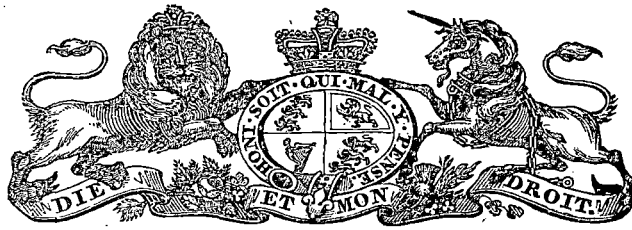


(No. 47.)



1896.

SESSION II.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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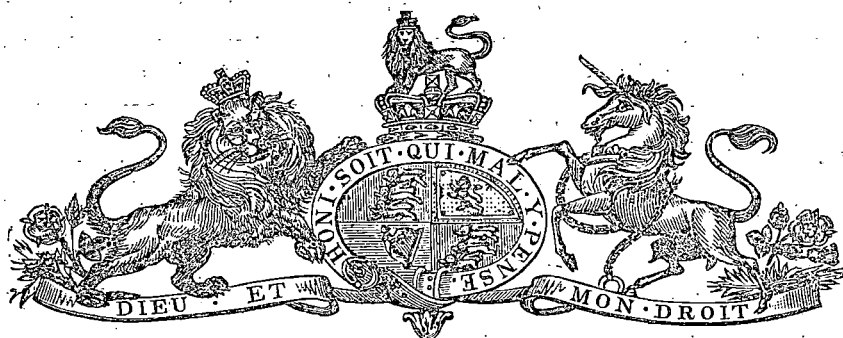
DEPARTMENT OF LANDS AND SURVEYS:

REPORT OF SURVEYOR-GENERAL AND SECRETARY FOR  
LANDS FOR 1895.

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

Cost of printing—£12.



*Department of Lands and Surveys,  
Hobart, 10th July, 1896.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit to you a Report on the Department of Lands and Surveys for the twelve months ending June 30th, 1896.

#### REVENUE.

The forecast of revenue furnished by me in June, 1895, for that year, was £36,379, and the sum actually collected was £40,496,—showing an increase in results over estimate of £4117; whilst the estimate of revenue for the year 1896, as presented in March last, was £41,130, and the amount collected during the six months ending June 30th ultimo was £22,594, as against £19,584 for the same period of 1895,—thus showing a considerable improvement on last year's proceedings, and showing that the estimate for the current year is likely to be realised. It is important to note that this increase is much more satisfactory than the bare figures indicate, inasmuch as it is made up quite independently of the area sold during the last two years under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," which represents 230 selections, embracing a total area of 5506 acres, or actually a greater number of individual farm allotments than those taken into account in the revenue returns. Although no instalments are yet due on these selections, consequent on their having been selected under the "Three years' free system," they are, nevertheless, being settled upon, and form an important element in the progress of the Country. With the disturbing elements as contained in the special land legislation of last and the two previous years, which had to be taken into account in regard to revenue items, the above forecasts have been very satisfactory.

Particulars of the receipts of Territorial Revenue collected from all sources will be found in Appendix A., Return No. 1, attached to this Report, as compared with those of the previous nine years, under the separate headings to which they belong.

#### LANDS.

As there has been a gratifying increase in Territorial Revenue, as stated in the preceding paragraph, for the year 1895, so also has there been a general improvement in the progress of agricultural selection throughout the country, and a very marked improvement in the areas leased for pastoral purposes, referred to later on.

The transactions under "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," during the twelve months just closed are confined to five allotments, in regard to which arrangements had been entered into prior to the repeal of that Act in 1890; they cover an area of 314 acres. The number of allotments selected under the 31st Section of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," is 137, containing an area of 7263 acres, as compared with 113 allotments, containing 7081 acres, for the previous twelve months. The selections made under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," consist of 180 lots, with a total area of 6746 acres, as against 309 lots, embracing a total area of 12,827 acres, for the preceding twelve months (see Appendix A., Return No. 2). The advance in the figures quoted under the principal Act is especially encouraging when taken into consideration with the Crown Lands Amendment Acts of 1893, 1894, and 1895 respectively, inasmuch as such amendment Acts are really of the nature of relief or extra concessional measures. The amendment Act of 1893 provides for an 18 years' purchase at £1 per acre, with one-third added for credit. It was devised to enable "working men" or persons with slender means to settle on the land. The maximum area allowed was 50 acres, the first three years being free and the State providing the cost of survey, which was to be subsequently repaid by the selector with the instalments. This portion of the Act was repealed after nine months' trial, as it was found to be a heavy drain on the survey vote without affording any compensating guarantee that the selector would complete his purchase. It will, I think, furnish a reasonable explanation for the increase of applications made thereunder as against those received during the last twelve months. The following Table shows the number of applications dealt with, the areas applied for, and the survey fees paid by the applicants under these respective measures.

*RETURN of Selections under 31st Section of the Crown Lands Act, 1890, and the Crown Lands Amendment Acts, 1893 and 1894, from 30th June, 1895, to 30th June, 1896.*

	Crown Lands Act, 1890, (31st Section).					Crown Lands Amendment Acts, 1893 and 1894.				
	No. of Appli- cations 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 Appli- cations 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.....	34	1786	14	460	68 5 0	66	2073	39	1127	170 0 0
Cornwall.....	16	960	2	80	12 10 0	21	647	10	327	49 15 0
Cumberland.....	13	1841	7	218	34 15 0	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Devon.....	26	2308	11	701	84 15 0	45	1777	13	493	66 15 0
Dorset.....	45	2943	17	822	107 0 0	26	845	9	285	42 15 0
Glamorgan.....	1	50	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	5	217	1	50	6 5 0
Kent.....	17	1298	12	943	98 0 0	18	544	10	287	44 10 0
Lincoln.....	6	520	3	370	32 15 0	1	25	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.
Monmouth.....	7	268	3	104	16 10 0	20	667	9	264	42 15 0
Pembroke.....	12	1186	4	225	27 10 0	20	790	7	237	34 15 0
Somerset.....	4	265	3	215	22 15 0	3	125	3	125	16 10 0
Wellington.....	27	3673	7	657	58 10 0	28	1075	6	280	37 10 0
Flinders Island..	1	25	Nil.	Nil.	Nil.	3	120	1	50	6 5 0
King Island.....	38	7012	22	4027	277 0 0	5	225	3	150	18 15 0
Westmorland....	5	240	4	290	33 15 0	6	365	1	15	Nil.
TOTAL.....	252	24,375	109	9112	874 0 0	267	9495	112	3690	536 10 0

A Return of the areas of Country, Town, and Suburban lands sold, selected, and leased for pastoral purposes is contained in Appendix A., Returns Nos. 3, 4, and 5.

#### REPORTS OF DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

A Report on the surveys effected, the progress of settlement, and other matters of importance as affecting the development of the resources of the several Survey Districts will be found in Appendix B.

#### POSTPONEMENT OF INSTALMENTS, AND SUBDIVISION OF ALLOTMENTS.

The rigorous administration of the Land Laws of the Colony, which may be said to have commenced under the Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1894, 58 Vict. No. 13, has been continued during the period under review. This enactment was introduced to give special relief to *bona fide* selectors who had fallen into embarrassed circumstances, and who were in consequence unable to clear off the arrears of instalments which had accumulated on their selections under the previous administration of the Land Acts. It authorised the Governor in Council to postpone the payment of any land instalments for any period not exceeding five years, at £5 per centum per annum, or to permit any selector or purchaser under certain conditions to apply the moneys paid on the whole of any allotment of land towards the purchase of any portion thereof, not being less than one-half the original selection. Improvements were essential to the value of the land for which a grant deed was claimed, exclusive of buildings. Liberal though these provisions were, it soon became apparent that there was a large proportion of the selectors in arrears with their instalments who were unable to meet their responsibilities, who had not paid half the purchase money on their allotments, and who were thereby debarred from availing themselves of the advantages of a subdivision. Accordingly, a further Amendment of the Crown Lands Act, 1890, was passed by Parliament last year, 59 Vict. No. 31. Such Amendment extended the provisions appertaining to subdivisions, and contained in the Act of 1894, to any selector, regardless of the proportion of the purchase money paid by him. In short, it permitted the issue of a Crown grant for any portion of a rural lot of land covered by the amount of the purchase money that had been paid thereon. Like the Act of 1894, one of the principal features of the later Amendment was the satisfying of the Governor in Council that the residential and improvement clauses of the Act under which the land was purchased had been complied with in order to prevent mere land speculators from participating in the privileges it offered to the *bona fide* selectors. It came into force in October, 1895, and expired on June 30th, 1896. During the period of this Act and that of 1894, 207 applications for subdivisions were received. Of this number 68 persons paid survey fees on a total area of 5233 acres, thus providing for the issue of Crown grants of an average of 77 acres each to 68 deserving persons who would otherwise have been deprived of their holdings. For the 12 months ending June 30th ult., instalments amounting to £13,177 15s. have been postponed for various periods not exceeding one year. They refer to an aggregate area of 73,049 acres.

## CORRIGENDUM.

After the words "Six months of 1896" *read* "The figures are, for 1895, 236,345 acres at an annual rental of £1655 10s., as against 46,002 acres at £298 15s. for the year 1894, and 147,837 acres at £821 10s. for the Six months ending June 30th ultimo."

*RETURN of Instalments postponed, showing Total Area of Selections and Amount of Purchase Money deferred in respect thereof, for the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1896.*

	Area.			Amount.		
	A.	R.	P.	£	s.	d.
1895.						
July.....	7023	1	25	1025	4	0
August.....	8387	3	13	1766	7	1
September.....	11,496	1	30	3001	4	5
October.....	5155	0	17	1025	9	4
November.....	5386	2	27	766	17	5
December.....	8586	2	27	479	15	7
1896.						
January.....	1763	0	3	261	6	9
February.....	2217	3	27	329	19	9
March.....	2418	3	23	439	14	7
April.....	12,170	2	34	1866	0	1
May.....	5172	1	24	1066	17	4
June.....	3270	1	37	1148	18	8
TOTALS .....	73,049	2	7	£13,177	15	0

The amount of interest paid during the twelve months ending 30th June, 1896, on account of postponements of Purchase Money and Rentals is £708 10s. 3d.

The greatest care and constant watchfulness have been essential in the administration of the special Amending Acts of 1894 and 1895; and although, as a matter of fact, under their operation the land credit system of the Colony, as embodied in the principal Act, has for the time being been thrown into confusion in favour of rendering special assistance to those who had over-selected in more prosperous times, and were under the prevailing depression unable to meet their payments, yet these enactments have worked well on the whole in so far as fulfilling the object for which they were instituted, and I venture to believe that the results attained will compare favourably with those arrived at under similar conditions in any of the neighbouring colonies.

There are cases still in which the relief afforded by subdivision is sought, but which did not come within the scope of the Acts above mentioned by reason of the fact that the standard value of improvements upon the land had not been reached. These cases will probably be presented to Parliament for consideration with a view to making special provision to enable the purchasers to retain a portion of their respective allotments.

#### PASTORAL LEASES.

The results of the year's administration of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," in regard to pastoral lands, are of a highly satisfactory nature when compared with previous years, as shown in Appendix A., Return No. 3: the area leased being more than 500 per cent. greater than last year, and higher than any year during the last decade, with a proportionate increase again for the first six months of 1896. ~~The figures are, for 1895, 236,345 acres at an annual rental of £4594, as against 46,002 acres at £3038 for the year 1894, and 147,837 acres at £2018 for the six months ending June 30th ultimo—vide Appendix A., Return No. 1.~~ In analysing the figures quoted it will be seen that the total rental received for last year is proportionately lower than for former years as compared with the areas leased, which fact goes to show that the improvement in pastoral leases is mainly due to the more active supervision over the Crown Lands than was formerly exercised rather than to any increased demand for pastoral occupation. And yet there is much room for a further improvement under a systematic order of inspection of these Lands, such as might be economically and reproductively carried out by a special officer, in connection with a much needed inspection over the timber-cutting and wattle-barking industries throughout the island. Reference was made to this important matter in my last Annual Report, and I may now say that the remarks therein made are equally applicable at the present time. I am not unmindful of, on the contrary I feel a deep sense of appreciation of the valuable, arduous, and in many instances gratuitous services rendered to this Department by the Bailiffs of Crown Lands in various districts, but inasmuch as these officers are invariably officials of the Police Department or of local Municipal Councils, the duties which those in the Municipalities are sometimes called upon to perform for this Department are inconsistent with their primary appointment and individual interests, of which I have seen several very practical illustrations. I have therefore little hope of arriving at anything like satisfactory results under present conditions.

## DEFAULT SALES.

A sale of lands selected or purchased under "The Waste Lands Act, 1870," and "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," 54 Vict. No. 8, upon which default in the payments of instalments had been made, was prepared and fixed to take place in October last year; but it was subsequently withdrawn pending the passing of the Crown Lands Amendment Act of 1895, 59 Vict. No. 31, which it was intended should offer greater concessions to persons in arrears with their instalments than the legislation in operation when the Default Sale was prepared afforded. Had the sale been proceeded with under such conditions it is obvious that the defaulters whose lots were included therein would have been placed at a disadvantage to those of a subsequent period, and would accordingly have had tangible grounds for complaining of unfair treatment by the Department.

There has been no Default Sale held during the past twelve months, but a list of defaulters has been prepared and advertised in accordance with the provisions contained in Sect. 71 of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," preparatory to such a sale being held at a future date. The list as advertised, which is a very large one, will be considerably reduced before the day of sale, inasmuch as it includes numbers of allotments upon which the arrears have since been paid or arranged for by subdivision or postponement of payments under sections 5 and 6 of 58 Vict. No. 13.

## SURVEYS.

In my last Annual Report I had the honor to acknowledge my appreciation of your having been pleased to recommend to Parliament that all public surveys be by statute vested in the control of the Surveyor General—Act 58 Vict. No. 13—and to advise you that I had taken steps accordingly to arrange for all such surveys being carried out under one uniform system of Regulations. As the provisions of this Act have not been brought into operation, and as a consequence the surveys are still being conducted by the several separate departments under your jurisdiction, and under various conditions and methods, it will, I conclude, be expected of me to deal with those only for the proper conduct of which the Survey Department is at present being held responsible, viz., those required for agricultural settlement. But, in view of the fact that the gravity of the survey question may not be fully understood by those not specially versed in the technicalities with which it is surrounded, and in view also of the insecurity thrown upon the individuals whom it may affect, and the risks to which the State is exposed under a loose and imperfect system of survey, I cannot too strongly urge upon you the necessity for instituting a well-regulated order of supervision over all surveys. As a practical illustration of the difficulties of the situation, the large interests at stake, and the importance of this subject, I would refer briefly to the suit at law instituted by the Silver Queen Prospecting Association *versus* The Montana Mining Company, which was heard before His Honor Mr. Justice Dodds in the Supreme Court in December last. This case involved a claim for £17,000 on account of an alleged encroachment, against which there was a cross action for £1000. After having spent some days in endeavouring unsuccessfully to grapple with the professional evidence of surveyors, the learned Judge is reported to have said that "he was just as wise as ever." Later on His Honor decided that the case was of such a technical character that it should be submitted to experts for arbitration. In support of this view he is reported to have made the following very significant remarks that:—"The jury were required to assume the position of surveyors to determine questions of fact. They were required to become judges of evidence at all times difficult and of a technical character." If this is so; if one of our most able Judges—one who has had such a large experience and close intimacy with the law and practice in such matters as His Honor is known to possess—should hesitate to address a jury upon such a subject, then how much more difficult and confusing must such a question be to the mind of a layman, of whom it could not be expected that he would be so competent to master its intricacies. And yet withal, complex as the case cited proved to be (even in able hands), it does not appear to have been in any way of an exceptional nature; it was purely a question of determining a survey boundary on the evidence of surveyors; it was, in fact, a question that the Survey and your other Departments are continually called upon to decide. And thus a very grave and, as it appears, an unfair responsibility is thrown upon persons who may not always possess the special training which His Honor considers so essential to arriving at a correct conclusion.

In making the foregoing remarks I have endeavoured to confine myself strictly to the primary question of the survey boundary, as distinct from the quantity of ore which it was alleged had been wrongly taken from the Silver Queen P. A., and represented in value by the amount of damages claimed. The material excavated would of necessity be governed by the position of the boundary line, and would in reality be a matter for calculation after the former consideration had been determined. As to the great value which His Honor attaches to reliable surveys, I submit that his observations, after having examined the District Surveyor upon the original survey, leave little room for doubt or difference of opinion. They are printed as follows:—"You have now got something certain. Here is the man who made the survey and who has found his own line. I don't think all the surveyors in the country can alter that." From the direct bearing which the case quoted has upon surveys generally, and from the very forcible expressions used by His Honor in dealing with it, it is quite evident that in his opinion it is of the utmost importance that all survey boundaries should be well and truly laid down in such a manner that the original lines could be at any time accurately and faithfully reproduced.

*RETURN of Selection and Auction Surveys received during the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1896.*

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.	1451	47	255	5	1706	52
Cumberland .....	Frodsham, T.	1982	29	...	...	1982	29
Dorset .....	Eddie, G. T.	1529	33	18	6	1547	39
Devon .....	Hall, R.	666	14	102	3	768	17
Deloraine .....	Sorell, J. A.	1330	34	4	10	1334	44
Franklin .....	Innes, E. G.	2830	47	15	2	2845	49
Fingal .....	Smith, G. C.	2030	44	2	10	2032	54
Moorina .....	Walpole, E. G.	191	4	1	1	192	5
Mersey & Flinders Island .....	Chalmers, H. J.	477	10	...	...	477	10
Montagu .....	Wilson, C. S.	157	13	60	208	217	221
Oatlands .....	Hardy, W. M.	1320	20	8	2	1328	22
Russell .....	Jones, D.	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tasman's Peninsula .....	Hinsby, J. H.	354	8	...	...	354	8
Wellington .....	Windsor, F. E.	1557	30	20	3	1577	33
King Island .....	...	3553	24	...	...	3553	24
		19,427	357	485	250	19,912	607

*Special Surveys—Annual Return for Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1896.*

Town of Queenstown (extension), 103 lots surveyed and permanently marked.  
Town of Gormanston (extension), 97 lots surveyed and permanently marked.  
Thirteen miles of road surveyed for Public Works Department in numerous small sections throughout the country.

*RETURN of Number of Instructions issued to Surveyors for the Twelve months ending 30th June, 1896.*

Name.	Survey Department.	Mines Department.	Total.
Chalmers, H. J. ....	25	30	55
Combes, H. ....	43	—	43
Eddie, G. T. ....	39	43	82
Frodsham, T. ....	30	—	30
Hall, R. ....	22	147	169
Hardy, W. M. ....	44	—	44
Innes, E. G. ....	38	—	38
Jones, D. ....	—	92	92
Smith, G. C. ....	35	275	310
Sorell, J. A. ....	25	44	69
Windsor, F. E. ....	21	3	24
Wilson, C. S. ....	28	564	592
Authorised Surveyors .....	66	31	97
	416	1229	1645

**DRAFTING ROOM.**

The Chief Draftsman reports as follows upon the work of the Drafting Room :—

Three Town plans and one County plan have been compiled in the Drafting Room during the year; and ten Town plans, twenty-nine County Plans, and one small map of Tasmania have been posted up to date. Satisfactory progress has been made with the compilation of the 2-chain scale plan of the City of Hobart mentioned in the last Annual Report, two sheets out of six having been completed, and a third nearly so.

The compilation of the Town plans is now practically complete with the exception of Hobart, and one or two others that it has not been considered advisable, for various reasons, to publish at present. Since 1884, when I undertook the supervision of the compilation of plans, one hundred and ten Town plans have been compiled and drawn. Previously to 1884 no lithographs of Town plans were procurable from this office,—in fact very few of the working plans themselves were complete, it being necessary in the majority of cases to refer to eight or ten plans, besides innumerable diagrams, before any idea of the Town could be arrived at; this, of course, was very confusing to outsiders. There still remain a considerable number of County sheets to be compiled or re-compiled.

The Grant Schedules, from the year 1838 to 1866, inclusive, have, after a great deal of searching, &c., been collected and arranged for binding; the later years were collected and bound some time since. When they are all done it will be a great convenience both to the department and the public, as when the description of the boundaries of a granted property was required it constantly happened that the information could not be obtained without sending an officer of this department to consult the records of the Enrolment Office, thus causing delay and loss of time. The advantage of being able to turn up these old records readily has already been largely felt in the compilation of the plan of the City of Hobart.

It is proposed as opportunity occurs to have the *Gazettes* of the Colony from the earliest dates carefully gone through, with the view of obtaining complete records of Proclamations of Public Reserves, Main Roads, Cross Roads, Closed Roads, &c., the records in the distant past on these matters having been very indifferently and imperfectly kept.

It must be understood that the matters referred to under this heading are, as it were, a few extras that can only be attended to after the current work of the office has been done; for instance, in Victoria at one time there was a staff of thirty draftsmen employed solely on the compilation of plans, whereas here there is not a single draftsman whose time can be wholly devoted to that work.

*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, 1896.*

Plans prepared.	County and Town plans compiled and drawn .....	10	
	Ditto ditto posted up to date .....	40	
			50
Applications dealt with.	Crown Lands Amendment Acts, 1893 and 1894, (selection) .....	270	
	Crown Lands Act, 1890, (31st Section) .....	253	
	Ditto, (auction and private purchase) .....	140	
	Ditto, (rent).....	493	
	Ditto, (selection in mining areas) .....	76	
	Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1894, 10th Section, (reduction of area) .....	53	
	Ditto, 1895, (for purchase of second-class land) .....	47	
	Residence Areas Acts, 1891 and 1893, (purchase) .....	85	
			1417
Grants prepared.	Grant deeds prepared in duplicate .....		391
Diagrams of Surveys received.	Selections .....	339	
	Auction and residence areas.....	317	
	Real Property Act .....	17	
	Roads, re-surveys, &c.....	104	
			777
Diagrams and Plans examined.	Computed and examined.....	751	
	In course of examination.....	18	
	Unexamined .....	8	
			777
Road Surveys recorded.	Plan of road surveys received from Public Works Department and recorded on original plans .....		38
Diagram books and grant schedules.	Diagram books prepared for binding .....	8	
	Grant schedule books ditto .....	1	
			9
	Claims for grants under the Real Property Act and through the Supreme Court dealt with .....		23
Instructions for Surveys.	Instructions prepared and issued to Surveyors .....		416
Surveyors' accounts.	Surveyors' accounts in triplicate passed for payment .....		162
Closed roads.	Roads described for closing by Proclamation .....		8
Descriptions.	Descriptions of allotments furnished to clerical branch for contracts for sale of land.....		347
Plans of districts.	Plans of Districts prepared for Boundaries Board of Advice.....		8
	Road Districts described for proclamation .....	9	
	Fruit ditto .....	3	
	Municipal ditto.....	4	
	Recreation ditto .....	1	
	Towns proclaimed .....	3	
			20



## INSPECTIONS.

I have visited the Districts of Franklin, Buckingham, Cumberland, Deloraine, Dorset, and Montagu during the last twelve months. The surveys generally, as far as I have been able to examine them, have been satisfactorily carried out,—the marking being fairly permanent, and the lines well cut out.

A serious error made by a District Surveyor was discovered in the office, and the offending official punished as provided for in the Regulations. The rectifying of this error involved a cost to the Government of some £28 7s., together with a large amount of time expended in the office investigation.

In December I made a special journey, by arrangement with the Manager of the Van Diemen's Land Company (Mr. J. W. Norton-Smith), to Green Point, on the West Coast. The object of my mission was to inspect the south boundary line of the Woolnorth Estate, the position of which boundary has been in dispute, as between the Government and the said Company, for many years. The nature of the dispute is a discrepancy which exists between the line as marked on the ground and the descriptions of the Block contained in the Grant Deed. I carefully examined the boundary hitherto adopted, (upon which several allotments of land have been sold by the Crown), and also the country in from the coast, to ascertain if any other surveyed line existed which might indicate a misconception of the true boundary, but I was unable to discover that any second original line had ever been run. As I have had the honor to previously place the subject fully before you for consideration in a special report, dated December 31st, 1895, in which report I drew attention at some length to the law in Tasmania and elsewhere bearing on the matter at issue, it may not be further referred to here; but, inasmuch as there are a number of applications for land purchase held in abeyance pending a final settlement of the question in dispute, it is of consequence that it be finally disposed of as early as practicable.

## VILLAGE SETTLEMENT.

I visited the Village Settlement at Southport at Easter this year, and noticed a great change for the better since I last saw it. Many settlers have come and gone since the movement was initiated in October 1894, but those now on their allotments, consisting of nine families exclusive of the managing settler, numbering 47 souls all told, appear to be fairly establishing themselves there. Every family had a planting of potatoes averaging, say, 1½ acres, with a wholesome supply of other vegetables, and generally a plot of grass in preparation for a cow, which one settler had already obtained; others were anxious to follow suit, whilst in every case there was a pig or two in the sty, and a collection of poultry in the yard. The initial clearing, estimated at between two and three acres, about each cottage has been overcome. It was a heavy undertaking by reason of the fact that a large amount of heavy timber had to be felled for the safety of the cottages in stormy weather, and that the "burn-off" was a very bad one. More time has been spent in grubbing stumps, running their roots, and in completely getting rid of all traces of scrub-growth than in settlement generally is actually essential or economical in the early stages of clearing heavy bush land, as the stumps and roots can be much more easily disposed of after the land has been cropped or "laid down" in grass for a few years. In this special instance it was necessary to bring the land under tillage at once. Taken as a whole the progress made is not great, but there is an air of comfort and contentment about the settlers which leaves no room to doubt that they are, so to speak, taking hold on the land and intend to remain there; but they will apparently require further support to carry them on till this year's crop is gathered. When it is borne in mind that persons of special calibre only, and inured to bush life, may be expected to successfully combat the difficulties incidental to carving out a home in the dense forest, that the settlers were drawn from the ranks of the unemployed of Hobart, some of whom had never "worked on the land" before, and some again of whom had never been accustomed to laborious work of any kind, it is not surprising that the progress made has not been more extensive, but rather that the results achieved should infuse renewed energy into the labours of the Ladies' Committee under whom the Settlement has been inaugurated. They have, at any rate, realised that their efforts have not been a failure, but, on the other hand, that permanent good has been wrought, and a new life given to a number of suffering individuals who were unable to face the battle of life unaided, and who must otherwise have fallen back upon the Government for assistance. A practical suggestion may be taken from this experiment in favour of its being carried on in conjunction with a labour colony as an economical means of affording permanent relief to the unemployed amongst the labouring classes with advantage to the State and the people.

## CROWN RESERVATIONS.

Steps have been taken in this Department to preserve the rights of the State to the numerous Crown reservations throughout the country. Where persons have been found to be in unlawful occupation of portions of such reservations they have been called upon to take out an annual licence for such occupation. Generally this demand has been complied with, (about 50 persons having paid rent), but in some instances it has been disregarded, and in others a perpetual ownership is claimed on account of lengthened and undisturbed possession. The necessary process at law under the provisions of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890" is now in course of progress for dealing with the latter cases.

## TIMBER-CUTTING AND WATTLE-BARKING.

The absence of any adequate provision having been hitherto made to enable saw-millers to prosecute the timber industry upon Crown Lands has led to many years misapplication of the provisions of the Waste Lands Acts, and to a comparatively large annual loss of revenue in more prosperous times. The only legitimate way in which a saw-miller could acquire the timber on Crown Lands under previous legislation was by the payment of a Timber Licence at £1 per month for each individual employed upon the work. These Licences afforded no protection against intrusion by other saw-millers upon any particular bed of timber the holder of a licence may have discovered; and consequently it could scarcely be expected that persons possessing practical knowledge of the business would be willing to risk their capital in establishing a costly saw-milling plant under such insecure conditions. This was, as a matter of fact, tacitly admitted by the Government, and in order to protect the timber industry, the saw-miller was permitted to select lands ostensibly for cultivation—but in reality for timber purposes—in direct contravention of the fundamental principles of the Lands Acts, under which his security was obtained.

Many thousands of acres of Crown Land have been selected throughout the country, denuded of all valuable timber, and afterwards thrown back upon the State, without, in many cases, one penny having been contributed to the revenue. Not only this, but it is known that in some instances a heavy royalty has been charged by individuals on timber which was in reality illegally cut on Crown Land.

As a step towards placing the timber industry upon a more satisfactory footing, provision was made in Section 9 of the Crown Lands Amendment Act of last year (59 Vict. No. 31) authorising the Governor in Council to make regulations for the cutting of timber on Crown Lands for saw-milling purposes. These Regulations have been framed, and came into operation on February 14th of this year. They provide for the issue of Timber Licences, securing to the licensee the right to the timber upon a prescribed area. But no right is conferred upon such Licensee to use the surface of the land except for the purpose for which the Licence is issued. The land may be thrown open for agricultural selection as the timber is taken away. As a practical concession to the saw-millers the cost of surveys under these Regulations is reduced £50 per centum. Only four applications, covering an area of 1200 acres, have been received up to June 30th last. The low price of timber will, I think, account for the scarcity of applications. Practical saw-millers speak well of the measure.

The wattle-barking business, like the timber-cutting, has always been in an unsatisfactory condition for want of better supervision. It is let by tender in such area as the Commissioner of Crown Lands may determine, or by auction, under conditions prescribed pursuant to the authority contained in the Crown Lands Act, 1890, 54 Vict. No. 8. The number of applications received during last season is 34, comprising a total area of 301,050 acres, which area includes one tender for 276,000 acres in Glamorgan. The sum of tenders is £221 11s. 0d., and the sum realised is £171 11s. 0d., leaving a balance of £50, which is due upon the large tender, and will be payable at the expiration of time granted to the tenderer. The total amount tendered is, I am quite convinced, altogether inadequate to the quantity of bark stripped—it is probably not one-quarter of the value which it is supposed to represent. The total sum collected for timber licences issued during the year is £507 8s. 6d. In obtaining these sums no fewer than twelve Crown seizures in as many districts have been made; viz., three of wattle bark stripped on Crown land without authority, and nine of timber of various kinds which had been cut without a licence. One action was laid against a number of persons under Section 108 of the Crown Lands Act, and fully sustained. These facts are not reassuring; on the contrary they furnish practical testimony of how little the law is respected in regard to these important matters. Every effort is being made in this Department with the means at command to see that the law is being fairly carried out, but it has not been possible to obtain satisfactory field supervision over either timber-cutting, bark-stripping, or the trespassing on pastoral lands under existing circumstances. When any special case of emergency arises, such as that which occurred in Glamorgan last year, there is no officer immediately available for the duty. In the instance referred to, application had to be made to the Commissioner of Police to place the services of an officer stationed in Hobart at the disposal of this Department to undertake the prosecutions, which involved his travelling over 150 miles for these solitary cases, at a cost of about £15.

## EXPLORATION TRACKS.

Very little in the way of exploration track-cutting has been undertaken by the Government for many years, and such as there has been, cannot be said to have been carried out under any methodical system of arrangement, if we except that initiated in 1876, and prosecuted with more or less success for some three years later, in which the late Mr. Chas. P. Sprent took a leading part. It was therefore not altogether a matter for surprise that much of the information obtained under the able administration of the late Sir William Denison during the fifties, upon the country to the west of the Derwent, was not immediately available when the agitation was recently raised for establishing communication overland between Hobart and the West Coast. Had the records of past explorations been systematically preserved, those recently undertaken might have been

arranged to greater advantage, as has been suggested in the press; but in view of the nature of the data of the original surveys that have come to light so far, it does not appear that any extensive departure from the general route entrusted to Mr. Frodsham to explore, between Tyenna and Arrowsmith, and that upon which Mr. E. G. Innes is at present engaged, between Tyenna and the navigable waters of the Gordon, could have been dispensed with in the circumstances.

The results of Mr. Frodsham's labours are to some extent disappointing, he having been compelled to discontinue the work owing to his supplies having run out; whilst the result of Mr. Innes' expedition must await his return to civilisation. He is an experienced surveyor, and may be expected to give a good account of himself.

In regard to the subject of track-cutting generally, I cannot too strongly commend its importance to the favourable consideration of the Government as a main factor in the early and profitable development of the unexplored regions of the Island; but the undertaking, to prove in every way successful, must be initiated under an organised and general scheme, to be carried on year by year during the summer months.

#### KING ISLAND.

One of the most interesting paragraphs in this Report is the wonderful progress that has taken place in land settlement on King Island during the last few years. The island had remained almost an uninhabited and unproductive waste ever since the foundation of the Colony in 1804. It is true that it was held under lease at a nominal rental from the year 1864 to 1887, but it was merely used as a bush run for stock. In 1887 the Lands Department sent a surveyor to inspect and report on its capabilities, and made other efforts to bring this island into prominence, but to no purpose, until an application for the purchase of a 45-acre selection was received at this office in August, 1888. Since that date 41 sections have been applied for, embracing in all 5650 acres; and six pastoral leases have been issued representing a total area of 15,200 acres.

There can be no doubt that permanent settlement on King Island is now assured, under the most favourable prospects of future success. The country generally is open and lightly timbered, and the soil of a light friable nature—varying from granite and sandstone to limestone formation—and exceedingly fertile. It is somewhat singular that such an island, being just in the line of traffic to Victoria, should have been so long untenanted. The population now settled there is principally engaged in pastoral pursuits, and as the stock fatten with marvellous rapidity upon the native pasture, it is proving to be a most profitable enterprise. There is now regular fortnightly communication with the mainland during the best part of the year.

#### REGULATIONS.

By virtue of the authority vested in the Governor in Council under Section 127 of "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," (54 Vict. No. 8), a Regulation was published in the *Government Gazette* of 12th November, 1895, providing, where practicable, for a reduction in fees paid to surveyors for subdivision surveys effected under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1894." Chainage rates are prescribed as applied to the measurement of ordinary connections. This Regulation has afforded a substantial concession to persons generally who have been in a position to avail themselves of its conditions; which, however, owing to the shape of some allotments, is not always practicable.

Regulations were also framed and published with the approval of the Governor in Council in February last, under the provisions of Section 10 of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1895," setting forth the mode of operations in connection with and the information required by the Commissioner for the classification of Rural Lands of the Crown.

Provision has been made by Regulation for reducing the fee payable for quarrying stone on Crown Lands for road-making and other purposes from 5s. to 2s. 6d. per week for each person so employed:—*Vide Gazette* of 6. 11. 95.

The prescribed form of application, with the conditions and stipulations upon which licences are granted for saw-milling areas, were published in the *Gazette* of 14th February, 1896, pursuant to the authority contained in Section 9 of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1895," (54 Vict. No. 31).

Copies of these Regulations have been laid upon the Table of each House of Parliament in terms of the Acts by which they are authorised.

#### THE CROWN LANDS GUIDE.

"The Crown Lands Guide" has been revised, and the matter it contains brought up to date as far as practicable. The general observations upon the characteristics and progress of the country have been re-written and some additional chapters added, with a view to giving a brief outline of

the general developments that have taken place since the first edition was published in 1884. It is of the greatest service to the Lands Department in supplying information to inquirers from abroad upon all matters relative to the Crown Lands, and the laws under which they are administered.

#### BOARD OF EXAMINERS FOR SURVEYORS.

The Secretary to the Board of Examiners reports as follows upon the operations of the Board for the Twelve months ending 30th June, 1896 :—

“ A new Board was appointed by the Governor in Council on the 23rd of August, 1895, whereupon the former Board ceased to exist, two members of which, however, were included in the new Board, which is constituted as follows :—

The Surveyor-General, *ex officio*, (Chairman).

The Chief Draftsman Lands and Surveys, *ex officio*.

The Director of Education, *ex officio*.

The Engineer of existing Railway Lines.

The City Surveyor; and

Two authorised Surveyors (of whom one is a District Surveyor), nominated by the Institution of Surveyors for Tasmania.

An examination under the auspices of this Board was held at the Lands Office commencing on the 3rd September last, at which one candidate presented himself. Three meetings have been held for the transaction of routine business, and the list of authorised Surveyors for Tasmania has been increased by the addition of one name. Correspondence has been conducted with the various Boards of Examiners in the Australasian Colonies and New Zealand, to all of whom this Board is indebted for valuable information as to the system obtaining, of payment of members thereof, and other matters. Exchanges of examination papers have from time to time taken place between this and other similar Boards elsewhere; and the good feeling hitherto existing has in no way abated, although in the matter of ‘reciprocity’ we are as yet almost strangers to the Australasian Colonies.”

#### GENERAL.

In closing this Report I desire to acknowledge the consideration extended to me by heads of other Departments in the conduct of public business, and especially the valuable and ready assistance at all times accorded to me by the Government Printer in reproducing litho plans, charts, diagrams, &c., and the creditable and prompt manner in which the work has been executed in his Department.

It is my pleasure also to bear testimony to the regular attendance and uniform zeal displayed by the officers of this Department generally in the performance of their work, whilst those in the senior branches have been especially assiduous in the discharge of their arduous and responsible duties. The large amount of extra work undertaken for the various other Departments of the Service, together with the vigorous administration of the land credit system, has added considerably to the already heavy strain thrown upon a reduced staff, thus necessitating much overtime work being resorted to. In such cases the extra duties of those so employed have been in every case gratuitously rendered to the State, and it now remains for me to thank one and all of them for their loyal and generous services.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

E. A. COUNSEL, *F.R.G.S.*,

*Surveyor-General and Secretary for Lands.*

*The Honorable the Minister of Lands.*



## APPENDIX A.

## No. 1.

## GENERAL RETURN, Crown Lands Branch.

	1886.	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.	1895.	1896. 6 Months.
Receipts from all sources £	60,381	61,331	70,645	64,823	67,707	67,840	54,536	42,493	34,885	40,496	22,594
Receipts from Deposits and Instalments, 24th and 31st Sections.....£	30,621	31,346	35,406	38,208	37,373	34,117	27,712	26,976	21,262	21,877	11,674
Receipts from other Sales of Crown Lands.....£	14,582	16,080	13,754	11,010	10,074	7947	14,519	5840	5900	6446	3815
Rent of Crown Land for Pastoral purposes.....£	5813	5019	4746	5032	5690	4627	4047	4181	3038	4594	2018
Fees for Timber Licences, Grant Deeds, &c.....£	1073	1117	3077	3637	1983	1927	1873	1127	1613	1017	655
Survey Fees.....£	8292	7769	13,662	6936	12,587	19,222	6335	4369	3072	6562	4432
Area of Country Lands sold.....acres	50,607	55,046	35,671	50,566	42,987	30,648	31,204	19,788	20,866	14,316	8165
Area of Town and Sub-urban Lands sold...acres	394	478	706	885	572	412	306	684	277	269	87
Area of Land selected under "Immigration Act"...ac.	3574	3913	1227	1109	217	112	1968	1722	655	558	Nil.
Area of Land leased for Pastoral purposes...acres	205,361	69,484	82,669	177,397	93,026	37,234	63,530	63,805	46,002	236,345	147,837
Number of Applications for Selection and Purchase...	1734	1514	1632	1783	1924	1305	1385	770	1487	899	848
Number of Grant Deeds issued.....	554	549	573	553	530	525	454	555	341	397	185

## No. 2.

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, 1895, and 30th June, 1896.

	Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895.			Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1896.		
	No. of Lots.	Area.		No. of Lots.	Area.	
		A.	R. P.		A.	R. P.
Waste Lands Act, 1870.....	14	1006	3 38	5	314	1 27
Crown Lands Act, 1890.....	113	7081	2 9	137	7263	1 36
Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893 .....	309	12,827	0 39	180	6746	3 3
TOTALS.....	436	20,915	3 6	322	14,324	2 26

## No. 3.

RETURN showing the Number of Lots and Area of Land leased during the Twelve Months ending 30th June, 1895, and 30th June, 1896, respectively, with Rental of same.

	Twelve months ending 30th June, 1895.			Twelve months ending 30th June, 1896.		
	No of Lots.	Area. Acres.	Rental.	No. of Lots.	Area Acres.	Rental.
			£ s. d.			£ s. d.
Islands.....	5	23,825	48 10 0	3	8750	44 0 0
Occupation Licences .....	100	50,304	377 10 6	185	65,277	340 8 4
Half-yearly Rentals .....	69	58,025	513 15 0	179	222,353	1435 19 0
TOTALS .....	174	132,154	939 15 6	367	296,380	1820 7 4

## 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.
1886.....	626	79	705	50,607	394	51,101	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 5½	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	21,143	29,584	6159	35,743	1 7 10	22 4 11
1895.....	380	136	516	14,316	269	14,585	20,757	5193	25,950	1 8 11¼	19 6 1

## No. 5.

*RETURN showing Amount received for Rent of Pastoral Crown Lands and Annual Occupation Licences for the past Ten Years, and for the first Six Months of 1896, respectively.*

	£
1886 .....	5811
1887 .....	5018
1888 .....	4576
1889 .....	5032
1890 .....	5690
1891 .....	4627
1892 .....	4047
1893 .....	4181
1894 .....	3037
1895 .....	4594
1896, six months .....	2018

## APPENDIX B.

## REPORTS OF DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

Survey District of *Buckingham*.—Mr. H. Combes, District Surveyor, reports :—

During the year 1895 nothing has arisen to call for more than passing comment. The number of allotments surveyed for agricultural settlement during the past year is thirty, comprising about one thousand acres, situated in different parts of the District, in some few cases new selections in isolated situations, in others extensions of previous holdings. One person only has availed himself of the liberal clause of "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1894;" while two lots only have been surveyed for auction—one-acre lot and a fourteen.

*Land available for selection*.—The portion of my District having the greatest claim to notice from intending selectors should be the Upper Huon, but, as I have already pointed out on several occasions, the lack of access thereto is still a bar to its settlement. I anticipate that if a track was cut into this country much of it would be selected. There is also good land in the vicinity of Sandfly recently thrown open for selection.

In the Parish of Throckmorton, at the heads of the Crabtree and Baker's Rivulet, there is still good land to be obtained with good splitting timber; but in view of the low price of produce prevailing, it can hardly be expected that much attention would have been directed to the forming of new farms.

*Road requirements*.—Under this heading I have the honor to again recommend the cutting of a good horse-track from Wallis' farm on the Upper Huon into the country watered by the Denison and Weld Rivers, where some 2000 acres of good land can be made available for selection.

*Progress of Settlement*.—That settlement has proceeded very slowly during the past year is a remark for little surprise, considering the very discouraging returns from many well-established farms in this District. Low prices—in many cases placing the farmer on the wrong side of the ledger after a season's hard work—are hardly likely to induce settlement, and until we experience a revival in the produce market the farmer and selector cannot afford to extend his operations.

Survey District of *Cumberland*.—Mr. Thos. Frodsham, District Surveyor, reports as follows :—

I have to report that during the year 1895 a very small area of land has been selected, the amount being about seven or eight hundred acres, in about seventeen lots, and out of this area about one half only has been purchased, the balance having been given up. At present selection has almost ceased, the cause, I believe, being the low price of all agricultural produce and the high price of land. Although a large area of land in my district has been forfeited during the past year, yet those persons who have remained on the land are making steady progress in improving the country selected.

*Land suitable for selection, &c.*—A large area of first-class land is still available for selection in the Russell's Falls District, also in the Florentine Valley; for a detailed account of such land I would refer you to my former reports.

The largest area of land suitable for pastoral purposes is to be found in the County of Lincoln, west of River Derwent.

*Roads and Tracks required*.—In my former reports I indicated the roads and tracks I considered necessary to open up the country, and I would again suggest that a small amount be spent upon the track from Russell's Falls to Florentine Valley to clear off timber that has fallen across it. This track has been of great assistance to prospectors prospecting the country to the West, and will also be of use in the future as a base of operations in surveying a line of road to Florentine Valley when required.

Survey District of *Deloraine*.—Mr. J. A. Sorell, District Surveyor, reports as follows :—

In connection with the Survey District under my charge, I have the honor to report that during the year 1895 I received instructions to survey 243 acres in 8 lots, applied for under "The Crown Lands Act, 1890," 140 acres in 4 lots under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," 520 acres in 33 lots under "The Mining Act," and 276 acres in 3 lots under Section 10 of "The Crown Lands Act, 1894." The residue of the last-mentioned lots reverted to the Crown. In short, we have disposed of 383 acres of Crown Land for a time, while 258 acres, previously applied for, have come back to us to be further dealt with. These figures are not encouraging, but I venture to bring them under notice in the hope that they may prove interesting in view of the possible classification of the unalienated lands of the Colony.

This question of classification of our Waste Lands, to which I have had the honor annually to draw your attention, has recently been discussed by the Tasmanian Institution of Surveyors, with the result that, although there is a wide divergence of opinion amongst Surveyors as to the best means of classifying the waste areas available to selectors, there is no doubt in their minds as to

the desirability of classification for the purpose of promoting settlement in these unsold lands. The unselected portions of my district which are open for selection are mostly somewhat large tracts of very inferior land, but I have the honor to point out that these second-class lands can never be disposed of at first-rate prices. It is true that there is some good bush land still available in the vicinity of Jackey's Marsh and Quamby Bluff, but there seems now to be no very great extent of it—the cutting of a new track to the Great Lake having revealed the fact that much of the unalienated land to the south and south-east of Quamby Bluff is of a very poor description. The track follows a high water-shed, and enters the Lake District near Projection Bluff, at the head of the Lake River. I have ridden along it from the Eastern or Deloraine end (where it junctions with a main road), and noted the gradients by which the higher levels of the Lake Country are reached, and the nature and quality of the land traversed, as well as the general appearance of the surrounding country within scope of the bridle path. It has been said publicly that the gradients are nowhere steeper than 1 in 400, but this statement, inaccurate on the face of it, is more than a slight exaggeration. In order to make the track practicable for wheel traffic it would be necessary to examine the country carefully on both sides of the line, and lengthen several of the gradients, which at present are quite as steep as 1 in 6. The soil in the immediate vicinity of the track varies considerably, but is generally poor and sandy; while the surrounding country is densely wooded and covered with heavy scrub, and bears the appearance of being very broken and difficult of access. On the other hand, the importance of the track, which has been urged by some of the residents of Deloraine, is apparent from the fact that a very material shortening of the stock route from that town to Mount Lyell is now well within the bounds of possibility, and from the further consideration that the Lake Country is brought within easy reach of visitors from the Deloraine side of the Great Western Mountains.

I have pleasure in reporting that the Public Works Department has lately constructed another section of the main road leading to Glengarry. The completion of this work may induce further selection of Crown land in that neighbourhood, although, unfortunately, the unalienated land in that vicinity is of very poor quality. Several of the lots around Glengarry which were selected under "The Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893," have been improved, but it is probable that many of them will be abandoned soon after the first instalment becomes due. Coming to the mining surveys, most of the sections applied for are at Beaconsfield, and seem to have been pegged in anticipation of the successful flotation of the Tasmanian G. M. Co.'s property on the London market. In regard to the surveys themselves, the "stiffening" of the sections by triangulation seems to me to be well worth the consideration of the Department, but beyond this there is nothing calling for mention in this Report.

Survey District of *Devon*.—Mr. Richard Hall, District Surveyor, reports as follows:—

I have the honor to report in reference to my survey district and survey work, that during 1895 I marked off 15 lots, amounting to 800 acres, in the County of Dorset; 16 lots, totalling 657 acres, in the County of Devon; 30 lots, amounting to 300 acres of mineral land, in Devon. At the present time selection for agricultural purposes has almost ceased. There is still some activity in mining matters. On the coast the old Penguin Silver Mines have again been taken up. Gold has been found close to Ulverstone in quartz veins, but although the specimens seem very encouraging they have not yet led to much practical result. The country from the Black Bluff to Mount Claude is still being examined, and in some instances the prospects seem very encouraging. There are still a few sections in these localities to be marked off. I have made no further discoveries of agricultural land during the past year. I would like to suggest that a track be cut which would be a continuation of the Pine Road in a southerly direction, keeping up the valley of Laurel Creek in the direction of Mount Tor. This is one of the unexplored portions of this district, and it is believed to be both mineral and agricultural land. If a track were cut for a distance of seven or eight miles it would afford an opportunity for both selector and prospector to get in and ascertain its value for both purposes. It is a very difficult country to get about in for the want of a track to take supplies along.

Survey District of *Dorset*.—Mr. G. T. Eddie, District Surveyor, reports as follows for the year 1895:—

*Lands suitable for Selection, &c.*—I know of very little land suitable for selection within reasonable access of rail or road. As I have previously reported, there is some good land in the vicinity of Mount Barrow to the south east. The Messrs. Whittle, who selected there in 1894, and who have cleared and grassed a part of their land, seem satisfied as to the results of their venture.

*Roads and Tracks required.*—A track might be cut with advantage from the Messrs. Whittle's land referred to on to Camden Plains, so that the extent of the good land might be seen.

*Progress of Settlement.*—Only about 530 acres have been selected under the 31st Sect. Crown Lands Act, 1890, and Crown Lands Amendment Acts, 1893 and 1894, during the year. I have surveyed the following Lots:—

1433 acres mineral land, in 151 lots.

350 acres, Section 10, Crown Lands Amendment Act, in 5 lots.

330 acres, 31st Section Crown Lands Amendment, 1890, in 9 lots.

199 acres, Crown Lands Amendment Act, 1893, in 5 lots.



- 15½ acres, at auction.
- 4 Residence areas.
- 4 Re-surveys.
- 2 Town Surveys under Real Property Act.
- 1 Recreation Reserve.
- 2 Public Works Roads.

Survey District of *Fingal*.—Mr. G. C. Smith, District Surveyor, reports as follows for the year 1895 :—

*Lands fit for Selection.*

I can but repeat my reports of former years in indicating the localities where land of fairly good quality can be found in this district. With the present prospects of farming I see little chance of any land being selected for the purpose of gaining a living from it, except such as is very favourably situated or of the first quality.

In the Parish of Weld about 2000 acres of fairly good basaltic soil, of the usual heavily-timbered quality, may be found, which would be reached by a branch road from the present road between St. Helen's and the George Settlement.

In the Parishes of Lunta and Lowelly I believe there are about 7000 acres of a similar quality. The steepness of much of this, and its height above sea-level, in some degree detract from its value.

I have previously mentioned the tracts of second class soil, chiefly from decomposed granite, in the north-east part of the District, and between Urana and Hogan's track, but, without a local market owing to mineral discoveries, none of this is likely to be taken up.

On the Tyne there are some hundreds of acres of fairly good land which, if the mines in the Mathinna district are successful, will probably be worth selection; and the same remark applies to some hundreds of acres on Dan's Rivulet. There, however, land has been given up, and some partially cleared has been again grown over with scrub.

About St. Mary's there is little Crown land worth £1 per acre, and all near there might now be offered at a lower rate.

Around Tower Hill, Parish of Fonthill, there are a few hundreds of acres of land which, in the event of the mines near proving successful, would be readily taken up.

There are considerable areas in the Parishes of Alberton and Monna of good quality, especially about 1000 acres on the Ringarooma River, about five miles south of Ringarooma township. The 470 acres on the Ringarooma (Lots 3978 and 5977) would sell readily if allowed to be selected in lots of from 25 to 100 acres. Ten acres is too small an area for selection.

*Roads and Tracks required.*

Roads have been well attended to in this District, and at present I have no suggestion to make as to further road construction.

A bridle track should be made from the George River Falls to Clayton's selections, Parish a bot, or elsewhere towards Mathinna.

If a bridle-track, or even a track fit for foot travellers only, were made from near Maurice Reserve up the east side of the Ringarooma, passing on east side of Ben Nevis to the track to Blessington, it would open up a large tract of promising country to prospectors. Money spent on tracks of this kind has been the most "reproductive" of all Government expenditure.

A bridle-track might be made between Hogan's Track from St. Helen's to Mathinna to the mineral sections near the Scamander.

**PROGRESS OF SETTLEMENT.**

There has been very little selection in this District during the past year except in the Parishes of Kay and Alberton, where about 1000 acres of excellent land has been taken up by men who, to the best of my knowledge, intend to occupy and improve their ground. There is no chance at present, as I have already said, of much land being selected unless it is of specially good quality, or favourably situated in regard to a local market.

Those who selected good land along the George River years ago have not prospered in such a way as to encourage others to occupy land more remote from a market and of somewhat inferior quality. If lode mining were to provide a population and a consequent local market on the Blue Tier, no doubt selectors on the George would improve their holdings and more land would be taken up. Of the success of lode mining there is some hope, but without it I fear that even some of the more recently selected land on the George will be given up, and further selection is unlikely.

About St. Mary's selectors for the most part have not prospered as their industry deserved, and after years of hard work and hard living only too many of them find their homesteads practically the property of a storekeeper or a bank.

I cannot say that much progress has taken place, and although nearly all the selectors in this District reside on their land they have not the means to make extensive improvements, and many have to look for a living elsewhere than from their holdings.

About Mathinna the small farmers are at present doing well, having a good market, and the opportunity of earning by the labour of one member of a family what will provide for further improvement of the land. Unfortunately, in that neighbourhood there is little land fit for selection.

There is little pastoral Crown land of much value in this District, and most that is of any use is, I think, held. When default is made in payment of rent, I am of opinion that the land should be open for any one to rent on application at a fixed rate. I believe the revenue would thereby benefit considerably.

Survey District of *Franklin*.—Mr. E. G. Innes, District Surveyor, reports as follows :—

I have the honor to report that, for the year ending 31st December, 1895, I have surveyed in the District under my charge some fifty-one lots, ranging from 1 acre to 500 acres, and having an aggregate of some (2500) two thousand five hundred acres.

The majority of these lots have been from twenty-five to fifty acres each, and have been taken up for *bonâ fide* settlement purposes. One lot of five hundred acres situate near Southport, in the Parish of Garrett, was selected by the Village Settlement Committee for the purpose of subdivision into small blocks on which to locate their settlers. This has been carried out to a certain extent, and, judging from appearances, should turn out some thriving homes when once the settlers have got accustomed to this mode of life, which, in the majority of cases, is apparently new to them.

The land selected by the Settlement Committee is, as a rule, very good in quality; like all the rest of our south-western portion of the island, it is heavily timbered, and takes a very considerable amount of time and labour before very much improvement can be shown, so that the settlers have an uphill fight before them for some little time to come; but, to a steady industrious man, not afraid to rough it for a time, the settlement should afford a good chance to make a comfortable home in the near future.

Nine-tenths of the land surveyed during last year was of very good quality, and well fitted for agricultural purposes, the remainder being from medium to inferior quality, and generally taken up for the purpose of timber-getting.

While making the surveys of the lots throughout the district a considerable length of roads has been surveyed to give access to the adjoining lots already selected and the adjacent Crown lands; in the majority of cases these roads have been laid off with more than ordinary care, and, with perhaps a little alteration here and there, should in the future prove serviceable lines of traffic.

*Lands suitable for Selection*.—There is still a large area of land in the District under my charge which is well suited for selection and the purposes of settlement, and is chiefly available in the Parishes of Leithbridge, in the valley of the Huon and its various tributaries; Honeywood, vicinity of Castle Forbes' Bay and Scott's Rivulet; Price, vicinity of Town of Geeveston; Thanet, in the valley of the Esperance; Garrett, in the vicinity of Hastings and the Village Settlement. The Parishes of Purves and Blakeney contain very little really good land, being generally rough and broken, heavily timbered, and difficult of access, excepting in the vicinity of Southport Lagoon (which is a fine sheet of water, having an opening to the Southern Ocean). This land is comparatively open, and in many instances swampy, but with a moderate expenditure in drainage should soon become fit for the plough, and I believe, in many instances, would give a good return for the labour. On South Bruni Island there is still a considerable area of very fair land, but unfortunately it is inaccessible for want of roads, and is without regular communication with the mainland, which is a serious drawback in the way of settlement. Parishes of Bedford, Pedder, and Bagot contain very little land that is available for settlement, the bulk of what is left being land of inferior quality, and next door to useless to anyone unless the owner of an adjoining block, and, being generally hilly and broken, will require to be reduced in price to induce selection.

Want of good roads constitutes the most serious drawback to settlement in the Huon District. As a rule, when a road is made for a mile or so, the available land upon both sides is at once selected, and, in some cases, before the road is made. For a selector to go some distance in advance of a road, take up his selection, commence clearing, and wait his chance to obtain a road, or make his own, and at the same time make his living off his land, involves a problem which very few care to attempt to solve at the present time, especially with the low prices ruling for all kinds of produce.

*Tracks*.—I would strongly recommend, if funds could be obtained for the purpose, that the Government should open a track from the Southport Narrows to the plateau of the La Perouse range of mountains, for the purpose of attracting visitors to our shores.

I am credibly informed that the track from Geeveston to the Hartz range is this season doing good work, by attracting numbers of visitors to Geeveston, and thus proving a source of revenue; and I feel certain, that once the La Perouse range was made accessible and became known, that it would soon become a favourite resort for tourists of both sexes. This range contains some of the most beautiful lake and mountain scenery to be found, not only in Tasmania, but in Australasia, there being some thirteen small lakes of beautiful clear water, fringed with stunted Myrtle and Grass-trees, with occasional clumps of stunted Huon Pines (*Dacrydium franklinii*). The surrounding country being devoid of much scrub, it is very easy to travel for some miles along the range, and obtain near views of the tremendous gorges and ravines intersecting it. The views from the different points of vantage are unsurpassed in any portion of the island, especially that from the Trig Station on La Perouse proper, some 3800 feet above the sea. A track, to start from the old track cut by myself in 1881, when going towards Port Davey, at a point known as Triangle Gully, thence on to what is known locally as Mount Misery, ought to be done for about £75 (seventy-five pounds) right into the open country near the first chain of lakes; here a camping-ground could be found, well sheltered, and with plenty of firewood and good water; game also abounds. This is a

beautiful spot for a fixed camp, and the surrounding scenery can be easily explored from it. I had the pleasure of a night there in June, 1892; it was then under about a foot of snow, and the lakes frozen over, but we managed to make ourselves fairly comfortable with a good fire and roast badger; as this was in the dead of a bad winter, there should be no difficulty about a comfortable camp in the summer months.

If anything can be done to further this matter, I shall be willing to supply all the information in my power, and would gladly assist to see that the work was carried out in a proper manner. I have seen some of the most beautiful mountain scenery in the adjacent colony of New Zealand, and I have no hesitation in saying that the La Perouse range in south-west Tasmania is quite the equal of the best I saw in New Zealand.

A track from the end of the Arve Road at Geeveston to the River Arve, to open Crown Lands, is urgently required.

#### *Rate of Progress and Information.*

I am afraid, under this heading, that for 1895 very little can be called actual progress, for a multitude of causes.

A considerable amount of clearing has been done upon the various selections throughout the district, and new land has been brought under cultivation, but in other instances selections have had to be abandoned because the necessary road communication was not forthcoming, the Public Works Department having no funds to carry out the necessary works. The Public Works throughout the District, with the exception of those carried out through the Land Fund, have been practically stopped; and work of all kinds for labouring men has been scarce, and wages low. The price of fruit and timber also being very low, very little money has been in circulation, especially amongst those who, as a rule, form the bulk of our selectors and small farmers; therefore, at present, and for some little time past, little or no selection has been taking place.

I have much pleasure in stating that the Public Works that have been carried out during the past year have been well and faithfully done, and reflect credit upon the officers of that Department who have had charge thereof.

I think the outlook for 1896 is a brighter one for this district, for up to the present the prices offering for small fruits are better than have been ruling for some time past. The apple crop, though not so heavy as in some seasons, is likely to be a fair one, and if prices are anything like payable should prove remunerative to the growers.

We are also promised, to a certain extent, a revival in our timber trade. During last year shipments have been made to England and the Continent, and another large shipment is now being prepared, to leave very shortly. Should these turn out the success that is hoped for, the near future will see our large saw-mills again in full swing; and as fruit-growing and timber-cutting have always been, and are likely to be for some time to come, the staple industries of the Huon, a revival in either or both means a return of prosperity to residents of all classes, and consequent advance to settlement. With regard to the timber industry, one thing is certain—that the wholesale and useless destruction of valuable timber that has taken place in years gone by requires checking, otherwise in a few years we shall find ourselves running very short of some of the more valuable of our timbers. Our blue-gum is one of these; it will not stand repeated firing of the undergrowth, and is easily destroyed.

Survey District of *Mersey*.—Mr. H. J. Chalmers, District Surveyor, reports as follows:—

In forwarding my annual Report for 1895, I regret to inform you that there has been little or no work done in my District during the year—one survey of 50 acres and two subdivisions. I visited Flinders Island in the early part of the year, and surveyed eight small sections, two of which were mineral, total acreage 225, and two 10-acre lots for gold leases. I was also employed for a short time in Mr. Surveyor Smith's District surveying small and isolated lots.

I hoped for better results after the amendment of the Crown Lands Act reducing the purchase money, but I fear that the fact of the selection having to go to auction will prevent many from acquiring the second-class land adjoining their freeholds. The trouble of attending the sales, and the uncertainty of obtaining what they require, is a great barrier; this, together with the agriculturist's financial position at the present time, will prevent any activity for some time to come.

Survey District of *Montagu*.—Mr. C. S. Wilson, District Surveyor, reports for the year 1895 as follows:—

#### *Selection Areas.*

Agriculture in the district under my charge is yet in its embryo stage, consequently I have little to report in that direction.

The rapid but permanent strides which the mining industry is witnessing on the West Coast may be considered the harbinger of employment of capital and labour in agricultural pursuits.

It is premised that mining, as a whole, would be materially benefited in having the aid of the agriculturist. It would, however, be needless for me to advance statistics to show why mining and farming should, in some sort, be consolidated. The Crown Lands and Mining Acts could, no

doubt, effectually be combined to meet the case, without interfering with the progress of either industry.

The rate of living on the mineral fields of the West Coast is abnormally high, consequent upon the necessity for obtaining supplies from distant markets. Hence there is an exceptionally good opening for those skilled in agriculture. With a ready market for produce of all kinds, a farming community should not hesitate in selecting at once available lands.

I am not in a position at present to advise that any more land than what has already been proclaimed be thrown open for selection. I think, however, that the selector should be enabled to apply for land in any locality which is not held under lease, and his application be received, pending an investigation by the Crown as to whether there is any valid objection to such area being disposed of under "The Crown Lands Act."

I have watched the working of the Act relating to Residence Areas for a number of years, and I can say, without fear of logical contradiction, that the present Act requires speedy reform. I am aware that the enactment was for the purpose of aiding mining; but, under existing circumstances, it is of little or no assistance, and therefore a hardship would not be inflicted upon mining if this Act were abolished altogether.

During the year there has been considerable demand for mineral sections, principally in the vicinity of Mount Lyell and North Dundas.

There is no doubt but that capital has been influenced in this direction, solely on account of the increasing output of silver and lead ores from the Zeehan field, the steady and satisfactory developments in the Mount Lyell Mine, and the important "finds" at North Dundas, notably the "Curtin and Davis" mine.

Considerable activity has been displayed during the year by the Mount Lyell Mining and Railway Company. This company's railway and reduction works are now well advanced, and the progressive works in the mine itself are being carried on in a most spirited manner.

Following the lead of the Mount Lyell Company, the Government have decided to build a light tramway to connect the Zeehan-Strahan Railway with North Dundas and Mount Reid. Owing to this departure, I am persuaded that a large amount of foreign capital will at once be introduced to work several known and valuable mines in the vicinity named. It has now been proved that, with communication once established, low grade pyritic formations (which are numerous on the West Coast) will give a good return, and it is to be hoped that this tramway will be but the forerunner of similar works.

I beg to draw your attention to several matters relative to the conduct of mineral surveys, and, if not out of place, to offer a few suggestions. As you are aware, under the present system the official numbering of mineral blocks is altered periodically. During the past eight (8) years the numbers have been changed from a number over 87M to over 91M, and now is a number over 93M. Every time a forfeited section is retaken up under lease, the "numerator," and, at periods, the "denominator" of the application number is changed. My suggestion is that the same number remain good for all time. A few years ago I was in the habit of cutting the number of the section under survey on the nearest tree, but when I found that confusion would arise, and as I had no authority to mark in this manner, I abandoned it. If a system such as I propose were brought into force, and the number cut on a tree or on the corner post, it would add to the permanency of the survey, and, at the same time, confer a boon on the prospector in particular and the public in general.

The Mining Act demands that the lessee shall place posts of certain dimensions at each and every angle of his lease. The result is evident. I contend that the lessee should not be empowered to displace the angle posts erected by the Surveyor, and indeed "prosecution" should follow any interference with the different survey marks.

I cannot too strongly urge the necessity for a Trigonometrical Survey of the West Coast. It is to be deplored that something was not done in this direction between the silver boom of 1890 and the present time. Besides the vast importance of such a survey, the utility of having the different Fields (especially those lying in the same mineral zone) correctly located in mutual relation is apparent. Even the erection of a few trig stations on the prominent mountain peaks would be more satisfactory than the present mode of connecting surveys.

*Survey District of Outlands.*—Mr. W. M. Hardy, District Surveyor, reports as follows:—

*Surveys.*—There has been a considerable falling off in the number of surveys applied for during the year 1895. These also have been so scattered that the expense of effecting them has fallen heavily upon me. At the present moment I have only three small outstanding surveys of recent date to effect throughout the District.

*Unauthorised occupation of Crown Lands.*—I had occasion to draw your attention to several cases of this sort during the early part of last year, but of late there does not seem much cause for complaint. I think I may point out that timber is being removed in great quantities from the Rhyndaston Crown lands, also at Runnymede, for which Licences may not have been obtained in all cases.

*Land suitable for Selection.*—I have once or twice recommended the subdivision of the Jerusalem Coal Reserve; there is some very good land on it that could be turned to better account than at present, seeing its suitability and the situation in regard to road and railways. The coal strip seems to be confined to the extreme S.W. corner of the Reserve, and even there the result of a long

series of experiments go to prove that nothing of a remunerative nature is procurable. In the Parish of Hill there is some good land available for selection; but a short strip of road will have to be obtained through private property to give access. I anticipate no difficulty in this matter for the Road Inspector.

There is also good land available in many other parts of the district, but all very limited in extent and requiring local knowledge to find it, sometimes being included in the apparent boundaries of large freeholds.

*Classification of Land.*—If the proposal to reduce the cost of second-class land to ten shillings per acre obtain, I consider that very many applications will be received from small holders desirous of procuring a turn-out for their stock. There is much land that could be improved into pasture paddocks with advantage to the working of present selections.

*Roads.*—I would recommend the purchase of a piece of ground in the Parish of Hill from executors of the late Mr. Joseph Bayles, in order to open Crown lands and provide an outlet for a selector named Davidson. A deviation of the present reserved road is also necessary. This selector is prepared to construct the deviation required and erect a bridge for the sum of twenty pounds.

Survey District of *Russell*.—Mr. David Jones, District Surveyor, reports as follows:—

I have the honor to submit for your consideration my report for the year 1895 upon the County of Russell, which now chiefly comprises my survey district, the counties of Montagu and Franklin being separated into another survey district.

#### *Lands suitable for Selection, &c.*

The large extent of basaltic soil fit for agricultural and pastoral purposes in the vicinity of Waratah and along the Main road to the Heazlewood District, has not up to the present been selected by anyone, notwithstanding the fact that it has been thrown open by the Government under the 49th Section of the Crown Lands Act for over twelve months. At one time people were anxious to take up small areas of this land, but when it was made available mining in the vicinity of and at Mount Bischoff began to decline; the Stanhope and West Bischoff mines were closed, and work suspended at the North Valley mine, the property of the Mount Bischoff T.M. Co. This made a material difference to the prosperity of Waratah, and, together with the forfeiture of several mineral leases at the Whyte River and Heazlewood, made mining look as if it were at a very low ebb indeed. At the beginning of this year operations were again commenced at the Stanhope tin mine; the West Bischoff tin mine is also to start shortly; gradual developments are also taking place at the old Godkin mine (now the Magnet), Whyte River, Bell's Reward, and the Nickel at the Heazlewood, and Bell's Find at the Magnet Range; so that there is a great probability of all-round prosperity being restored to Waratah, and land selection being proceeded with. To further induce settlement, especially in mining districts, it would no doubt be a wise step to classify the Crown lands, as so much of the land now available is not first-class, and consequently not worth one pound per acre, but would, perhaps, be worth to the intending selector ten or fifteen shillings per acre.

A railway line between Waratah and Zeehan *via* Dundas will lead to the opening up of a large extent of agricultural land near the delta of the Huskisson River, not far from where it joins the Pieman River. It will also be the means of unlocking a big area of good pine country, besides small areas of land fit for pastoral or agricultural purposes. The route of the proposed V. D. L. Railway line will pass chiefly through country known to contain minerals,—gold, silver-lead, and copper being known to exist not far from the route surveyed.

At the Savage River, near its junction with the Pieman River, some 200 acres of capital land could be selected, the only objection to some of it being that it is subjected occasionally to floods. Small areas of fair land are scattered over other parts of the District, but could not be recommended to the general selector owing chiefly to their isolation.

#### *Roads and Tracks.*

The road from Waratah to Heazlewood is being much improved, as well as the pack-horse track from Heazlewood to Corinna. Tracks are much required from the Waratah-Heazlewood Road into the Meredith Range at its north end. The line of country is known to contain metaliferous deposits, and if tracks were made fit for pack-horses it would induce prospectors to thoroughly explore this part of the country. Tracks that would open up country of which little is at present known would be from near the Hadfield Plain, near the south boundary of the V.D.L. Co.'s Surrey Hills block, and from thence practically follow the valley of the Mackintosh River. Copper, in the form of pyrites, has been found down this valley carrying a little gold. Money would be well spent in the different directions here indicated. Other tracks could be made with advantage, going north-westerly from Mount Bischoff to join the track made some time back from Wynyard across the Arthur River to Specimen Reef. These would go, when made, through country only slightly prospected.

#### *Progress of Settlement.*

It is with regret that the statement is made that settlement has practically been at a standstill for the last twelve months in this District. The starting of hydraulic sluicing in the neighbourhood

of the Pieman led many to believe that settlement there would be permanent—a great number of Residence licences were marked off, but failure of nearly all the hydraulic claims have now caused their abandonment. There is strong hope still held here that other mining ventures started will be more successful than hydraulic sluicing has been.

Survey District of *Tasman's Peninsula*.—Mr. J. H. Hinsby, Surveyor, reports as follows :—

Selection of Crown Land on Tasman's and Forestier's Peninsulas for agricultural purposes during the year 1895 has been not much availed of, I think owing simply to scarceness of money, from the low price of all natural produce, and the cessation of Public Works expenditure. Section 10 of the Crown Lands Amendment Act seems to have suited many of the selectors, and I think there will be a good many more take advantage of it; but the amendment that will do most for this District is the classification of Crown Lands, much of the land that cannot be thought of at the present price would be snapped up at once by the adjoining landholders for easements, timber, &c., and a very correct classification could be rendered by the surveyor at the time of survey, but could not be got at any other time free of expense.

There is still a good area of land fit for agriculture on both Tasman's and Forestier's Peninsulas, but at present it is in want of accessible roads. There is one area, however, spoken of in my last report situated at the back of Tunnel Bay that is being taken, and the hundred acres there measured for C. T. Tatnell is the best block I have seen on the Peninsulas, and there are several good blocks adjoining.

I have made one mineral lease survey at the coal mines, the block being taken to secure the drift slack on the beach. There is still a considerable deposit of this left further north along the beach opposite the old buildings. There has been no fresh discovery of minerals.

The timber enterprise is still carried on in most parts of the district, a good deal of lightwood, stave, and fitch being got at present round the head of Cripps' Creek, also palings (Swamp Gum and Stringy-bark); this is shipped from Wedge Bay. There are many other good timber deposits fit for milling purposes.

Survey District of *Wellington*.—Mr. F. E. Windsor, District Surveyor, reports as follows :—

During the year 1895 thirty-five surveys of agricultural selections have been surveyed, comprising an area of 1480 acres; three re-surveys, containing 505 acres, and one township allotment of  $7\frac{1}{2}$  acres;  $11\frac{1}{2}$  miles of roads and connections, including five Public Works roads. Notwithstanding the general depression and low prices for produce, there has been great progress throughout the district, the butter factory and creameries being still the backbone of the farmers. The Table Cape bacon factory opened during the year has been made use of by the farmers to a large extent, and in a few years, no doubt, will prove a large industry. The really urgent works requiring attention, and which have been specially mentioned to me, are as follows :—The Green Point jetty, the Back Line road of the V. D. L. Company's Circular Head Block, Irish Town Road, and the Rocky Cape Port Road. In reference to the sand drift across the present main road at Stanley, it will be necessary to deviate at least two miles of the last portion by taking it further inland in order to make this a permanent work.

*Parishes of Marrawah, Williams, Mowbray, and Togari*.—About 6000 acres of first-class agricultural land is still available for selection, and in the latter parishes several large selections have reverted back to the Crown. A road is required in the Parish of Marrawah, leading from the Main Coast Road to Messrs. King's selections and Crown Land in that vicinity. A jetty at Green Point is urgently required to enable residents to ship their produce to Strahan. No new selection has taken place during the year.

*Parishes of Gibson, Ford, and Medwin*.—About 3000 acres of good land suitable for agriculture is known to exist in these parishes. A few of the old selections have been forfeited, and portions have now been re-selected. The Back Line Road along the south boundary of the V.D.L. Company's Circular Head Block requires extending and improving before it is of real practical value to the residents. The road from J. P. Breheney's selection, better known as Waters' Hill, if extended to the Irish Town Road through the selections, would be very beneficial to farmers, as it is a much nearer route to Stanley *via* South Road. The Irish Town Road, in the vicinity of O'Halloran's and Harvey's selections, requires forming and metalling for at least 20 chains. I have been requested to draw attention to the urgency of this matter. Several selections have taken place, and general improvement steadily going on throughout these parishes.

*Parishes of Emmett, Anderson, Dallas, and Myalla*.—About 1000 acres or more of good land still unselected in these parishes. Roads giving access to these selections are in very bad order and practically impassable in winter. The road to Rocky Cape shipping port is in a very unfinished state, and the latter portion is almost impassable. Only one small selection has been applied for, but old selections have been well opened up especially in Dallas, where a large area is now under crop.

*Parishes of Flowerdale and Preolenna*.—About 6000 acres of first-class land still available for selection, besides a large number of forfeited selections, consisting mostly of good land. The main Flowerdale Road requires extending to Messrs. Reeves' and Cooper's selections. The road from Flowerdale to Calder, if opened up across the Inglis River, would be the shortest road to Wynyard

by some miles for those residing on the back sections. Several selections have taken place in these parishes. Extensive improvements have been made on old selections.

*Parishes of Calder and Quiggin.*—2000 acres of good land is still unselected in these parishes. A road is required to the recent selections of Messrs. Harman and Milton, which has already been pegged out by the Public Works Department. A few selections have taken place, and the old ones are being gradually improved.

*Parishes of Yolla, Oonah, and Takone.*—A very large area of good land still exists unselected in these parishes, and a large number of old selection have been forfeited to the Crown. A branch road to join the Wilkinson's Plains and Waratah Roads is very much needed. No selection has taken place during the year, but on some of the old selections extensive improvement has been done.

*Parishes of Lewis and Elliott.*—Very little Crown land remains in these parishes suitable for selection. Several selections have taken place, and great progress has been made in improving the old sections.

*County of Devon, Parishes of Stowport and Natone.*—About 2500 acres of good Crown land still available. The road west of the Blythe River to selections of Messrs. Morris's requires opening up and extending. A few selections have been applied for, and extensive improvements have been made on the old selections.