

By the fourth mode, land to the extent of 1,000 acres and not less than 100, within an agricultural area, and not exceeding 5,000 acres outside an agricultural area, may be applied for at a price (at present ten shillings an acre) to be fixed by the Governor in Council. Within three years the land must be fenced, and within five years 5s. per acre must be spent on improvements.

For garden purposes small areas of not less than 5 acres nor more than 20 acres (except in special cases), at 20s. per acre, may be purchased on the condition that within three years the land shall be fenced, and one-tenth planted with vines or fruit trees, or vegetables.

In the Kimberley, North-West, Gascoyne, Eastern, and Eucla Divisions, special areas for purchase may be set apart of not less than 5,000 acres. The total quantity to be held by any one person in a division shall not exceed 5,000 acres, or less than 100 acres. The price is at present ten shillings an acre, payable in ten years or sooner.

Upon approval a lease shall issue for 10 years. Within two years the land must be fenced. At the expiration of the lease, or at any time during its currency, the fence being in good order, improvements in addition to the fencing equal to the purchase money having been made, and the purchase money having been paid, a grant from the Crown will be issued.

Only one area under this regulation has, up to the present, been set apart and surveyed, viz., the Knowsley area, in the vicinity of Derby, in the Kimberley Division.

Pastoral lands are granted on lease, which gives no right to the soil or to the timber, except for fencing or other improvements on the lands leased, and the lands may be reserved, sold, or otherwise disposed of by the Crown during the lease.

REDUCTION OF RENT FOR STOCKING.—Any Lessee in the Kimberley and Eucla Divisions may have a reduction of one-half the rental due under the Regulations, computed from the 1st day of January, 1887, for the first 14 years of his lease if, in the Kimberley Division, he have, within five years of the date of these Regulations, in his possession within the division 10 head of sheep or one head of large stock for every thousand acres leased.

A penalty of double rental for the remaining portion of the lease is imposed, except in the South-West Division, if the lessee has not within 7 years complied with the stocking or improvement Clause.

POISONED LAND.—Any person desirous of obtaining a lease of Poisoned land shall apply to the Commissioner, defining the boundaries and paying one year's rent at the rate of £1 per 1,000 acres. After provisional approval by the Commissioner, and within 12 months from the date of application, a proper survey of the land must be furnished, at the expense of the applicant, to the Commissioner, and sufficient proof given that the said land is Poisoned land. If the application is approved, a lease is granted for 21 years at £1 per 1,000 acres, on the condition that the land is fenced in within three years; and if the poison plant is completely eradicated before the lease expires, the lessee will be entitled to a Crown grant.

Miscellaneous leases and licenses of Crown lands are issued at the following rates:—

Licenses to Collect Bark from trees on Crown Lands, 2s. 6d. per month for each man. Land Regulations proclaimed 2nd March, 1887.

Licenses to cut Timber.—220 per annum for any quantity of land not exceeding 640 acres and £40 per annum exceeding 640 acres and not exceeding 1,280 acres; or 5s. per month for each sawyer, cutter, or splitter. Land Regulations proclaimed 2nd March, 1887.

Licenses to cut or remove Sandalwood from Waste Lands of the Crown, 2s. 6d. per month for each man. Land Regulations proclaimed 2nd March, 1887.

Licenses to cut Timber in the Special Area on the Darling Range.—Lots fronting on Eastern Railway are, on application, put up to auction at an upset rent of £100 per annum, for a term of fourteen years. Lots not fronting on the Railway are dealt with in a similar way at an upset annual rental of £20, for a term of fourteen years.—Enacted 15th September, 1887.

Licenses to collect and remove Guano.—General and Special, a sum equal to 10s. per registered ton of Vessel which charge may be increased in case of an Exclusive License, Regulations of 29th November, 1883 (Act 40th Victoria, No. 9).

The total extent of Crown lands alienated up to the end of 1892 was 5,505,209 acres.

In 1892 there were alienated by sale of Town and Suburban lands 287 acres, realising £2,866; and of rural lands 14,955 acres, realising £417, besides 310,820 acres granted to the Midland Railway Company.

The total area of the Colony, according to the latest computation, is about 975,920 square miles or 624,588,800 acres; out of this, 5,505,209 acres have been alienated, thus leaving 619,083,591 acres available for additional occupation for agricultural or other purposes.

The quantity of land held under Conditional Purchase, including Special Occupation Licenses under the regulations of 1878, at the end of 1892 was 553,860 acres.

The acreage of land held for pastoral purposes at the end of 1892 was 98,483,136.

Under the regulations for leasing land under the poison clauses there was a total of land held at the end of 1892 of 1,414,772 acres.

The quantity of land held as mineral leases at the end of 1892 was 1,102 acres.

Ten special timber licenses and concessions were in existence at the end of 1892, giving the right to cut timber over an area of 655,840 acres.

CROPS AND STOCK.—Most of the European grains, fruits, and vegetables can be cultivated and brought to a high state of perfection in the Southern part of the Colony. The soil in parts is sandy, but this sand when irrigated is highly productive. There is a large extent of light friable soil suitable for all kinds of crops. The climate, as regards agriculture, is favourable, although at times subject to bad seasons. The shortest day is in June, and midsummer comes in December; with August commences the spring, and the winter begins in April.

Sheep, horses, and cattle thrive well throughout the Colony, more especially in the Northern parts, where the pasturage is extensive and very nourishing.

THE HOMESTEADS ACT, 1893 (57 Vic., No. XVIII.)

Assented to, 13th October, 1893.

Under this Act power is given to the Crown to grant, out of lands specially set apart for that purpose, a homestead farm of not more than 160 acres, to any person who is the sole head of a family, or a male who has attained the age of eighteen years, provided that such person does not already hold an estate in the Colony exceeding one hundred acres, either in fee simple or under Special Occupation or Conditional Purchase License.

Should, however, any person be already the owner of land, as before mentioned, not exceeding 100 acres, and reside upon such land, he may, subject to approval, apply for a homestead farm from any Crown lands adjoining his present holding, and the residence condition need not then be complied with.

A statutory declaration having been made to the above effect, and the fee of one pound having been paid, an Occupation Certificate is issued, upon receipt of which the selector can either take immediate possession or not, as preferred, but it is compulsory that, within six months from the date of approval, he shall personally take possession of and occupy the lands upon which, for at least six months during each of the first five years of occupancy, he must personally reside, otherwise the certificate will be cancelled and lands forfeited. In cases, however, of illness, or other valid reasons, satisfactorily proved, permission of absence may be allowed and forfeiture waived.