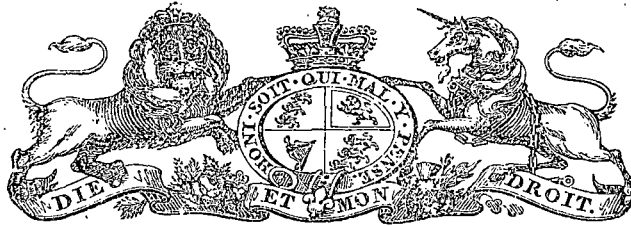


(No. 28.)



1898.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

INTERCOLONIAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF
AGRICULTURE, MELBOURNE, FEBRUARY, 1898 :

REPORT, &c.

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

Cost of printing—£2 5s.



INTERCOLONIAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE.

MELBOURNE, 3RD, 4TH, AND 5TH FEBRUARY, 1898.

A CONFERENCE of the Ministers of Agriculture for several of the Australasian Colonies, convened by the Minister for Victoria, was held at the Houses of Parliament, Melbourne, on the 3rd, 4th, and 5th February, 1898, for the purpose of discussing certain questions relating to the producing interests of the colonies in which they are jointly concerned.

The representation of the colonies was as under :—

New South Wales	...	Hon. Sydney Smith.
Victoria	...	Hon. J. W. Taverner.
South Australia	...	Hon. Dr. Cockburn.
Queensland	...	Hon. A. J. Thynne.
Tasmania	...	The Right Hon. Sir Edward Braddon.

Mr. Taverner was elected Chairman of the Conference, and submitted a syllabus of the subjects which he proposed to ask representatives to consider, and which were as follow :—

1. Report on Agricultural Produce (Marks) Bill (Great Britain).
2. Australian Leather Industry—Recent action of War Office.
3. Tick Disease.
4. Joint action for reduction of Ocean Freights.
5. Joint Australian Display of Produce in London.
6. Questions mutually affecting Producing Interests.

TICK DISEASE.

It was agreed to first take into consideration the question of the Tick Disease.

Mr. Thynne informed the Conference that the Stock Board of Queensland intended leaving Brisbane on the 9th inst. for the purpose of making an inspection of certain of the tick-infected districts in that colony, and at the same time invited the other colonies concerned to send officers of their respective Stock Departments to accompany the Board. It was therefore resolved—

“That the other colonies interested accept the invitation of the representative of Queensland, and agree to instruct officers to accompany the Board, and furnish reports to their several Ministers.”

In view of the fact of the existence of tick in Western Australia, it was further resolved—

“That the Government of Western Australia be asked to also send an officer to accompany the Stock Board, and further to arrange for representation at the next Ministerial Conference to be held dealing with the subject.”

Mr. Thynne further reported that since this subject had been previously considered by Ministers in conference, the extent of the tick-infected area in Queensland had considerably diminished, the disease having shown signs of increase only in the neighbourhood of Rockhampton, and submitted for the information of the other colonies reports which had been furnished by the Chief Inspector of Stock, and Dr. J. Sidney Hunt, of Queensland, and an epitome of experiments, which had been conducted in inoculation as a means of conferring immunity from the tick disease, by Mr. C. J. Pound, also of Queensland.

It was agreed that these reports, &c., should be printed as an Appendix to the report of the proceedings of the present Conference.

In regard to the results of the experiments in inoculation which had been conducted under the direction of the Queensland Government, the Conference, considering that at its present rate of progress there was no possibility of the disease extending to the southern colonies for many years to come, and being of opinion that inoculation could only be regarded at the present time as in an experimental stage, was strongly impressed with the view that at this junction there was no necessity for committing itself to any indorsement of the system of inoculation, and thereby undertaking any risk which might be attendant upon it, until the results of further experiments now being conducted had been ascertained. These views were shared by the representatives of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, and the Conference therefore resolved—

“That, while the reports submitted by Mr. Thynne as to the results of inoculation are satisfactory so far as they go, and while the plan recently produced showing the extent of the tick-infected area does not justify the exaggerated statements made as to the spread of the disease, but rather that it has disappeared in certain districts previously infected, although extended in the district of Rockhampton, still the representatives of Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia, being desirous of further information on certain points before adopting the recommendation of Queensland in favour of general inoculation, desire that such recommendation should have further consideration after the enquiry to be made by the Queensland Stock Board, accompanied by the officers of other Stock Departments, and when the results of further experiments now proceeding in Queensland are known.”

Mr. Thynne brought before the Conference the question of modifying the regulations relating to quarantine on the extreme north-west of Queensland as between that colony and South Australia, and Dr. Cockburn urged the desirableness of proclaiming an intermediate zone north of the prohibitory line in the Northern Territory of South Australia.

It was agreed, however, that all matters relating to the tick disease should be permitted to stand over pending the inquiry about to be made in Queensland.

AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE (MARKS) BILL (GREAT BRITAIN).

The Conference proceeded to discuss the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons in regard to this Bill, and after consideration, adopted the following resolution with respect thereto:—

“That, while it is satisfactory to note the recommendation made that meat produced in the colonies should be distinguished in Great Britain from that produced in other countries, the Conference is strongly desirous that meat imported into Great Britain from these colonies should be marked ‘Australian,’ and objects to the use of the term ‘foreign’ as applied to Australian produce. The Conference recommends, therefore, that steps should be taken by the respective Governments to have these views represented to the proper authorities.”

AUSTRALIAN LEATHER INDUSTRY.

The action recently taken by the British War Office in relation to the leather industry of Australia in debarring from use for army purposes leather tanned in Australia was then considered. Correspondence on the subject which had passed between the Victorian Government and the Agent-General for Victoria, as well as other papers, including a statement of the exports of leather from all the colonies, was submitted by Mr. Taverner, and these, together with papers submitted by Mr. Smith, were directed to be printed in connexion with the Report of the proceedings of the Conference. Dr. Cockburn and Mr. Thynne informed the Conference of the steps they had taken in this matter, and, after consideration and discussion, the following resolution on the subject was adopted, viz.:—

“That, in view of the provisions relating to tannage in the specifications for the supply of leather for army purposes in Great Britain, it is, in the opinion of this Conference, desirable that leather tanned in these colonies should be accepted as coming within the category of ‘British tanned’ leather for the purpose of the War Office and other Imperial supplies, and that the respective Governments be asked to place these views before the home authorities.”

JOINT ACTION FOR REDUCTION OF FREIGHTS.

Mr. Sydney Smith reported to the Conference as to the action which had been taken in pursuance of the resolution on this subject adopted at the Conference held in Sydney in May, 1897, and explained that he hoped shortly to be in a position to submit further information respecting the matter to the other colonies.

JOINT AUSTRALIAN DISPLAY OF PRODUCE IN LONDON.

The Conference considered that at the present time it was not advisable to take any action in the direction of arranging for a joint display of produce in London. In connection with the consideration of this matter, however, a resolution was adopted to the following effect:—

“That inquiries should be instituted by the respective Governments of the colonies represented at the Conference as to the desirability of establishing an agency in Great Britain for the distribution of Australian produce, in combination with cool stores for the accommodation of such produce when landed.”

QUESTIONS MUTUALLY AFFECTING PRODUCING INTERESTS.

Under this heading various questions of joint interest to the colonies were considered and dealt with as follows:—

Uniform Branding of Cattle.

Pursuant to an arrangement previously made, Mr. Sydney Smith submitted copies of a Bill, which had been drafted under his direction, to amend and consolidate the law relating to the branding of stock, having for its objects the attainment of uniformity of system in regard to the branding of cattle, and the saving of the loss which results from the present want of system in consequence of the damage caused to the hides by the methods adopted, the monetary loss resulting from such damage being estimated at about £300,000 per annum.

Mr. Thynne also presented copies of a Bill dealing with the subject, which had been introduced into the Queensland Parliament.

These Bills it was decided to refer to the various Governments represented at the Conference for consideration.

Dairy Bill.

Mr. Thynne also laid before the Conference copies of the Dairy Bill which had been introduced into the Parliament of Queensland, as well as a Report of the proceedings of the Select Committee which had been appointed by the Legislative Council of that colony to consider the measure.

Diseases in Fruit.

Sir Edward Braddon introduced the question of the restrictions placed by certain of the colonies upon the importation from other colonies of fruit affected with disease, pointing out that in New South Wales, for instance, the admission of such fruit was absolutely prohibited, although the disease it bore actually already existed there, while no steps were taken in Tasmania to exclude fruit coming from New South Wales similarly affected.

The other representatives were, however, strongly of opinion that all the colonies were fully justified in adopting such measures as to them appeared necessary or desirable to secure freedom from fruit diseases, and that the circumstances would not warrant any relaxation of the regulations at present existing, inasmuch as efforts to stamp out diseases within any colony would be unavailing if their introduction were permitted from outside.

It was, however, pointed out in connexion with this matter that in the colony of Western Australia the regulations were practically prohibitive of the importation of fruit, and the Conference therefore resolved—

“That representations be made on the subject to the Honourable the Premier of Western Australia, and that he be requested to bring about a relaxation of the regulations to such an extent as will permit of the introduction into Western Australia from the other colonies of fruit uninfected with disease, no objection being entertained to the exclusion of diseased fruit or to any inspection that might be considered necessary.”

In connexion with the consideration of this subject the Conference further adopted the following resolution, viz. :—

“That it is advisable for the producing interests of the colonies that uniform legislation should be adopted by them dealing with diseases in vegetation.”

Railway Freights on Fruit.

Mr. Thynne brought before the Conference the subject of the freights charged for the carriage by rail of tropical fruits from Queensland to the southern colonies. These rates were considered by the Conference to be excessive, and it was decided that it should be a recommendation to the Railway Departments of the Colonies interested to confer, with a view of ascertaining whether a reduction could not be made on such freights that would permit of trade in fruit being carried on between the colonies with more chance of profit to the producers, and benefit to the consumers.

Ocean Carriage of Fruit.

Mr. Taverner reported in connexion with the resolution on this subject adopted at the Conference held in Sydney, in May, 1897, that arrangements had been made between certain of the colonies, and were shortly to be given effect, for conducting an experiment in the shipment of fruit to Great Britain.

Proposed visit of Dr. Koch.

Mr. Sydney Smith reported that in accordance with a resolution adopted at the Conference held in May, 1897, Dr. Koch has been communicated with as to the terms upon which he would visit the colonies, and a reply had been received that he was unable to come.

A cordial expression of thanks from the Members of the Conference for courtesies extended to them was accorded to the Chairman, Mr. Taverner.

Appreciation was also expressed of the services of Mr. S. Whitehead as Secretary to the Conference, and the proceedings terminated.

J. W. TAVERNER, Victoria, Chairman.
S. SMITH, New South Wales.
JOHN A. COCKBURN, South Australia.
A. J. THYNNE, Queensland.
E. BRADDON, Tasmania.

APPENDIX I.

Live Stock and Brands Office,
Brisbane, 28th January, 1898.

SIR,

I have the honour to submit the following brief resumé of our experience so far in inoculation as a preventive of tick fever in cattle:

The experiments have been carried out with two distinct objects in view—

1. To ascertain results of inoculation with recovered blood on cattle that have never been infested or in contact with ticks.
2. To ascertain effects of inoculation in cattle that had already been slightly or severely tick-infested.

With regard to the first, the reports of Mr. Pound and Dr. Hunt herewith show that the success has been complete, as far as protection from the fever is concerned.

There have been a few deaths from the effects of the operation, but these have occurred in the adult cattle. No deaths have occurred in the young cattle, experience showing that the young cattle suffer less severely than adult cattle, whether the disease be communicated in the natural way by means of ticks or induced by injection of infected blood.

With respect to cattle already tick-infested, the results seem to show that inoculation has a decided effect in enabling cattle that are but slightly tick-infested to resist the fever. Of course, cattle that have suffered from the fever naturally contracted are immune after recovery.

All evidence points to the fact that the injection of from 3 to 5 centimetres of recovered blood into healthy cattle, that is, cattle that have not been in direct or indirect contact with ticks or tick-infested pasture, thoroughly protects them from fever when placed in contact with tick-infested cattle; and, although there will be a small percentage of mortality in adult cattle, particularly in bulls, from the operation, experience so far has demonstrated that the percentage of deaths from that cause in young cattle has been nil.

Acting on this information, several owners in the north are now inoculating calves at time of branding.

Our knowledge on the subject is now sufficiently ripe to warrant us in strongly recommending the Stock Department of New South Wales to induce cattle-owners in the north coastal districts of that colony to inoculate all their young cattle, and so render them immune to fever in the event of ticks extending to those districts.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

P. R. GORDON,
Chief Inspector of Stock.

The Honourable A. J. Thynne,
Secretary for Agriculture, Brisbane.

Dr. Hunt successfully inoculated two bulls imported from Victoria, which are now on an infested run, and have since been quite immune, although tick-infested.

Three hundred cattle were inoculated on Glendower, and have remained immune in the centre of a herd suffering severely from the fever.

In the Bowen district, 4,000 cattle on Mount Pleasant (Mr. Lascelles'), inoculated in June last, remain immune.

In Birraleer herd (Crump and Hughes), 4,000 have been inoculated with complete success. The remaining 5,900 are now being inoculated. Strathmore herd, same district, numbering 24,890, is being inoculated.

Natal Downs herd, numbering 20,920, is being inoculated at the present time.

Sub-inspector Haly inoculated 89 bulls a second time on Bulliwallah run with 5 c.c.m. infected blood with no rise of temperature, showing the success of the first operation. This operation only occupied 53 minutes.

In Mackay district Inspector Hancock has inoculated cattle in many herds in the district, and with complete success, merely by way of instructing the owners. Inoculation is now general in that district, owners now inoculating calves at time of branding.

In St. Lawrence district the owners of Collaroy here have inoculated 4,000. These were slightly tick-infested. No mortality.

From the number of applications that are being received by the Department for hypodermic syringes, protective inoculation south of the infected districts will be general during the coming autumn. Owners have been merely waiting a break in the weather.

P. R. GORDON,
Chief Inspector of Stock.

Brisbane, 28th January, 1898.

SIR,

In accordance with your instructions, I have the honour to submit the following brief summary of the more important ascertained facts in connexion with tick fever:—

1. That the disease is communicated by ticks, and, in nature, by ticks only.
2. That cattle may be infested for many months without showing signs of disease. Instances are on record where cattle have been tick-infested for upwards of two years without showing any signs of disease. From this circumstance it would appear probable that all cattle ticks do not carry the specific micro-organism of tick fever.
3. Instances have been recorded where cattle have suffered from and even succumbed to a second and possibly a third attack of acute tick fever, but such instances are so exceptional that they may be neglected.
4. A single attack of naturally-induced acute tick fever confers a degree of subsequent protection which is effective for all practical purposes. The evidence of this fact is supplied by the immunity of cattle in places through which the disease has passed, *e.g.*, the northern stations in Queensland, and in the permanently infested areas of United States.
5. A more or less modified form of the disease may be induced by inoculation with the blood of an animal suffering from the disease or with blood of one that has recovered. This artificially-induced disease is much milder than the natural disease, but is followed by like practical immunity. No instance is on record that a subsequent attack of tick fever has been artificially produced in an animal that has once been effectually inoculated.
6. The health and condition of cattle that have recovered from tick fever, natural or artificial, is in no way impaired.
7. Bulls are peculiarly prone to succumb to tick fever. The greatest care must, therefore, be exercised in the inoculation of this class of cattle.
8. The micro-organism of tick fever is essentially a blood parasite belonging to the animal kingdom; it has not been cultivated artificially, and is not known to affect any but bovine animals. Hence, a vaccine must necessarily be sought in the blood of cattle containing the micro-parasite.
9. Various attempts have been made to produce a modified virus by the use of chemical and physical agents, as, for instance, by keeping the blood to be used for inoculating purposes mixed with such substances as carbolic acid, glycerine, camphor, &c., in various proportions and for various periods by mixing it in like manner with the blood of a naturally immune animal, such as the horse, or by slowly desiccating the blood at a gentle heat. No very satisfactory results have been obtained by such means.
10. No *direct* evidence has been adduced to show that a *toxin* is present in the blood of sick beasts, or an *anti-toxin* in recovered ones, though from analogy and other considerations it may be reasonably inferred that some such bodies are present. Methods of inoculation based on these suppositions have not yielded results in any way comparable to those obtained by the use of blood containing living organisms, which have now, in a very large number of cases, proved eminently satisfactory.

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient servant,

J. SIDNEY HUNT.

The Honourable A. J. Thynne,
Secretary for Agriculture, Brisbane.

Bacteriological Laboratory, Stock Institute,
Brisbane, 28th January, 1898.

EPITOME OF ORIGINAL INVESTIGATIONS IN CONNEXION WITH
PROTECTIVE INOCULATION FOR TICK FEVER.

BY C. J. POUND.

12th February, 1897.—Two immune steers (A and B) arrived at Indooroopilly from Inkerman Station, North Queensland. Blood examined, and extra cellular organisms found in both.

22nd February, 1897.—Inoculated two calves (C and D), one with 10 c.c., and the other with 5 c.c. of blood from Inkerman steer B. Both developed a decided attack of fever, and at present are perfectly healthy.

3rd March, 1897.—Inoculated two calves (E and F) each with 5 c.c. of blood from Inkerman steer B. These have since been used to provide blood for stock-owners in the Moreton, Burnett, Wide Bay, and Port Curtis districts.

EXPERIMENTS AT MUNDOOLUN.

9th April, 1897.—Inoculated 29 adult cattle with varying quantities (from 1 to 10 c.c.) of blood from Inkerman steer B. Inoculated six adult cattle with from 2 to 10 c.c. of blood from calf D. Inoculated six adult cattle with from 4 to 10 c.c. of filtered blood from Inkerman steer B.

Four of the animals inoculated with blood from Inkerman steer B died, partly from the effects of inoculation, and partly owing to the severity of the weather, and through having to be driven to the yards when they were in high fever.

In order to prove that the two latter conditions assisted the progress of the fever, another experiment was tried as follows:—Thirty-three more adult animals were inoculated with 8 c.c. of blood from Inkerman steer B, after which they were turned out (the weather being warm) into a good paddock and left entirely undisturbed, with the result that not one of them died.

This experiment has been repeated again and again in various districts with the same satisfactory results.

26th June, 1897.—Fifty-two experimental animals arrived at Inkerman Station from Mundoolun. Of this number—

- (a) Twenty-seven were inoculated with unfiltered blood from Inkerman steer B.
- (b) Four were inoculated with filtered blood from Inkerman steer B.
- (c) Three were inoculated from bile from an animal recently dead of tick fever.
- (d) Eighteen healthy or control animals.

These cattle were kept in a virulently tick-infested paddock, and within three weeks all became covered with ticks.

The result of this experiment up to date (January, 1898, six months after) is as follows:—

Lot (a) A few showed signs of slight fever by means of the thermometer, but none died.

Lot (b) All had severe fever, and one died.

Lot (c) All had severe fever, and one died.

Lot (d) All suffered severely from fever, some having acute attacks of red-water, and six (over 30 per cent.) died from tick fever.

All the inoculated cattle, in spite of being grossly tick-infested, got quite fat, and have remained so ever since.

On the other hand, the survivors of those injected with bile and filtered blood and the control or healthy animals all suffered severely from fever, and remained in a miserable wasting condition for a long period of time.

BULL INOCULATION.

20th August, 1897.—Inoculated at Rathdowney Station 35 stud bulls (shorthorns), all under two years old, with 5 c.c. of blood from Inkerman steer B.

Result.—All remained healthy and well.

20th October, 1897.—Thirty-three of the above bulls, and seven fresh bulls, were inoculated with 5 c.c. of blood from Inkerman steer B.

Result.—Few showed slight sickness, but none died.

At present these animals are waiting to be shipped to a tick-infested district in North Queensland.

NOTE.—Bulls under two years are not nearly so susceptible to tick fever as those of five years and over.

8th September, 1897.—Eighty-eight bulls (Shorthorns and Devons), mostly aged, some being over seven years, were inoculated at Rosedale with 5 c.c. of blood from a heifer calf originally inoculated from Inkerman steer B.

Result.—

22nd September, 1897.—A number apparently sick.

23rd September, 1897.—8 bulls died.

24th September, 1897.—19 bulls died.

Up to date.—8 bulls died.

—
35, total number dead.

I am of opinion that the heavy mortality was largely due to the bulls being inoculated at an age when they are extremely susceptible to any form of fever whether produced naturally or artificially; at the same time it is highly probable that the travelling and scarcity of grass in the paddock tended to increase the death rate.

INOCULATION OF SLIGHTLY TICK-INFESTED CATTLE.

15th September, 1897.—At Gracemere inoculated 31 slightly tick-infested cattle with 5 c.c. of blood from an animal that had recovered from a severe attack of tick fever.

The temperature of only six animals were taken with the thermometer, but all showed a distinct reaction.

13th October, 1897.—The 31 inoculated cattle, together with 31 uninoculated cattle (all slightly tick-infested), were removed to a grossly tick-infested paddock at Carwarral.

Up to the present time only one of the inoculated animals has died, and nine of the control or uninoculated animals have died.

Since March of last year an interesting series of experiments have been conducted at Indooroopilly in order to determine whether the passing of blood from one animal to another through several generations will vary in its protective qualities.

Up to the present we have animals inoculated with the sixth remove from the original immune animal, and when they were subjected to the inoculation of virulent blood they remained perfectly healthy, therefore it is reasonable to suppose that these animals will withstand natural tick infection.

Acting on the suggestion of the Minister, I have visited various cattle-raising districts in different parts of the colony for the purpose of delivering lectures on ticks and tick fever, and also to give practical demonstration on the method of protective inoculation.

The following places have been visited, viz. :—Gayndah, Mount Perry, Maryborough, Bundaberg, Rosedale, Gladstone, Rockhampton, and various cattle-stations in Central and Western Queensland.

At each of the above-mentioned places I have inoculated from 10 to 30 calves for distribution among stock-owners in the immediate districts.

C. J. POUND,
Director Stock Institute.

Brisbane, 28th January, 1898.

APPENDIX II.

No. 6256.

Victoria Office, 15 Victoria-street,
Westminster, S.W., 21st December, 1897.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegraphic despatch of the 17th inst., as under :—

“Is there any truth in report that Imperial Government have ordered that leather tanned with Australian bark is not to be accepted by War Office? If so, co-operate with other Agents-General to have orders cancelled.”

Immediately upon the receipt of the above I wrote to Sir Ralph Knox and received from him a note in reply stating that their only stipulation is that leather shall be “British tanned,” although in some few cases “oak bark” tannage is also required. As this information is a little vague, I have instituted further inquiries, and on receipt of a reply to the same will at once advise you further on the subject.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient servant,
AND. CLARKE.

The Honourable the Premier, Melbourne.

[COPY.]

Department of Mines and Agriculture,
Sydney, 22nd December, 1897.

MINUTE PAPER.

An order has recently been issued by the British War Office to the effect that no leather tanned with Australian bark is to be accepted for the future. This will seriously affect several industries, and it is desirable that representations should be made to the proper authorities at home through the Agent-General.

With a view to having the order rescinded, if possible, the Victorian Government are making representations of the kind, and I would suggest that a cablegram be sent to the Agent-General for his colony asking him to co-operate with the Agent-General for Victoria in bringing the matter under the attention of the home authorities.

(Signed)

S. SMITH.

The Under-Secretary, Finance and Trade.—D. McL., 24.12.97.

EXPORTS OF LEATHER FROM AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

	1894.		1895.		1896.
	£		£		£
New South Wales	241,848	...	294,708	...	338,961
Victoria	219,013	...	280,809	...	314,179
South Australia	33,208	...	54,619	...	51,233
Queensland	13,696	...	11,949	...	11,688
Tasmania	5,790	...	11,156	...	5,864