100	10
Innes, G. E.	Nil	Nil
Smith, G. C.	1429	78
Walpole, E. G. (H. P. Dove).....	706	52
Chalmers, H. J.*.....	80	1
Jones, D.	1485	38
Hardy, W. M.	20	2
Hinsby, J. H.	Nil	Nil
Windsor, F. E.	170	7
Wilson, C. S.	3775	132
TOTAL	10,063	503

* On Flinders Island.

RETURN of Number of Instructions issued to Surveyors for the Year ending 30th June, 1895.

Name.	Survey Department.	Mines Department.	Total.
Eddie, G. T.	31	183	214
Combes, H.	33	—	33
Chalmers, H. J.	21	—	21
Frodsham, T.	38	2	40
Hardy, W. M.	26	—	26
Hall, R.	60	36	96
Innes, E. G.	48	1	49
Jones, D.	2	63	65
Smith, G. C.	50	91	141
Sorell, J. A.	44	23	67
Wilson, C. S.	16	151	167
Windsor, F. E.	38	5	43
Walpole, E. G.	1	—	1
Authorised Surveyors	70	36	106
	478	591	1069

BOARD OF EXAMINERS.

The Board of Examiners appointed under the provisions of "The Waste Lands Amendment Act, 1886," 50 Vict. No. 11, Sect. 14, to enquire into the qualifications of persons applying for authority to make surveys in Tasmania, held an examination in September last year. One candidate presented himself, and having passed with credit he was subsequently authorised to practise his profession as a surveyor. It is proposed at an early date to ask the Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands to consent to a reconstruction of the Board, as several of its members, including James Fincham, Esq., C.E., (late) Engineer-in-Chief, and Albert Reid, Esq., (late) Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands, have retired from their respective offices by virtue of which they were appointed; another member, Wm. Duffy, Esq., C.E., has left the Colony; and the vacancies thereby occasioned have not been filled up. They have all rendered valuable services to the Board, and their retirement will be much regretted by their fellow members. Opportunity has been offered to the Tasmanian Institution of Surveyors of representation on the new Board, in accordance with the proposal made at the Intercolonial Conference of Surveyors held in Melbourne in 1892-3.

THE DRAFTING ROOM.

The Chief Draftsman reports that fairly satisfactory progress has been made with the compilation of plans when the reduction of the staff and other causes are taken into consideration, six County and four Town plans having been compiled during the year. The compilation of the plan

of the City of Hobart, mentioned in the last annual report, is practically at a standstill, I am sorry to say (as no plan is more needed). It is a work requiring a great deal of skill and knowledge of the records, and can therefore be entrusted only to one of the superior officers, whose time has been taken up almost entirely with other pressing matters. Such a plan would be invaluable to solicitors and others, and would save both their time and the time of the officers of the Department in making long searches through the old records.

Claims to Grants of Land.—Claims for grants under the Real Property Act, though not very numerous, as a rule give a great deal of trouble, especially in connection with the examination of plans; but if solicitors and others interested would pay more attention to the regulation requiring that the surveys for all such claims should be made under instruction from the Surveyor-General, the trouble would be minimised. These surveys, on account of the difficulties to be contended with and the interests at stake, should be made by surveyors with special qualifications, of which only the Surveyor-General is in a position to judge. The remarks with regard to the necessity for the employment of surveyors with special qualifications would apply equally as well to all surveys made under the Real Property Act, the plans of many of which are referred by the Recorder of Titles to this Department for investigation.

A great deal of the time of the officers of this branch has been taken up both during and after office hours in assisting the Lands branch in the preparation of notices to selectors and the calculation of the interest due on their overdue instalments.

RETURN of the principal Office Work performed in the Drafting Room of the Department of Lands and Surveys during the Twelve Months ending June 30th, 1895.

Plans prepared.	County and town plans compiled and drawn	10	39
	Ditto ditto posted up for photo-lithography	29	
Applications dealt with.	Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893, (selection)	381	1254
	Crown Lands Act, 1890	284	
	Ditto (auction and private purchase)	96	
	Ditto (rent)	266	
	Ditto (selection in mining areas).....	149	
	Residence Areas Act, 1891 (purchase)	78	
Grants prepared.	Grant deeds prepared in duplicate	357	716
Diagrams of Surveys received.	Selections	425	
	Auction and residence areas.....	158	
	Real Property Act	18	
	Roads, re-surveys, &c.	115	
Diagrams and Plans examined.	Computed and examined	701	716
	In course of examination	10	
	Unexamined	5	
Road Surveys recorded.	Plan of road surveys received from Public Works Department and recorded on original plans	137	19
Diagram books and grant schedules.	Diagram books prepared for binding	17	
	Grant schedule books ditto	2	16
Instructions for surveys.	Claims for grants under the R. P. Act and through the Supreme Court dealt with.....	16	
	Instructions prepared and issued to district and authorised surveyors	478	170
	Surveyors' accounts in triplicate passed for payment.....	170	
Closed roads.	Roads described for closing by proclamation	17	374
Descriptions.	Descriptions of surveys furnished to Lands Branch for contracts for sale of land	374	
	Plans of districts prepared for Boundaries Board of Advice.....	8	30
Plans of districts.	Road Districts described for proclamation.....	19	
Proclamation of districts.	Fruit ditto	3	
	Municipal ditto	1	
	Registration ditto	4	
	Recreation ditto.....	1	
	Towns proclaimed.....	2	

ROADS.

In my last Annual Report reference was made to the fact that, after many years contention on the subject of acquiring land for road purposes in agricultural settlement, the Recorder of Titles had withdrawn his opposition to a proposal which I had on previous occasions put forward for consideration, and which to my mind was calculated to simplify and facilitate a complicated piece of business, and at the same time amply protect the interests of all parties concerned. "The Lands Vesting Act," of 1894, 58 Vict. No. 17, is the outcome of the proposal. The measure was drafted

by the Recorder of Titles, and although his views were not in harmony with the principles of the Act, it is quite evident that his high professional attainments and valued experience in all matters connected with property titles has enabled him to prepare an Act which is calculated to remove many irritating difficulties with which the former process of dealing with road lands was encumbered. But it is equally apparent that, unless great care is exercised in its administration, there is danger of its leading to serious troubles in the future. As to how far it has up to the present operated, satisfactorily or the reverse, I am not in a position to state, consequent on the Act having been referred to another department.

REGULATIONS.

The Crown Lands Regulations were revised and issued on 1st December last, the last revision having taken place in 1886. Since that time several amendments and a consolidation of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," have rendered necessary a recasting of most of the clauses, and the addition of many others, to meet the requirements of the amended Land Laws.

The Pine Regulations were also revised and published for general information on August 28th, 1894. The provision for the payment of royalty on pine cut for local consumption has been removed, and consequently the revenue hitherto received from this source has become practically *nil*. The cutting of pine timber under the revised Regulations was extended to all parts of the Island, instead of being restricted to proclaimed districts as hitherto. Since the date of publication the time during which pine may be cut has been extended to the whole of the year instead of to nine months only as formerly. Much information of a general and semi-official character has come to hand from time to time, which has pointed to an infringement of the Regulations; but in the absence of an efficient officer, whose time would be wholly at the disposal of the Department for the protection of the timber and barking industries, it is impossible to prevent their being prosecuted illegally. This has been the case in the past, and the loss of much revenue to the country has resulted in consequence. The evil can only be remedied by an energetic and constant supervision of the Crown lands.

The Regulations for stripping wattle-bark require amendment, and will receive attention before the opening of the next season, which commences on the 1st October. The receipts of revenue for the right to strip wattle-bark on Crown lands for the year 1894-95 amounted to £70 4s. 2d.

The timber and bark industries never appear to have received the close attention which their importance demands. They should, in my opinion, be made a much more fruitful source of revenue than hitherto. The Huon pine timber (*Dacrydium Franklinii*) is becoming rare, and is only to be found now in any quantity in remote localities. The operations of the "piners" on the West Coast have extended to the Serpentine River over 60 miles from Strahan. Much of this fine timber is being utilised for rough work on the mines, for which not one penny is being paid to the State, where less valuable class timber would meet the requirements. It is of slow growth; and unless it is to practically disappear from use of any kind, it will require to be better conserved.

The Crown Lands Guide has been thoroughly revised and brought up to date. It contains the latest official reports from the District Surveyors, with other reliable information, and is now ready to hand to the Government Printer.

DEPARTMENTAL CHANGES.

Some important changes have occurred in the status of officers during the year. In August last the late Deputy Commissioner of Crown Lands (Albert Reid, Esq.) severed a long and valued connection with the Public Service. On his retirement the Departments of Lands and Surveys, hitherto conducted under separate heads, were amalgamated, and the control of the combined offices entrusted to one official, under the title of "Surveyor-General and Secretary for Lands." This appointment is specially acknowledged under the heading of "Surveys." In order to cope with the increased duties to be undertaken, the retirement of the Deputy Commissioner and two Clerks, rendered it necessary to rearrange the offices, and accordingly Mr. E. W. N. Butcher, a first-class officer, was transferred from the professional staff to the position of Chief Clerk in the Lands—a position which his high qualifications enable him to fill with credit to himself and satisfaction to the Department. Mr. Nevin Hurst, a comparatively young officer, has taken up the duties hitherto performed by Mr. Butcher on the professional staff. He has steadily advanced from the position of Junior Draftsman in this Department to the responsible office he now holds, and in which he has exhibited an amount of judgment and skilled training which leave nothing to be desired. Mr. Flanagan, an authorised Surveyor and Draftsman, has been retired in connection with the retrenchment policy of the Government.

Recognising the growing importance of the West Coast mineral fields, and the necessity for placing the surveys in the Districts of Strahan, Zeehan, Dundas, and Mount Lyell under the control of a competent resident officer, it was my pleasure to recommend for your approval the appointment of Mr. C. S. Wilson as District Surveyor for the newly-formed Survey District of

Montagu. Mr. Wilson is well known to this Department and to the profession as a reliable and painstaking surveyor, and he has entered upon his duties with a proper sense of his responsible position.

In closing this Report, I desire to record my sense of the efficiency of the officers of the Department, and the ready assistance they have given in times of emergency. The compiled Returns furnished in the Appendices, which are more comprehensive than it has been customary to supply in previous years, may convey some idea of the great amount of extra duties performed in bringing up arrears of work in the Lands Branch. Such extra duties have entailed a constant strain upon the reduced staff, especially upon the Clerical division; and it is my pleasing duty to thank the officers for the large amount of overtime service which they have willingly and gratuitously rendered.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your very obedient Servant,

E. A. COUNSEL,

Surveyor-General and Secretary for Lands.

*The Hon. the Commissioner of Crown Lands,
Lands and Works Office.*

APPENDIX A.

No. 1.

RETURN of Lands forfeited, February, 1895.

COUNTY.	COUNTRY LANDS.				TOWN LANDS.			
	No. of Lots.	Area forfeited.		Amount of Arrears.	No. of Lots.	Area forfeited.		Amount of Arrears.
		A.	R. P.	£ s. d.		A.	R. P.	£ s. d.
Buckingham.....	111	6279	0 39	1553 11 3	7	54	0 32	41 0 2
Cornwall.....	54	4271	1 30	1301 17 5	11	58	3 12	190 10 4
Cumberland.....	23	1750	0 39	310 4 0	...	...	...	...
Devon.....	149	11,712	0 19	3637 7 3	24	56	3 20	168 10 10
Dorset.....	107	8172	3 33	2207 13 5	2	0	2 0	10 15 7
Flinders and King Island....	13	1128	1 9	215 9 3	...	...	...	...
Glamorgan.....	13	1001	0 33	275 18 6	2	20	2 1	29 17 11
Kent.....	44	2743	0 20	736 12 8	25	217	3 5	149 13 3
Lincoln.....	2	435	2 0	215 2 0	...	...	...	...
Monmouth.....	29	1775	3 39	679 15 8	5	27	2 15	69 14 0
Montagu.....	18	915	2 38	160 6 7	210	52	2 0	1041 10 7
Pembroke.....	73	4409	1 10	1389 14 2	13	86	1 39	87 13 7
Somerset.....	3	568	0 0	290 15 6	...	...	...	...
Wellington.....	69	6950	2 34	1185 13 8	13	48	2 6	171 6 2
Westmorland.....	29	2832	1 7	711 17 6	...	...	...	...
TOTALS.....	737	54,946	0 30	14,871 18 10	312	623	3 10	1960 12 5

No. 2.

RETURN of Payments postponed, shewing Total Area of Selections and Total Amount of Purchase Money.

Year.	Month.	Area.			Amount.		
		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
1894	August	3248	1	9	583	14	9
"	September	9688	0	30	1375	1	1
"	October	13,661	0	2	3291	14	8
"	November	26,359	3	11	5662	15	1
"	December	4375	0	0	531	8	0
1895	January.....	28,394	2	30	6090	5	8
"	February.....	12,392	1	28	3063	4	11
"	March.....	3501	2	33	859	8	3
"	April.....	5085	1	2	1940	16	4
"	May.....	3424	3	35	555	9	6
"	June.....	3133	3	33	630	6	8
	TOTALS	113,265	1	13	£24,584	4	11

No. 3.

RETURN showing Number of Lots held on Credit in Tasmania on 31st May, 1895, with Area of same.

Section of Act, &c.	No. of Lots.	Area.		
		A.	R.	P.
24th Section Waste Lands Act, 1870.....	3867	284,637	2	39
31st Section Crown Lands Act, 1890.....				
Auction, Country lands.....	150	7721	1	3
Ditto, Town lands.....	894	4859	2	35
5th Section Waste Lands Act, 1889.....	91	2791	1	9
49th Section Crown Lands Act, 1890.....	101	4833	1	31
Crown Lands Amendment Act.....	273	11,414	0	39
Residence Areas.....	295	67	1	26
TOTAL.....	5671	316,325	0	22

LAND SALES.—DECENNIAL RETURN.

YEAR.	NUMBER OF LOTS.			AREA OF LAND SOLD.			AMOUNT FOR WHICH SOLD.			AVERAGE PRICE PER ACRE.	
	Country.	Town and Suburban.	TOTAL.	Country.	Town and Suburban Lots.	TOTAL.	Country.	Town and Suburban Lots.	TOTAL.	Of Country Lots.	Of Town and Suburban Lots.
				acres.	acres.	acres.	£	£	£	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
1885.....	631	224	855	52,862	1058	53,920	69,984	4907	74,891	1 6 5½	4 12 9
1886.....	626	79	705	50,607	394	51,001	67,370	5222	72,592	1 6 7½	13 5 0½
1887.....	631	100	731	55,046	479	55,525	72,850	3120	75,970	1 6 5¼	6 10 6
1888.....	483	192	675	35,671	706	36,377	47,782	5794	53,576	1 6 9¼	8 4 1½
1889.....	723	435	1158	50,566	885	51,451	68,319	14,051	82,370	1 7 2¼	15 17 6
1890.....	610	207	817	42,986	572	43,558	57,176	8454	65,630	1 6 7	14 15 7
1891.....	451	89	540	30,649	412	31,061	40,623	2588	43,211	1 6 6	6 5 7
1892.....	467	587	1054	31,204	306	31,510	41,447	18,633	60,080	1 6 6¾	60 17 9¼
1893.....	328	70	398	19,788	684	20,472	26,452	3502	29,954	1 6 8¾	5 2 4½
1894.....	445	188	633	20,866	277	21,073	29,584	6159	35,743	1 7 10	22 4 11

RETURN showing result of Inspection of lands held on Credit.—Compiled from particulars furnished by Baliffs of Crown Lands, 1894.

County.	Lots Inspected.		Lots Improved.		Lots Unimproved.	
	No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.	No.	Area in Acres.
Buckingham*	564	25,388	403	18,016	161	7372
Cornwall.....	238	12,404	211	10,978	27	1426
Cumberland*	53	5628	41	4669	12	959
Devon	1009	78,027	717	49,842	292	28,185
Dorset	704	56,795	569	44,668	135	12,127
Flinders Island	61	7673	41	4600	20	3073
Glamorgan	57	6464	36	5324	21	1140
Kent	285	18,938	203	12,368	82	6570
Lincoln	7	576	2	174	5	402
Monmouth	179	8584	151	7018	28	1566
Montagu.....	105	3367	47	1833	58	1534
Pembroke	355	22,376	259	16,212	96	6164
Somerset	19	2513	15	1765	4	748
Wellington	440	45,735	350	36,801	90	8934
Westmorland	182	15,771	122	9695	60	6076
TOTALS	4258	310,239	3167	223,963	1091	86,276

* Returns not complete from Hamilton Municipality.

GENERAL RETURN.

	1885.	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895. 6 Months.
Revenue from all sources £	57,231	52,192	53,604	56,883	57,864	55,151	48,620	48,115	38,123	34,885	19,584
Revenue from Deposit and Instalments, 24th and 31st Sections£	31,614	30,621	31,346	35,382	38,196	37,373	34,117	27,710	26,976	21,262	10,790
Revenue from other Sales of Crown Lands£	17,373	14,582	16,080	13,848	10,970	10,074	7947	14,495	5840	5900	3887
Area of Country Lands sold acres	52,862	50,607	55,046	35,671	50,566	42,987	30,648	31,204	19,788	20,866	7792
Area of Town and Suburban Lots sold.... acres	1058	394	478	706	885	572	412	306	684	277	149
Area of Land selected under "Immigration Act" acres	6052	3574	3913	1227	1109	217	112	1968	1722	655	99
Number of Applications received for Selection and Purchase.....	1942	1734	1514	1632	1783	1924	1305	1385	770	1487	655
Number of Grant Deeds issued.....	610	554	549	573	553	530	525	454	555	341	191

No. 7.

RETURN of the Number of Country Lots of Crown Land, and Town and Suburban Allotments sold during the Years 1893 and 1894; also, the Quantity sold, Amount of Sale, and the Average Price per Acre.

YEAR.	COUNTRY LANDS.						TOWN AND SUBURBAN ALLOTMENTS.													
	No. of Lots.	Area.			Amount of Sale.		Average Price per Acre.	Number of Lots.	Area.			Amount of Sale.		Average Price per Acre.						
		A.	R.	P.	£	s.			d.	£	s.	d.								
1893..	328	19,788	0	10	26,451	10	0	1	6	8 $\frac{3}{4}$	70	684	0	2 $\frac{3}{2}$	3501	11	8	5	2	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
1894..	445	20,865	3	0	29,583	18	10	1	7	10	188	277	0	16 $\frac{5}{6}$	6159	3	4	22	4	11

No. 8.

RETURN showing the Number of Lots and Area of Land selected under "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," and "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," respectively, during the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1894, and 30th June, 1895.

	Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1894.			Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895.		
	No. of Lots.	Area.			No. of Lots.	Area.
		A.	R.	P.		
Waste Lands Act, 1870	41	2704	0	0	14	1006 3 38
Crown Lands Act, 1890.....	245	12,891	3	2	113	7081 2 9
Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893	Nil	...			309	12,827 0 39
TOTALS.....	286	15,595	3	2	436	20,915 3 6

21

No. 9.

RETURN of the Number of Lots upon which Instalments are in arrear up to the 30th June, 1895, showing Area of same and Amount due thereon.

Section.	Number of Lots.	Area.			Amount due.		
		A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
24th and 31st Sections	2099	174,072	2	39	31,946	15	3
49th Section, C. L. Act	52	2273	0	17	121	5	0
5th Section, W. L. Act	37	1567	3	22	545	10	8
38th Section—Auction	419	8696	2	31	4453	5	2
47th Section—Auction	160	1335	3	21	654	1	10
Residence Areas Act	268	60	2	7	4746	18	6
TOTALS	3035	188,006	3	17	*42,467	16	5

* This amount includes payments falling due in May and June, for which the 60 days' grace has not yet expired.

No. 10.

RETURN showing how Arrears of Purchase Money at June 30th, 1894, amounting to £47,686 2s. 11d., have been disposed of up to May 31st, 1895.

	£	s.	d.
Paid	8576	16	0
Time allowed	12,442	9	1
Given up	3434	7	6
Forfeited	15,305	17	0
Arrangements pending, &c.	7926	13	4
TOTAL	£47,686	2	11

APPENDIX B.

No. 1.

RETURN showing the Area of Leased Lands, and the Amount of Annual Rental for same, at 31st May, 1895.

	Area in Acres.	Rental.		
		£	s.	d.
Leases, Pastoral Lands	454,790	3281	15	0
Ditto, Islands	57,440	752	12	6
Occupation Licences and yearly Rentals	33,987	346	0	2
TOTAL	546,217	£4380	7	8

No. 2.

RETURN showing how Arrears of Rent due on July 1st, 1894, have been dealt with at 31st May, 1895.

	£	s.	d.
Forfeited	4256	5	4
Paid	330	18	4
Unprovided for	286	2	2
Given up	119	10	0
Time allowed	657	10	0
TOTAL	£5650	5	10

No. 3.

RETURN showing the Number of Lots and Area of Land leased during the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1894, and 30th June, 1895, respectively, with Rental of same.

	12 MONTHS ENDING 30 JUNE, 1894.			12 MONTHS ENDING 30 JUNE, 1895.		
	No. of Lots.	Area.	Rental.	No. of Lots.	Area.	Rental.
		Acres.	£ s. d.		Acres.	£ s. d.
Islands	3	160	25 5 0	5	23,825	48 10 0
Occupation Licences	41	12,028	139 1 10	100	50,304	377 10 6
Half-yearly Rentals	75	78,255	468 10 0	69	58,025	513 15 0
TOTALS	119	90,443	632 16 10	174	132,154	939 15 6

No. 4.

RETURN showing Amount received for Rent of Pastoral Crown Lands for the past Ten Years, and the first Six Months of 1895, respectively.

	£
1885	7115
1886	5811
1887	5018
1888	4576
1889	5032
1890	5690
1891	4627
1892	4047
1893	4181
1894	3037
1895, six months.....	2464

No. 5.

RETURN of Pastoral Lands the Leases of which were forfeited for non-payment of Rent, 26th November, 1894.

County.	No. of Runs.	Area in Acres.
Buckingham	2	2502
Cornwall	23	17,396
Cumberland	12	11,844
Devon	7	5800
Dorset	22	29,690
Flinders Island.....	1	1500
Glamorgan	19	27,721
Kent	1	1300
Lincoln	16	15,805
Monmouth	12	12,829
Pembroke.....	14	25,414
Russell	1	500
Somerset	8	6150
Wellington	13	8000
Westmorland	8	19,600
TOTALS.....	159	186,051