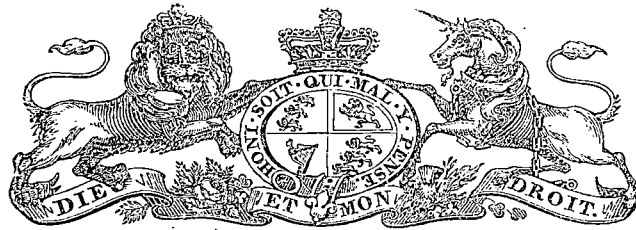


(No. 12.)



1899.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TASMANIA:

REPORT FOR 1898.

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

Cost of printing—£1 15s.



## COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE, TASMANIA.

### REPORT FOR 1898.

*Council of Agriculture, Hobart, 14th April, 1899.*

SIR,

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

#### PERSONNEL OF COUNCIL.

The elections carried out under Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 of "The Department of Agriculture Act," 61 Vict. No. 7, which came into force on the first day of the year, resulted in the following gentlemen being returned:—Mr. L. M. Shoobridge (Derwent), Mr. A. Oliver (Devon), Mr. C. W. Allen (Westmorland), Colonel Legge (Cornwall), Mr. W. W. Henwood (Pembroke), Mr. W. J. Thomas (Huon), Mr. A. Monnington (Wellington), Mr. Frank Maddox (Launceston), Mr. F. W. Briggs (Dorset), Mr. M. Fletcher, jun., (Hobart).

As no Boards of Agriculture were in existence in the Agricultural District of Cumberland, the Council selected Mr. J. R. Pillinger, an old member residing in the district, to fill the post.

At the first meeting, held on March 30th, Mr. L. M. Shoobridge was elected Vice-President, and that gentleman, together with Messrs. Thomas, Henwood, Fletcher, and Pillinger, constitute the Executive Body.

Mr. Frank Maddox's resignation in October was met by the appointment of Mr. J. W. Cheek, a former member nominated by the Lilydale Board of Agriculture.

Mr. Thos. A. Tabart still retains the office of Secretary, assisted by Mr. L. A. Evans.

#### MEETINGS OF COUNCIL.

The Council held five meetings during the year, and the following shows the number of attendances by Members:—Mr. L. M. Shoobridge (5), Mr. W. J. Thomas (5), Mr. Melmoth Fletcher (5), Mr. A. Monnington (5), Colonel Legge (4), Mr. C. W. Allen (4), Mr. F. W. Briggs (4), Mr. J. R. Pillinger (4), Mr. A. Oliver (4), Mr. W. W. Henwood (3), Mr. F. Maddox (2), Mr. J. W. Cheek, *nil*, no meetings having been held during 1898 since confirmation of appointment.

#### SPRAYING EXPERIMENTS.

The Report of Mr. Tasman Morrisby on the spraying experiments carried out for codlin moth, &c., at Glenorchy and South Bridgewater, has been issued in pamphlet form. A perusal of this clearly shows the necessity for further investigation, but the Council decided to refrain from requesting further expenditure pending the appointment of an entomologist who could supervise the work.

#### EXPERIMENTAL PLOTS.

In consequence of the resignation of Mr. Maddox, whose services the Council feel will, with difficulty, be replaced, the cereals remaining from the plots at "Eastfield" not being sufficient in bulk for distribution amongst the Branch Boards, were handed over to the Superintendent of the New Town Farm, and sown by the Farm Manager (Mr. Reid) at Derwent Park. Mr. Maddox, with other Members of the Council, visited the plots in October, and spoke in high terms of praise of their arrangement, and, so far, the movement promises to be a great success, some of the plots showing a probable yield equal to the rate of over fifty bushels per acre. The question of establishing field plots in different parts of the Colony for the purpose of demonstrating the conclusions arrived at by the different Agricultural Experiment Stations in various parts of the world has received close attention. Messrs. Shoobridge, Allen, Monnington, and Maddox met in conference

at Westbury, in April, and formulated a scheme which was afterwards approved by the Council, and appears on page four of the July issue of the *Agricultural Gazette*. The necessary funds, however, estimated at £600, not being available, this movement has remained in abeyance.

#### AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION.

With a view of facilitating the spread of Agricultural Education amongst the farming community, the Council supported the proposal to subsidise Mr. Gurney's Agricultural Technical School at Ulverstone, which was formally opened by yourself on the first of November. The result of this movement will be closely watched by farmers all over the Colony, and a successful issue will, no doubt, warrant an extension of the time for which subsidy was granted, viz., eighteen months, and possibly justify similar subsidies being granted in other portions of the Colony.

The encouraging response made by the Director of Education when approached *re* the position of Agricultural teaching in State Schools, promises to secure considerable future attention in this respect, and enquiries are being made as to the practicability of introducing coloured plates illustrating the farmers' "friends and foes," thus developing the scholar's powers of observation and furnishing him with a useful start in the rudiments of Natural History. The distribution of scientific text-books on agriculture will also take practical shape in the near future.

#### THE MANURE ADULTERATION ACT.

As you are aware, Sir, the defective construction of the above Act debarred the Council from proceeding legally against several vendors of manures in Launceston, nor did the Act clearly authorise the publication of the results of analysis of samples obtained by Inspectors. As the Amendment, which came into operation on the first of January, 1899, throws the responsibility of selling imported manures upon the vendor, one source of possible abuse is provided for. It is singular to notice that farmers, when making a purchase of an animal or implement, display the greatest interest in its intrinsic value; but in the case of buying manures for the farm, although involving in many instances an expenditure of over £20 per annum, make not the slightest effort to secure themselves by an analytical examination of fertilisers purchased, as well as a season's loss of time, when analysis could be had at a cost of 10s. 6d.

On the 30th March, Mr. Melmoth Fletcher was appointed an Inspector, *vice* Mr. Maddox resigned.

The Government Analyst has computed the unit values of the ingredients contained in the various fertilisers, thus enabling farmers to calculate the commercial value of manures, which, however, as has been pointed out, is quite distinct from the agricultural value.

#### CONFERENCES.

As one of the means of fostering and maintaining the interest of members of the Branch Boards (failing which a large proportion of the work the Council undertakes must necessarily be barren) lies in bringing them into contact one with another, the Council called a conference of delegates on the 18th of October at Hobart. Subjects of importance to farmers were discussed to advantage, and it would be well to point out that the benefits of such meetings are not confined to the meeting-room. The association of delegates during the journey to and fro, and the intercourse during sojourn at the place of meeting, have an educational value far above that generally recognised. In view of these circumstances, it is earnestly hoped that the further concessions by rail asked for will be granted.

Conferences are also being held by the members of Boards in the several agricultural districts, which should prove a very useful and practical means of devising suggestions for district operations, and possibly have a wider application as well.

In October Messrs. Monnington, Oliver, and Thomas, members of the Council, together with Mr. Thos. Hogarth, editor *Agricultural Gazette*, visited Woodbridge, Port Cygnet, Geeveston, and Franklin, for the purpose of meeting members of Branch Boards and farmers generally. In every instance interesting and profitable gatherings took place, and a desire expressed on behalf of the residents that the visits be made annually. A word of praise is due to those Boards who undertook the formation of hospitality committees, without which sufficient funds could not have been drawn from our vote to meet such expenses.

#### THE QUARANTINE REGULATIONS.

The Launceston Board of Agriculture, moving in the direction of the above, strongly urged the reduction of the quarantine period on mainland stock from six to three months. After receiving the views of the Chief Inspector of Stock and those of the Honorary Veterinarian, we decided that, in order to remain on the safe side of the possibility of introducing that dreaded disease, pleuro-pneumonia, it would be best not to fall in with the suggestion. With the object of getting the opinion of further authorities, and in response to a request from the Frankford branch, an application has been made to the Departments of Agriculture of Canada and the United States for the period, in the opinion of their Veterinary Division, it is necessary to enforce, in order to prevent the possibility of introducing pleuro-pneumonia into this Colony from outside sources.

## DUTY ON FRUIT WINES.

The question of permitting makers of Tasmanian wines to sell quantities as small as one bottle upon payment of a nominal licence of, say five shillings, was remitted for the consideration of Branch Boards at the instance of the Frankford branch. The replies totalled twenty-seven, twenty-two of which were opposed to any alteration in the present Act, and, in view of such opposition, we felt it undesirable to further the suggestion.

## BOTANICAL AND ENTOMOLOGICAL.

The services of Mr. L. Rodway, as Hon. Botanist, are still available, and the Council desire to place on record their continued appreciation of the services rendered by that gentleman, and the close and immediate attention he has given any questions submitted.

The appointment of Mr. A. M. Lea as Government Entomologist will, no doubt, prove of direct gain in the direction of assisting farmers to combat the numerous pests with which they are burdened.

## THE AGRICULTURAL GAZETTE.

Owing to the increase in the volume of monthly Board reports, it became desirable to increase the size of the Council's journal to twenty-four pages. Such increase, besides meeting the original intention, gives space for the inclusion of articles possessing special interest to the requirements of the Colony, culled from the many valuable papers and exchanges received from all parts of the world, and we have every reason to believe the extension is well appreciated by those who receive the journal.

Mr. Thos. Hogarth still controls the editorship, assisted by Mr. L. A. Evans.

## THE BRANCH BOARDS OF AGRICULTURE.

The total number of branches affiliated with the Council stands at forty-three, with an annual attending roster of over seven hundred members. As an instance of the work performed at these meetings, the following are a few of the subjects that have been discussed during the period under review:—Destruction of Cape Weed; Bot Fly; Dog Licence; Experimental Plots; Value of Shows; Price of Wheat; Noxious Weeds; Quality of Chaff; Rape; Agricultural Statistics; The Bush Fires Act; Fruit Wines; Importation of Plants; Federation from a Farmer's Standpoint; Threshing Plants; Co-operation; Potato Culture; Insect Pests; Restoring Worn-out Lands; Quarantine on Stock; Shelter for Stock; Apple Culture; Tree Planting; Agricultural Education; Seaweed as Manure; Oil Cake; The Dairying Interest; Destruction of Sparrows; Taxing Orchards, &c.

The following Papers have been read and discussed:—

*Bream Creek*.—"Stray Dogs," W. Jenkins; "Sparrow Pest," J. Woolley; "Shearing and Dipping," T. Dunbabin.

*Chudleigh*.—"Dairy Stock," A. Oliver.

*Clarence*.—"Principles of Rotation Cropping," E. P. Davies.

*Evandale*.—"Practical Agricultural Education, Tasmanian experience with Grain Drills," J. W. Cheek.

*East Wellington*.—"Rape Growing," J. Haywood.

*Frankford*.—"Meadow Hay," J. J. Durand; "The Dairy Industry," P. Welch.

*Lilydale*.—"Bull and Stallion Tax," F. Proctor; "Agricultural Education," W. Orr.

*Launceston*.—"On the Chemical Analysis of Soils as a guide to Manuring," W. A. Carins; "The Quarantine Laws and their probable effects on the Breed of Cattle in Tasmania," Dr. Wilson; "Federation," by J. Gunning; "The Year's results with the Babcock Tester in the Dairy Herds," "Winter Dairying," "Dehorning Calves," G. M. Barnard; "Work of Earth Worms," "Wire Worms," "The Potato Moth," F. M. Littler.

*Longford*.—"The Bush Fires Act," "Rotation of Crops," "Destruction of Vegetable Pests," J. Bottomly; "How to grow something else," G. Gill.

*Queenborough*.—"Fruit Fly," "Flax Culture," J. Langley.

*Ringarooma*.—"Farming in its various aspects," "Bull and Stallion Tax," Chas. A. Graves.

*Rosevale*.—"Buckwheat," "Some reasons why Tasmania does not supply sufficient Butter for her own use," "The Farmer's Fowls," D. L. Swift.

*St. Mary's*.—"Improvement of the Dairying Interest," J. T. Cramp.

*Westbury*.—"Ploughing," E. G. Hall; "Inbreeding of Stock," S. Bendall.

Respectfully submitted,

L. M. SHOBRIDGE, *Vice-President*.

THOMAS TABART, *Secretary*.

*The Right Hon. the Minister for Agriculture.*