

PART I
OF
REPORT OF DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR,
DOMINION LANDS OFFICE,
OTTAWA, 31st December, 1880.

To the Right Honorable
SIR JOHN A. MACDONALD, K.C.B.,
Minister of the Interior.

SIR,—I have the honor to submit the following Report upon the operations of this Branch of your Department during the twelve months ended the 31st October last; also, where the information might be useful or of interest, upon those of its outside service, to the end of the calendar year.

DOMINION LANDS.

The following is a summary of the returns from the Agencies in Manitoba and the North-West Territories :—

	Entries.	Acres.
Homesteads.....	2,074	331,840
Preemptions.....	1,004	160,640
Sales.....	1,132	236,534
	4,210	779,014

A comparative statement for the last six years would stand as follows :—

	Entries.	Acres.
1875.....	1,021	163,277
1876.....	807	153,535
1877.....	2,283	400,423
1878.....	4,065	682,591
1879.....	6,782	1,154,072
1880.....	4,210	779,014

It is to be observed that the figures for 1880 do not correctly represent the amount of settlement that has taken place during the year. By far the largest proportion of the immigrants went to the outlying districts, and settled on lands the surveys of which were but in progress. Even where a township is fully surveyed, until the returns of survey have been made, checked and approved in the Department, and copies of the plans sent out to the local Agent, the latter is not in a position to accord to settlers homestead and preemption entries for which they may have applied.

The diminution in the number of entries is further caused by the suspension of sale of lands in the outlying or new Agencies. This was done principally to protect settlers who had gone out in advance of surveys, and also that it was not deemed advisable to dispose largely of the Railway lands in advance of the pending arrangements for the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway.

The number of sales, therefore, represents those transactions only which took place in the older Agencies where the lands had already been to a great extent settled upon or sold.