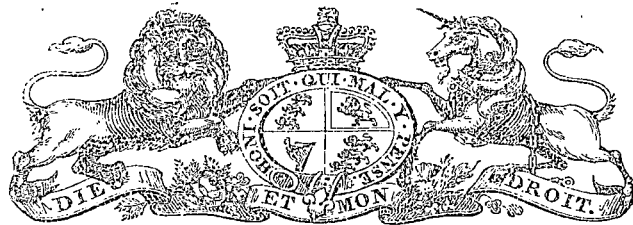


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1898.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE:

REPORT FOR 1897.

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

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COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TASMANIA.

REPORT FOR 1897.

Council of Agriculture, Hobart, 30th March, 1898.

SIR,

WE have the honour to present our Report, as follows:—

PERSONNEL OF COUNCIL.

For the year 1897 the Members and Officers of the Council were as follows:—Mr. L. M. Shookbridge (President), Mr. F. W. Briggs, Mr. F. Rockliff, Mr. A. Oliver, Mr. R. J. Wills, Mr. J. W. Check, Mr. Jas. Cox, Mr. J. R. Pillinger, Mr. A. T. W. Downie, Mr. W. W. Henwood, Mr. J. W. Norton-Smith, Mr. Thomas A. Tabart (Secretary), Mr. L. A. Evans (Clerk). In April Mr. A. Monnington was appointed, *vice* Mr. Norton-Smith, resigned; and in December Mr. M. Fletcher, jun., *vice* Mr. Jas. Cox, deceased.

VISITS TO BRANCH BOARDS.

During the year members of the Council have visited and held meetings amongst farmers at Railton, Barrington, Dunorlan, Sheffield, Chudleigh, Deloraine, Green Ponds, and Bagdad. The object of these visits is to bring the Council and its aims into closer contact with those engaged in farming pursuits and thereby create a greater interest. Although undertaken at considerable personal loss of time and inconvenience, meetings of the above nature have always a beneficial influence and deserve every encouragement.

THE EXPORT FRUIT TRADE.

In order to bring about, if possible, the safer carriage of fruit from these shores, the Council turned their attention to this industry, and, after careful consideration of the evidence brought forward, a general feeling existed and a recommendation made to your Government that success would attend those shipments which included the existence of insulated chambers and the admission of cooled air.

SPRAYING EXPERIMENTS.

Feeling the necessity of making an effort to combat the ravages of the codlin moth and other pests, the Council decided to ask your Government for the sum of £100, in order to be in a position to thoroughly test the various specifics recommended. Meeting with approval for the sum asked, the offer of Mr. Tasman Morrisby to conduct the experiments at South Bridgewater and Glenorchy for the sum of £70, the Council to find the material and Mr. Morrisby all labour and machinery, was accepted. The result of these experiments carefully performed will be looked forward to with great interest; but it is evident that one season's trial will not determine accurate results; the continuance for several years must follow before authentic data is established.

In order that orchardists might be in a position to know the quality of the material they were using, the Council advertised offering to insert in the *Agricultural Gazette* the names of vendors who would, on application, sell spraying material, with a certificate, and guarantee same. The outcome of such a movement resulted in Messrs. A. G. Webster & Son and H. J. Marsh & Co. agreeing to sell sulphate of copper, Paris green, and white hellebore in terms of above, and their names have been inserted in the *Gazette*.

EXPERIMENTAL WHEAT PLOTS.

The conduct of experimental wheat plots has been extended over various parts of the Colony, as well as those still carried out by Mr. Frank Maddox at "Eastfield." The following gentlemen have undertaken their conduct under the direction of Mr. Maddox, who has supplied (12) varieties of wheat, with a view to testing their yielding qualities in different parts of the Island, (viz., Briggs' Velvet (?), Maddox's Cross (G), Braemar Velvet, Agate, Maddox's Cross (D), Smith's Nonpareil, The Blount, Blount's Lambrigg, Jacinth, Berseler's Brown Club Head, Carter's Queen?, Square Head):—Messrs. John Skipper, Longford; E. Heazlewood, Glenore; Jas. Murdoch, Cambridge; T. H. Cutts, D. Beveridge, Sassafra; J. M'Kenna, J. Lade, Penguin; J. Heazlewood, Ulverstone; A. Oliver, F. Burk, Chudleigh; J. J. Sulzberger, Lilydale; W. Davis, Lisle Road; J. W. M'Ewan, Golconda; P. H. Welch, J. J. Towers, Frankford; W. G. Kingston, Bream Creek; T. Copping, Kelleve; G. Barnard, East Tamar; W. Hingston, Cressy; J. Woolnough, Quamby Bend; S. Bendall, Hagley; H. J. Edgecombe, Deloraine; J. Cooper, T. Hodgskinson, Beulah; T. Oliver, Latrobe; J. Castles, J. Blenkhorn, Railton; S. Hawley, Captain Cameron, Evandale; and W. E. Shoobridge, Bushy Park.

The results of these plots will be recorded in the *Gazette*, and it is the wish of the Council to still further develop this movement and to include other farm products.

POTATO EXPERIMENTS.

The report from Mr. Cutts on last year's experiments with manures supplied by the Council on the red-skin potato, pointed to the application of farmyard manure, combined with artificial fertilisers, as giving the best result. This season's experiments will be in the direction of testing whole *v.* cut sets, and the depths of planting. A word of thanks is due Mr. Cutts for the time and labour involved in this direction, which is performed gratuitously.

CONFERENCES.

Two Conferences have been held during the period under review, one at Hobart, in April, dealing with the Export of Produce; the other at Launceston, in December. The papers and discussions at both meetings have already appeared in the *Gazette*. The success of the Launceston Conference was largely due to the approval of free rail passes being granted to two delegates from each Board situated north of Oatlands, whereby some 60 farmers were enabled to visit the wheat plots under Mr. Maddox's care at "Eastfield," and afterwards confer on matters of agronomic interest. It is greatly to be hoped that this concession will in future be extended so that representatives from Boards of Agriculture throughout the whole Colony will be in a position to attend.

ADULTERATION OF MANURES.

Following on the appointment of Inspectors under "The Manures Adulteration Act," (57 Vict. No. 23), samples of manures were obtained from the vendors in Hobart and Launceston and submitted to the Government Analyst. In two cases the results showed the certificates to be too high, but as the Act had not previously been enforced a strong caution that in future no leniency would be shown, and the reduction of certificates was deemed advisable. One regrettable feature in connection with the successful working of this Act is the apathy displayed by farmers in not demanding a certificate of contents when purchasing manures.

BOTANICAL AND ENTOMOLOGICAL.

The services of Mr. L. Rodway, Hon. Botanist, have been largely availed of in the identification of plants and their parasites. A leaflet illustrating and describing the Oat-gall and its habits has been issued under that gentleman's advice.

The Rev. E. H. Thompson, though unattached to the Department, very kindly gives every information on specimens of natural history generally.

THE "GAZETTE."

The production of the Council's organ, containing the records of the business promulgated by the Branch Boards, is still in the hands of Mr. T. Hogarth, Hon. Assistant Secretary, who deserves every praise for his untiring efforts to make the paper of interest. Instructive articles also appear from the pens of Messrs. M. Smith, F. Walker, and H. C. Littler, Honararies Apiarist, Horticulturist, and Poultry Expert respectively.

THE BOARDS.

It is gratifying to report that a marked increase of interest in the work of the Boards has been displayed by members during the period under review as compared with the preceding year. The Bill to provide for the establishment of a Department of Agriculture, when passed into law, will still further augment this desideratum by providing for the election of the Council by the Branch Boards. Many items of interest have been given close attention, and the following papers read and discussed:—

- Clarence.*—"Some Remarks on Fruit Culture in Clarence District," by W. L. May.
- Carnarvon and Oakwood.*—"Historical outline of Farming and Farm Economy," C. Fairclough.
- East Wellington.*—"Tuberculosis," A. C. Hall.
- Evandale.*—"Tuberculosis," Dr. Johnson; "On Nature and Origin of some of the Evandale Soils," Rev. H. D. Atkinson.
- Frankford.*—"Potatoes," "Calf Mortality," H. Robinson.
- Golconda and Lisle Road.*—"Tasmanian Tigers," R. Coplestone.
- Launceston.*—"A few ways in which Chemistry helps the Farmer," W. A. Carins; "The Underground Grass Grubb," W. Orr; "Rape," "The Value of Babcock Tester in Dairy Herd," G. M. Barnard.
- Lilydale.*—"Agriculture in Tasmania," "The Agricultural Questions," W. Orr; "Does Farming in Tasmania pay?" W. J. Arnold.
- Macquarie Plains.*—"Etiology of Disease," E. Dean.
- Queenborough.*—"Cultivation of Scent-producing Plants," M. Lipscombe; "Chemistry of Soils and Manures," J. Osborne, jun.
- Penguin.*—"Onion Culture," A. Oliver.
- Ringarooma.*—"Permanent Pasture," C. Graves.
- Scottsdale.*—"Nitrate of Soda," W. A. Carins.
- Tasman Peninsula.*—"Tree Planting in connection with Farm Economy," A. North.
- Westbury.*—"Pickling Wheat," "Sheep," W. Lawrence.

Respectfully submitted,

L. M. SHOBRIDGE, *President.*
 THOMAS A. TABART, *Secretary.*

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture.