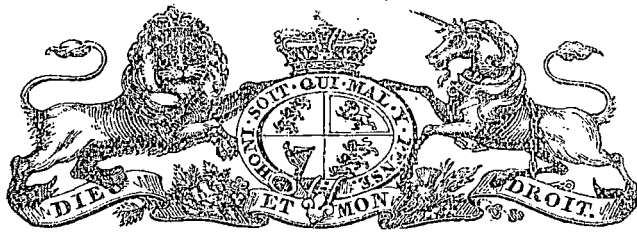


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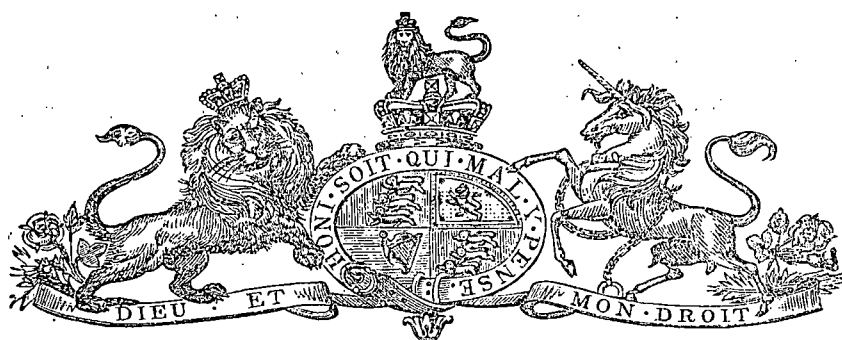
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE:

REPORT FOR 1896.

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

Cost of printing—£1 5s.



COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TASMANIA.

ANNUAL REPORT.

Council of Agriculture, Hobart, 29th April, 1897.

SIR,

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

Owing to the reduction in our vote, and the necessity for observing the strictest economy so as not to exceed the funds allotted, initiative practices have been largely restricted; but we trust, notwithstanding, that some practical benefit will accrue from the year's work.

THE EXPORT FRUIT TRADE.

Being desirous of assisting in every possible manner this valuable industry, the Council engaged the services of Mr. F. W. Hudson, of Sydney, to inquire into and report upon, in consideration of the sum of £50, Dr. Perkins' Sterilised Air Process of Fruit Preservation, which process is employed to a large extent in California for the preservation of food products. Mr. Hudson's report has been received and printed, and an approach made towards the P. & O. and Orient S. S. Companies, with a view to a trial being given the process. Unfortunately, the Companies could not see their way clear to fall in with the suggestion; but we have every reason to believe that, as a result of the Council's action, further efforts have been made in the direction of a more perfect system of carrying the fruit on board ship, and as legitimate imitation of the aforementioned process, which is patented, as possible.

EXPERIMENTAL PLOTS.

It is with pleasure we note the recognition by your Government of Mr. Frank Maddox's exertions in carrying out the Experimental Wheat Plots at "Eastfield." A visit was paid the plots, in December, by the Members of this Council and the officers of the Northern Boards affiliated with the Council; and the necessity for retaining and stimulating in every possible manner the desire to experiment in this direction was warmly expressed. Mr. Maddox's services and valuable experience will also be availed of in the establishment of Wheat Plots, with the co-operation of Members of the Boards of Agriculture, at various centres throughout the whole Colony. One feature regarding this line of action, which was unanimously decided at a Conference of the Northern Boards at Launceston, is the enlistment of interest of a large portion of the farming population throughout the Island, at a practically nominal cost.

POTATO EXPERIMENTS.

Mr. T. H. Cutts, of Sassafras, very generously undertook the conduct of a second series of experiments with potatoes. The variety treated was that locally known as "Redskins," the manures being supplied by the Council; and, as they were practically the same in each case, a comparison of the yields for the two years will prove interesting to those concerned.

THE AGRICULTURAL GAZETTE.

Under the control of Mr. Thos. Hogarth (Hon. Editor) the efficiency of the Council's Journal is well maintained. Instructive articles by the Hon. Experts in Horticulture, Bees, and Poultry are published regularly, and necessarily make the paper of deeper interest to its readers. The reports of the Boards, with any papers that are brought forward, are printed in detail, and a "Correspondence" column invites articles of interest from any person interested in Agriculture throughout the Colony.

VETERINARY.

The services of the Hon. Veterinary Surgeon (Dr. Willmott) have been largely availed of. A visit was paid by that gentleman to the northern portion of the Colony to investigate and report upon an outbreak of calf mortality. Many queries regarding the treatment of affected stock have been attended to, and instructive information given through the medium of a leaflet for dealing with the Bot Fly, which pest continues to make headway in this Colony.

BOTANICAL AND ENTOMOLOGICAL.

The Council desires to express appreciation of the assistance rendered by the Hon. Botanist (Mr. L. Rodway) on matters of interest in the botanical world. Farmers are solicited to forward any unknown plants for identification, and thus be in a position to discriminate between friends and foes.

The Rev. E. H. Thompson, though not attached to the Department, at all times is ready to impart information on matters connected with the treatment and nomenclature of insect and fungus pests.

CONFERENCES.

The Boards of Agriculture met in conference twice during the period under review,—at Hobart in September, and Launceston in December. Various matters of importance were discussed, *ergo*, The Pest Acts, Fruit Shipment, &c. The idea of holding two conferences in the year in different parts of the Colony has been warmly supported by the Boards, and an effort will be made to carry this proposition into effect.

ANALYSIS OF SPRAYS AND MANURES.

As considerable doubt appeared to exist amongst orchardists where to obtain pure material for spraying purposes, an officer of the Department approached the various vendors with a view to having samples of their goods analysed, which proposition met with general approval. The Analyst's report has been published in the *Gazette*, and in no case does there appear to be any cause for complaint, the "Bluestone" in particular being of a very high standard. Messrs. L. Evans, F. Maddox, and the Secretary (Mr. T. A. Tabart) were appointed Inspectors under "The Manures Adulteration Act" in December last, which Act empowers them to procure samples of Manures offered for sale for the purpose of having same analysed and their report will be furnished at an early date.

THE BOARDS.

During the early part of 1896 the interest in the work of the Boards on the part of the Members became somewhat relaxed, but the tours of visitation undertaken by the Members of the Council have been successful in reviving same, and they are now steadily progressing. The total number of Boards stands at thirty-three (33). Many subjects of interest to farmers have been dealt with, for example, Railway Freights, An Arbor Day, Codlin Moth Act, Destruction of Sparrows, Trade with Great Britain, Grain Storage, Markets for Produce, Osier Culture, Exported Products Bill, Flaying Hides, Crimson Clover, Spaying, Experimental Plots, &c.

The following papers have been read and discussed:—

Chudleigh.—"Sheep Farming," E. W. Oliver. "Horse-breaking," F. D. Roberts. "Potato-growing," C. Pearn.

Evandale.—"Some Functions of Plants," Rev. H. D. Atkinson. "Rotation of Crops," J. W. Cheek.

Green Ponds.—"Co-operation," R. W. Pierce.

Lilydale.—"Rail Freights and Charges," "Codlin Moth Act," F. Proctor.

Launceston.—"The Factory System of Butter-making," J. Christensen. "The Balcock Tester in Dairy Herd," "Berkshires," G. M. Barnard. "Sparrow Pest," J. Lamont.

Macquarie Plains.—"Potash Manuring of Crops," E. Dean.

New Norfolk.—"Mussel Scale," J. Brown.

Queenborough.—"Some Points of Interest," J. Langley.

Scottsdale.—"Panting Disease or Grunts in Cattle," F. W. Briggs. "Nitrate of Soda," W. A. Carius.

Tasman Peninsula.—"Some Observations on Potato-growing," J. Richardson.

L. M. SHOBRIDGE, *President*.

THOMAS A. TABART, *Secretary*.

The Hon. the Minister of Agriculture.