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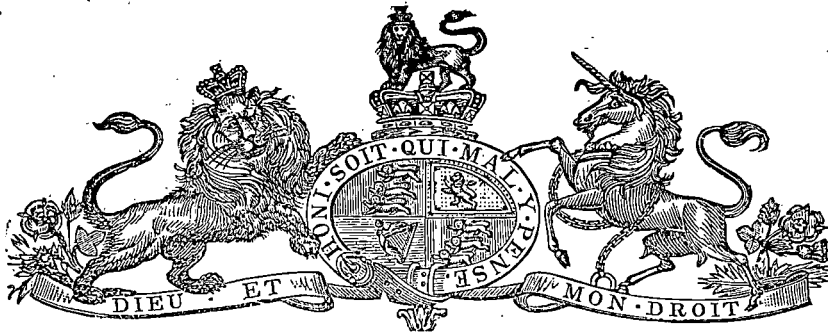
PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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REPORT OF CHIEF INSPECTOR UNDER  
CODLIN MOTH ACT.

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



## CODLIN MOTH ACT.

*Office of Chief Inspector, Hobart, 31st May, 1893.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to submit my Report upon the working of the Codlin Moth Act for the season up to 31st May, 1893. Following up the course of action taken last year, I issued a circular letter to the Chairmen of the various Fruit Boards requesting them to provide me with full information as to the working of the Act in their several Districts, and, where any occupiers had succeeded in wholly or partially cleansing their orchards of moth, to supply all particulars as to the means employed to attain this end.

I am pleased to find that many Boards report an advance in the number of names of "occupiers" upon the "clean" list. In one or two, however, the number of orchards cleansed is exceeded by those freshly infected, this latter being for the most part the effect of carelessness in introducing infected fruit or cases.

There appears to be a difficulty in Section 6 of the amended Act in the way of proving the infection of any case, box, &c. The Section provides a penalty for conveyance into any part of the country, or from one part to another, of any cases that have at any time contained infected fruit. How is this to be proved? Even the proof of such receptacles being at the time infected (that is, containing the grub) is difficult without resorting to the arbitrary course of breaking up the cases. There is no doubt of infection being spread in this way, and I think the difficulty should be met by giving an Inspector power to order the thorough disinfection of any cases that appear to have been used before permitting their introduction to another Fruit District. Several Fruit Boards have applied to me to obtain an opinion as to whether they are justified in detaining and treating receptacles for fruit which have apparently been used, and which come from an infected District. I could only inform them that the infection—present or past—must be proved before any action can be taken, and advise them that their best plan would be to obtain the authority of the Governor in Council for a local regulation in the terms stated above. The alteration of the Section would, however, be far preferable.

On examining the Reports from the Fruit Districts, I find that the Boards whose efforts have been most successful are North-West Bay, Lilydale, New Norfolk, Port Cygnet, and Gordon. All these report several orchards completely cleared of moth, and no fresh cases of infection.

In Longford and Glenorchy good work is reported, although no cases of actual eradication are given in the former. Yet the moth has in many instances been so far reduced as to give hopes of complete subjection during the ensuing season. Launceston reports some cases of great reduction in the suburbs, while in the town itself little advance has been made owing to the proximity of orchards and the difficulty of getting the ready compliance of occupiers in carrying out the Regulations. This may also be said of Hobart. In West Devon and Mersey, although several orchards are represented as having been cleaned, yet this good result has been discounted by the fact that several fresh cases of infection have occurred in orchards hitherto clean. All the Fruit Districts previously reported clean remain so with the exception of Frankford, in which a solitary case of infection has been found, which is attributed to the introduction of infected fruit or cases. The whole of the crop was picked and destroyed as soon as the infection was discovered, however, and as the discovery was made early in the season, this treatment will probably have the effect of again cleaning the District.

In the Government Districts particularly good results are reported, especially in the Midland and Brighton and Richmond portions. In the former no less than twenty orchards have been

completely cleaned within the last two seasons, and in the latter seventeen. George Town has added five to the list, and Fingal four, whilst in a number of other cases the pest has been reduced to a minimum.

In every instance in which complete eradication of the Codlin Moth has been achieved, the success is due either to picking the whole of the fruit crop in its earliest stages, or to a careful and strict adherence to the Regulations in respect to bandaging, scraping, and close picking of all infected fruit. In this lies the whole secret of success. What has been done in so many orchards can be done in others, and I am confident that complete eradication of the moth is possible by a full compliance with the Act and Regulations as they at present stand. What spraying has been done has been principally in the Longford District, where "London Purple" appears to be the substance preferred, and the results are represented as being encouraging. I cannot, however, recommend that absolute reliance be placed in this method of treatment alone without the additional safeguards directed by the Regulations, and, as a matter of fact, there has never been brought under my notice a case of complete eradication by its means. Moreover, no dependence can apparently be placed upon the strength of proprietary mixtures, which in many instances destroy the foliage and crop, although used in accordance with the printed directions, while in other cases a mixture of similar proportions has failed to destroy the grub.

Although, as shown above, some Boards have apparently done fair work within their respective Districts, yet, taking the system as a whole, I am each year more convinced that the Act can be worked more satisfactorily as well as more economically by being placed on the same footing as the Stock, Rabbit, and Californian Thistle Acts, and administered through the Government Inspectors. A comparatively small annual contribution would be required from orchardists, who under the present system have in some Districts to pay the highest sum per acre permitted by law, and the Act would be uniform in its operation, while the several separate payments to which such exception is taken might be collected at one and the same time, thus preventing much annoyance.

In several Districts sufficient interest is wanting to permit of the election of a Board, and as in these instances the Districts are remote from those worked by Government Inspectors, and are of small area, it is not practicable to put in force the provisions of Section 29. In one instance, although a Board has been elected, the Chairman reports that no work has been done, and that the Act has consequently become a farce. In another, in consequence of the Act becoming virtually a dead letter, arrangements have been made to amalgamate with an adjoining District, and this after all the trouble of the forms necessary to the separation from a previously declared fruit District has been gone through. In the method of administration proposed above nothing of this sort could occur, and action in dealing with the Codlin Moth would be general and systematic, while the moneys now expended on Board expenses would be wholly utilized in paying for a thorough inspection by men who are in an independent position as regards those whom it is their duty to see carry out the Regulations in a satisfactory manner.

In consequence of the heavy gales experienced, the fruit crop has been exceptionally light; but in spite of this I am constrained to remark that in many orchards the effect of past carelessness is patent from the fact of a larger amount of infected fruit having been picked than was the case last year with a much heavier crop. Two notable instances of this came within my own observation in a Board District.

As was the case last season, the moth continued its ravages to a very late period.

The returns of fruit exported to the English market show this year a marked decrease in comparison with those of the two previous years, and I regret to say that the same lamentable want of care in sorting and packing, and the same suicidal policy of forwarding immature and bad quality fruit, prevails as formerly. The first shipment per *Britannia* has become notorious as a consignment of windfalls and fruit unfit for market, and I am certain that unscrupulous shippers will continue this course of action to the ruin of the industry unless stringent means are taken to prevent it. It has been represented to me by those interested in the export of fruit that, as the whole of the shipping is done through a few firms, who charter the whole of the available space in the P. & O. and Orient steamships, the remedy for consigning fruit of bad sorts and quality lies in their hands, and that nothing further is necessary than a combination on their part to deal with the matter finally and effectually. That, to effect this, they should appoint an Inspector to examine samples from each grower's produce at the Hobart wharf, such Inspector being given power to prohibit fruit unsuitable for the Home market. Although this sounds theoretically right, yet it will be apparent that there are grave objections. Firstly, it seems a little incongruous that a man should appoint and pay a man to examine, and, if necessary, condemn his own consignment. Possibly it might act without friction when fruit is plentiful and good, and the condemned lots can easily be replaced by some of better quality; but in short seasons, inasmuch as the charterer of space is at great loss if such space is not filled up, is it not reasonable to suppose that considerable difference of opinion will arise between the inspector and consignor, and as the former is appointed and paid by the latter, can there be any doubt as to whose opinion will carry most weight? How-

ever, should some arrangement be made before next season—and in the interests of the fruit-growing industry it is of paramount importance—I urge the necessity of placing the Inspector in a completely independent position, with full power to prevent the export, not only of immature and undersized fruit, but also of kinds unsuitable for standing the transit to market.

The following are the Customs Returns of fruit exported to London for the present and four previous seasons :—

Year.	No. of Bushels.	Value.
1889 .....	18,390	£7225
1890 .....	<i>Nil.</i>	<i>Nil.</i>
1891 .....	129,391	46,843
1892 .....	186,415	47,797
1893 .....	121,219	48,726

I have much pleasure in expressing my satisfaction at the manner in which the Act has been administered by the several Inspectors under my immediate control. As an instance of the wonderful decrease of the moth, and corresponding increase in sound fruit, I may mention that whereas for some years several hundred bushels of fruit were consigned by one grower alone to Campbell Town for local consumption, there is now literally no sale, the gardens, which formerly produced nothing but grubby fruit, now repaying the trouble taken by occupiers at the instance of the Inspector, Mr. Morrisby, by giving a supply of sound wholesome fruit, fully up to the requirements of the District.

I have the honor to be,  
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

THOMAS A. TABART, *Chief Inspector.*

*The Hon. the Treasurer.*

TABLE showing acreage of Orchards for 1891-2 and 1892-3.

District.	Acreage.				Remarks.
	1891-2.	1892-3.	Increase.	Decrease.	
Brighton and Richmond .....	803	833	30	—	
Circular Head .....	93	—	—	—	
Cumberland .....	156	143	—	13	
Devon, West .....	367	379	12	—	
Fingal .....	227	232	5	—	
Franklin .....	812	814	2	—	
Frankford .....	59	66	7	—	
George Town .....	215	215	—	—	
Glamorgan .....	204	204	—	—	
Glenorchy .....	1272	1237	—	35	
Gordon .....	304	275	—	29	
Hobart .....	453	641	188	—	
Huon, North .....	713	—	—	—	
„ Upper .....	285	299	14	—	
„ Central .....	535	526	—	9	
„ South .....	124	—	—	—	
Launceston .....	887	947	60	—	
Lilydale .....	144	155	11	—	
Longford .....	774	734	—	40	
Longley .....	—	—	—	—	Now joined to North Huon.
Mersey .....	589	592	3	—	
Midland .....	268	270	2	—	
New Norfolk .....	1228	1207	—	21	
North West Bay .....	180	171	—	9	
Port Cygnet .....	854	841	—	13	
Queenborough .....	495	480	—	15	
Ringarooma .....	208	251	43	—	
Spring Bay .....	121	121	—	—	
Sorell .....	445	432	—	13	
Tasman's Peninsula .....	211	225	14	—	
Wellington .....	208	—	—	—	
Westbury and Deloraine ...	491	485	—	6	