

CHAPTER XII.

DOMINION LANDS.

759. The Crown Lands of the Dominion of Canada, known generally as Dominion Lands, are situated in Manitoba, the Territories, and in what is known as the Railway Belt in British Columbia, and comprise some of the finest agricultural lands on the Continent. In order to provide every facility for information to immigrants and settlers, the Commissioner of Dominion Lands has his office in Winnipeg, and a number of land agencies are situated at the most convenient points, where the fullest details can be obtained.

760. The following are the comparative figures for the last five years of the transactions in Dominion Lands:—

	1887.	1888.	1889.	1890.	1891.	Land transactions, 1887-1891.
	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	Acres.	
Homesteads.....	319,500	420,333	696,050	471,040	563,680	
Pre-emptions.....	87,747	70,521	212,651	57,600	
Sales.	114,544	197,140	177,092	139,030	189,704	

761. It will be seen that there was a satisfactory increase of 92,640 acres in the quantity of land taken up as homesteads by actual settlers, and an increase also of 50,674 acres in the quantity of land purchased. Present indications point to a still larger increase in 1892. The pre-emption system terminated on 1st January, 1890.

762. The number of entries cancelled has been steadily decreasing; in 1874, 63 per cent of the homestead and 93 per cent of the pre-emption entries were cancelled; in 1891, .01 per cent only of homestead entries were cancelled. The number of patents issued was 2,449, as compared with 3,273 in the preceding year, and the number cancelled was 35. The decrease in the number of patents issued during the year was owing to a variety of causes. Many of the applications being held over for consideration, and a number being refused altogether, owing to the homestead duties not having been properly performed, or to the fact that advances made to the settlers by the Government had not been repaid.

763. The next table gives the total amount of pre-emption and homestead fees, and proceeds of sales received in each year from 1st July, 1873, to 30th June, 1891:—

Receipts from fees and sales, 1873-1891.