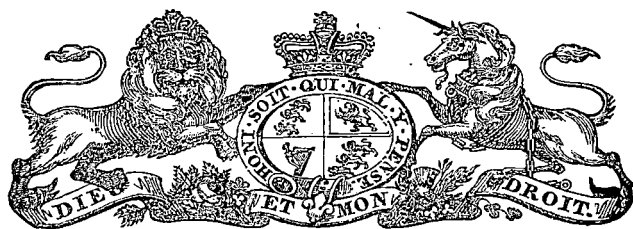


(No. 34.)



1893.

PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

QUEEN'S DOMAIN:

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1892.

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



QUEEN'S DOMAIN.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE FOR 1892.

To the Honorable the Minister of Lands and Works.

SIR,

1. THE Queen's Domain Committee have the honor to forward to you, for presentation to Parliament, the Annual Report of their proceedings during the past year.

2. The principal work carried out during 1892 has been the completion of the improvements at the Freestone Quarry, near the entrance gates to Government House. It is a matter of congratulation that this heavy undertaking has been successfully accomplished, and a long-established eyesore removed; and the belief is entertained that this spot, when the plants and shrubs are more grown, will become a favourite place of resort, and prove an agreeable adjunct to the grounds of Government House as well as to the Botanical Gardens. It will be noticed that a substantial five-rail fence has been erected on the roadside, the upper or Domain side being protected by one of strained wire, and four wicket gates have been provided in the fence to afford access and egress. It is also proposed eventually to have seats put up at convenient points of the broad central walk, especially when at no distant date the plantation may be expected to afford sufficient shade.

3. On this subject the Superintendent (Mr. Abbott) reports that upwards of 500 plants have been placed in position, embracing on the upper banks many of the better kinds of *Coniferae* and ornamental shrubs; the golden, silver, and other wattles, and red flowering gums, &c. being freely distributed on the drier parts of the grounds. At the bottom of the slopes bordering the broad walk, which will be much moister than the upper ground, birches, tulip trees, *Pyrus spectabilis*, *Tecoma speciosa*, mountain ash, and other ornamental shade trees have been planted. It is intended in the early future to plant the knoll on which the old cottage recently stood principally with indigenous Australian plants of the best kinds, and the rocky bluffs will be suitably planted with climbers and creepers.

4. In addition to the quarry itself the immediate surroundings have been much improved. On the upper side the ground has been levelled, unsightly hollows filled in, and a broad gravelled path made skirting the upper fence of the quarry, and leading down towards the Botanical Gardens. On the Government House side the bank immediately within the fence has been for the most part removed, and the bank skirting the road from the quarry to the entrance to the Gardens has been reduced and graded.

5. The plantations generally are progressing favourably; the plants looking well, and giving promise of vigorous growth in the near future. A *Yucca superba* at the Stoke-street entrance to the Domain flowered during the last spring, and attracted considerable attention by its magnificent spike. The bulk of the early deciduous trees have attained sufficient size to allow of the hurdles around them being removed; and of these there is now a good stock in hand for future requirements.

6. Lopping operations have been carried out to some extent during the year, and the trees thus treated have all started freely into growth. This work it is intended to continue, in conjunction with thinning out and removing decayed trees and branches, during 1893.

7. The heavy work at the quarry having been now completed, the prison labour has been removed to the gully outside the fence of the Gardens, and is now employed in grading down in the vicinity of the reservoir; and when this is finished the men will be put to clean out the reservoir

itself and improve the gully leading into it, with a view to enable planting operations to be undertaken on its banks, and also in the gully itself.

8. The continuation of the Cedar Avenue past the new Cricket Ground will be taken in hand at as early an opportunity as is possible.

9. The Committee desire to call attention to the fact that, contrary to the provisions of the Act 24 Vict. No. 16, intituled "An Act to render the Queen's Domain inalienable," and to the interpretation of that Act by the Hon. Attorney-General in Parliament, the Corporation of Hobart are still carrying on quarrying operations within the Queen's Domain.

10. The granting of that portion of the Domain bordered by Park-street to the Municipal Corporation for a stone-quarry has practically put a stop to all planting operations for some time to come.

11. The Superintendent concludes his full details of the work performed during the past year with the remark, that the Parliamentary vote in aid of the Domain improvements having been reduced to £200 for 1893, it will not be possible to commence any new undertaking by paid labour, as the amount voted will all be required for maintenance purposes and minor works.

12. The Committee desire to recall attention to paragraph 8 of their Report for the year 1891, and to express the hope that the very earliest opportunity will be taken, for the cogent reasons therein stated, to have the road defined in front of the residences on the Glebes suitably fenced in.

13. The grazing of the Queen's Domain has produced more satisfactory results this year than previously, as a larger number of sheep have been put upon the ground, which has thus greatly lessened any liability to danger from fire in the hot dry weather.

14. Wirth's Circus has been held this year in a more open part of the Domain than in 1891, and was unattended with any damage to the plants and trees.

15. Two Acts of Parliament were passed last Session having special relation to the Queen's Domain. By one of them (56 Vict. No. 26) the land originally granted to the High School for educational purposes, comprising an area of 4 acres 2 roods 25 perches, became vested in the University of Tasmania for the same important object. By the other Act (56 Vict. No. 35) the Minister is authorised to grant a lease of 10 acres 3 roods 27 perches for three years, upon certain specified conditions, to the "Tasmanian International Exhibition Association," freed from the control of the Queen's Domain Committee during the existence of the lease.

16. The Committee desire to include in this Report a strong expression of their concurrence in the scheme that was broached many years ago for largely increasing the water supply to the metropolis, seeking it even from a source twenty miles distant or more. Although the discussion of such a project may seem to be outside the legitimate range of their functions, and is essentially one for Municipal action, if not for Government consideration and support (in reference to the contemplated Metropolitan Drainage works especially), yet so deeply impressed is the Committee with the momentous advantages that would spring from an enlarged supply of water in the irrigation and consequent fertilisation of the land, and the facilities that would be given for artificial lakes and attractive fountains, conducing to the general embellishment of the Queen's Domain, that they feel justified, notwithstanding its magnitude, in urging forward such a highly important undertaking. But greater by far than all these benefits would be its health-giving effects in the purification of the city and its environs; and it may prove in the near future more a reality than a dream that the capital of Tasmania will become the standard sanatorium, not only for Australasia generally, but also for an annual crowd of visitors from our vast Indian Empire.

17. The amount of money received and expended for the year 1892, duly signed by the Chairman and certified to by the Auditor-General, has been published in the *Gazette* (January 31, page 340), in conformity with the terms of the Act of Parliament.

18. The Committee cannot conclude their Report without expressing their full satisfaction with the zeal, attention, and professional skill shown by Mr. Abbott in the performance of his duty in directing and supervising the various improvements that have been effected in the Queen's Domain.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

Hobart, 2nd February, 1893.

J. BARNARD, *Chairman.*