

FIRST ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS
(BY THE PRESIDENT);
LIST OF MEMBERS;
AND
RULES AND REGULATIONS,
OF THE
AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
OF
NEW SOUTH WALES,
INSTITUTED
ON THE 5th OF JULY, 1822.

—◆◆◆◆◆—
" *Nihil est agriculturæ melius, nihil uberius, nihil dulcius,
nihil homine, nihil libero dignius.*" CICERO.

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SYDNEY:

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PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

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Read 3d July, 1823.
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GENTLEMEN,

I HEARTILY congratulate you on the first return of this day—the anniversary of the institution of this most flourishing Society. It was the custom of Sir JOHN SINCLAIR, the father and first President of the Board of Agriculture, to address to the members annually a report of their transactions and progress. It falls to my lot, however unworthily, to endeavour to imitate so laudable an example; and I beg to be favoured with your kind attention, for a few minutes, while I sum up the history of our first year's growth.

The colonial events of the past year have amply fulfilled the predictions of our Prospectus; and a rigid public economy has too well justified us in our anticipations of the absolute necessity of associating as agriculturists, to help one another and ourselves. Our Society was not formed a single month before it was wanted. Our Mother Country has now completely weaned us, both as agriculturists and graziers. What we have to look out for now is the

importation of free settlers, and the exportation of fine wool. Nothing else will keep us in prosperity. But, of ultimate prosperity, let us in no wise despair. Although our only market hitherto for wheat and meat has taken the benefit of its consisting of but one buyer, yet better times and new resources will arise. When one door shuts, says the Spanish proverb, another opens. Should war in Europe, as well as in Spanish and Portuguese America, diminish British emigration, it will raise the price of our wool, and perhaps open other markets for our wheat and meat. The exportation of New Zealand flax to England, and its seed to Ireland, would prove to this Colony a most valuable trade, in the event of the Northern Powers taking part against us in the contemplated European war. Let us trust to Providence; and, depend upon it, something or other will always turn up to prosper a Colony of enterprising and industrious Englishmen.

We have had the pleasure of welcoming many most respectable free settlers in the course of the past year; but I hope we shall receive twenty times the number next year. The fine settlements of Hunter's River, Bathurst, Camden and Argyle, have been liberally thrown open by our local Government; and I was happy (in looking at the map of Hunter's River the other day) to see the whole banks, and even some of the back land, coloured with names.

One of the most skilful and intelligent Members of our General Committee, who has manufactured the best cheese yet seen in the Colony, has removed his family to Bathurst. Other respectable settlers are following his example; and I find we have increased the number of our subscribers during the past year by 21. We shall doubtless see many more free settlers in this country, now that the Parliamentary emigration to the Cape of Good Hope has failed, as soon as our Commissioner of Inquiry's Report has fixed the future policy and government of the Colony, and when the advantages which New South Wales possesses over Van Diemen's Land come to be more universally and correctly known. We can have no ill will to that dependency. On the contrary, we benefit by her prosperity. But it is important that emigrants from so vast a distance as Great Britain, should not be ruined by disappointment. Of the superiority of New South Wales over Van Diemen's Land, I am decidedly convinced, in some degree from personal observation, and much more from authentic information. But Van Diemen's Land has gotten the name at home; and it always takes many years to put down false pretensions, and to make known true ones. The mistake is in some degree to be attributed to the printed books upon the two Colonies, which generally fall into the emigrant's hand. These are Mr. Jeffreys' falsehoods on Van Diemen's Land (for

I can call them by no gentler name), and Mr. William Wentworth's declamations on New South Wales. Even in this latter work, the preference seems to be given to Van Diemen's Land for the free settler; and, indeed, it was very much the policy of the Administration which that book was written to praise, to discourage any other than convict emigration to this settlement. Sounder political principles, however, are now being acted upon; and I hope that, in a very few years, the eyes of the Public in England will be opened to the superiority of this Colony over Van Diemen's Land; in the first place, in water; in the second, in climate for fine wool, for fruits, and even for some tropical commodities; in the third, in the unbounded extent of grazing land, in room for colonization and population for centuries.— Much of the stoppage short at Van Diemen's Land of Australian emigration is also to be attributed to the wearisomeness of the past voyage; the expense of a visit at Hobart Town, which often necessarily converts it into a settlement (it is so hospitable a place that it will not part with its guests); the fascination of a little naturally clear land, like the remote American prairies of Mr. Birkbeck, whose delusiveness Mr. Cobbett has so well exposed; the beauty of the mountains, which hem in and storm the town, and line the country with places of refuge for robbers; the address and talent of the Lieutenant-Governor; and the interested per-

suasions of the master of the ship, that the passenger had better go no further. But when it comes to be known (as it cannot be much longer concealed) that Van Diemen's Land is at least twenty years behind this Colony in civilization; that it is a badly watered country; that the clear land is all granted away, inso-much that the liberal system of grazing occupations, which may be acted upon here for ever, is obliged to be given up at Van Diemen's Land; that the only police is situated at the two extremities of the island; that one of these towns is on the wrong side of the river, and the other so badly watered, so naturally sterile, and so distant from supplies, that it is about to be removed back to Launceston; that the climate is so much severer than our's that the wool will not become fine, and that both cattle and sheep must be winter-foddered; when these facts are published, I do confidently hope, without prejudice to the dependancy which has had her day of popularity, that the tide of free emigration will flow on to these shores; and that merchant-transports will be sent hither from Great Britain direct. Towards so desirable an end, I am convinced the institution of this Society will in no small degree contribute; and I should recommend that some of our Members would lay before us geographical and agricultural papers on the superior advantages of New South Wales as a Colony for British emigra-

tion. These might be beneficially published in England, under the authority of our Society; and perhaps our Premium Committee might think a piece of plate not unworthily offered for the best Essay on the subject.

Upon the subject so vitally important to the prosperity of the Colony as the exportation of fine wool, I am truly happy to report that there went home from this settlement alone, during the past year, 726 bales, or 181,500 pounds of wool, besides a small quantity, chiefly of lamb's wool, which remains to be sent with the next shearing. At only 1s. 9d. per pound, clear profit, this will amount to nearly £16,000 sterling. Nothing can shew the superiority of our wool over that of Van Diemen's Land in a stronger light than the following extract from a London Commercial Report, dated 20th September, 1822:—

140 bales wool from Van Diemen's Land, 4d. to 11d. per lb.
(2 lots 2s. 2d. to 2s. 7d.)
13 bales wool from New South Wales, 2s. 4d. to 3s. 4d. per lb.

Besides the increased Australian capital embarked in whaling since the repeal of our oil-duty, and in sealing, our cedar and other ship timber, having been relieved from duty by an Act of Parliament consequent upon Mr. Bigge's Report, has been found to answer the exportation to England, and a ship is now going home entirely laden therewith. In the event of war

with the Northern Powers, our timber would become still more valuable. The Purveyor of the Navy Board reports very highly of some of it, particularly the stringy bark.

Our Prospectus, which introduced the able papers of one of our Vice-Presidents, Dr. Townson, has been published and diffused in considerable numbers, both here and at home; and 50 copies of it have been sent to all parts of the globe, enclosed in a circular letter, requesting the contribution of foreign horticultural productions; for I have the pleasure to report, that we have engrafted on our Society an Horticultural Branch, with a small separate subscription. This subject is under the management of a Special Committee, of which Mr. Bell, a Corresponding Member of the London Horticultural Society, is Chairman; and, on account of this subscription, £30 has been remitted for the purchase of fruits, vegetables, and flowers, in England, by the hands of Dr. Anderson, of the ship *Marshal Wellington*, who also conveyed a letter from our Patron to the Navy Board, requesting free room on the decks of vessels for our plant-boxes. I anticipate great benefit to the Colony from the importation of these choice fruits and vegetables; and have no doubt that the London and Caledonian Horticultural Societies, as well as many of their corresponding members in foreign parts (who have been written to), will send us some very valuable presents. Horti-

culture is now quite a passion in Great Britain, and the improvement and variety, the forwarding and retarding of fruits and vegetables, appear by the published Transactions of the London Society, which I have read, to form almost a new science. Fruits and vegetables are absolutely necessaries of life in a climate like this, to which animal food is so uncongenial; and their perfection gratifies the most innocent and exquisite of all the luxuries of the table. So much for our Horticultural Branch.

The Subscribers to our Stock-fund have, as long ago as by the Shipley, remitted the sum of £1000 to their Agents in London, to be expended, one-half thereof in Merino sheep, chiefly ewes; £300 thereof in horses; and the remaining £200 in horned cattle. Furthermore, on account of the General Fund of the Society, £100 has been remitted by the hands of our associate, Captain King, R. N. of the Bathurst, to be laid out in grass and corn seeds, and agricultural books.

The next great step which I have to report to you is, the earnest interest which our excellent Patron has been pleased to take in our prosperity, as manifested in his promised grant of a building allotment of four acres, on the north side of the Parramatta River, adjoining the Government Domain, for a house of meeting, an experimental garden, stable, and stock sheds. These important matters, the plan of the building, and estimate of its expense, have

been referred to a Committee, of which Mr. Cox is Chairman. The Committee have hopes that, with the promised aid of Governmental mechanics and labourers, no extra subscription, besides the next year's annual one, will be necessary; and, after that period, I should think that, with our increasing numbers, our annual subscription may be safely reduced below the sum of twenty dollars.

Our Patron has also favoured us with letters of introduction to the present President of the Board of Agriculture, the Earl of Hardwicke, to Sir John Sinclair, and to Mr. Coke, of Norfolk; and the Society themselves have written (besides their letters to Mr. Buxton, our Parliamentary, and Messrs. Paxton and Company, our Mercantile Agents,) to the Secretary of the Board of Agriculture, and to the Commissioner of Inquiry into the State of this Colony. My personal acquaintance with Mr. Davies Gilbert, the Vice President of the Board of Agriculture, enabled me to have the pleasure of writing to him. To all these letters, we may now every day expect answers.

Furthermore, our Patron has honoured us with a letter to the Earl Bathurst, commending to his favourable consideration the petitions for the repeal of our wool-duty, which the Members of our Society signed, to the House of Commons and to his Lordship, as Secretary of State for the Colonies. These went home by the Bathurst; but the Report of our Commis-

sioner of Inquiry has anticipated the prayer of our Petitions, by recommending an Act of Parliament for that purpose, which passed accordingly last session.

Again, our Patron was pleased to comply with our request, in the restoration of Parramatta fair to the first Thursday in October; a period which interferes less with the sheep-shearing, though perhaps it may not be so favourable for shewing the condition of stock.

That then is the day which our Premium Committee, of which Mr. Hannibal M'Arthur is Chairman, have selected for the adjudication of certain premiums, to the value in all of £100, which they have advertised for the best sheep and lambs, horned cattle and stallion, and to the best shepherds and farm servants. They have also set the price of half a-crown upon the brush of every native dog destroyed, and of half that sum for each of the unborn litter. The Society have already presented a silver tankard to Mr. Jonas Bradley, of the Windsor Road, for a present of 1 cwt. of negro-head tobacco, of his own growing and curing. This was sent home, as a specimen of colonial produce, by the Bathurst.

To this head of Premiums may be referred a letter which the Society have written to the Secretary of the Society of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, upon the subject of their proposed Premiums for 1822-23, to the person who shall, in the years 1824, 5, and 6, manu-

facture and import the finest specimen of oil, not less than ten gallons; the produce of olives, grown in New South Wales; and to the person who shall import, in the years 1824 or 1825, the finest wine, not less than twenty gallons, made from the produce of vineyards in New South Wales. Our Society have not failed to express their due sense of the benefits which our Colony will derive from the honorable premiums, proposed by the Society of Arts, both in the former year and in the present, for both quantity and quality of fine wool exported; but we have ventured to suggest, that there having been till the past year only one olive-tree in the Colony, there can be no competition for the oil premium so soon as the year 1826; and that the Society's medals would be more beneficially offered for propagating the olive-tree, or for the greatest plantation of young trees: so of the twenty gallons of wine; it would not be very difficult to make that quantity from the table grapes in one's garden: the premium should rather be, either for a much larger quantity, for a real exportable cargo, or else for the greatest number of acres planted as a bearing vineyard, or for the greatest number of bunches of grapes ripened.

While I am upon the subject of the olive,—

— prolem tarde crescentis olivæ,
— the slow product of Minerva's tree.

I am happy to report that young plants have been introduced into the Colony during the past

year by Mr. H. M'Arthur, one of our Vice-Presidents, and by Dr. Carlyle, an intended settler, so that the olive is now in the hands of several more than one individual, and will certainly be to our posterity an article of export.

Tobacco may be considered to be now fairly domesticated as a denizen of Australia. The Government Agricultural Establishment at Emu Plains has greatly contributed to this desirable object; and I understand from our Vice-Patron, that New Zealand flax is to be made the next experiment of public cultivation and manufacture. Our Patron has succeeded in raising this plant from seed; and, although chemistry has not yet been able so completely to free this yarn from glutinous matter as to prevent the thread into which it is spun from being knotty; yet rope made of this flax was found by the Master of the Dromedary store-ship, to be nearly one-third stronger than English rope; and, even if this article should not, as long as we are at peace with the Northern Powers, be able to compete with the cheapness and quickness of transportation of Baltic hemp, yet a small quantity of it will, as I am informed by the most respectable mercantile authority, easily supersede the Italian hemp, which is required for the strength of shoemakers' thread.

Our prize-tobacconist, Mr. Bradley, laid before the Society a paper on his subject,

which has been made public by means of our Colonial Gazette; and besides this and Dr. Townson's (before mentioned), various other papers on agricultural and geological subjects have been read before us, and may hereafter be referred to a Committee for publication. While I am upon this literary head, I would suggest, for the consideration of the Society, whether our Colonial Almanack might not be furnished with better agricultural and horticultural calendars, than it now possesses, without undervaluing those, and whether it might not, with advantage to the Colony, be referred to Committees of our body to compile such manuals for the next year.

Several agricultural works have been presented to the Society by its members, among which Miller's Gardener's Dictionary by Mr. Oxley, and the Farmer's Magazine by Messrs. Berry and Wollstonecraft, deserve to be distinguished.

A present of English timber seeds has been made to the Society by Mr. Cunningham the Botanist, and another of Cape of Good Hope vines and other plants is announced by the brig Avon from Dr. Shortt, who has also furnished our Horticultural Committee with some valuable Cape information.

Such, Gentlemen, has been the progress of the Agricultural Society of New South Wales, during its first infant year; and I hope it will not be thought unworthy of the spirit which

gave rise to it. Of this at least I am sure, that at all its Meetings, whether general or of Committees, the utmost harmony and good humour have prevailed. Local politics have certainly been banished from our discussions; perhaps, in the sociality of the meeting, from our thoughts: And, if this Society were productive of no other benefit than that of good neighbourhood, I should say it was worth its cost. One of the leading purposes of Agricultural Societies, is stated in Sir John Sinclair's Reports, to be the cultivation of friendship and benevolence; and, in a Colony like this, where there are few natural ties to connect us, and where most of our relations and friends are far away, it appears to me that sociality is a peculiarly important political object. But I trust this Society will, by its numbers, its respectability, its talents, its unanimity, and its moderation, attain every one of the ends for which it was instituted—that, by the blessing of Providence, it will increase our corn, wine, and oil—make our land to flow with milk and honey—turn our fleeces into gold—and render us independent and happy in ourselves—a blessing to the hemisphere in which our lot is cast, and an honour to the parent country, from which we sprang.



LIST OF MEMBERS.

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R. Lowe, Esq; G. T. Palmer, Esq.
George Cox, Esq;

List of Books presented to the Society.

Lord Kaimes's Works, by the Rev. S. Marsden;
The Farmer's Magazine, 21 vols. by Messrs. Berry and
Wollstonecraft;
Miller's Gardener's Dictionary, by Mr. Oxley;
Sir John Sinclair's Essays, by Mr. Berry;
Cobbett's Year in America, by Mr. Justice Field;
White's Farriery, by Mr. Duguid.



RULES AND REGULATIONS.

- I. THAT this Society be denominated the AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES.
- II. That the following Gentlemen, jointly with the President and Vice-Presidents, Treasurers, and Secretaries, be appointed the General Committee for conducting the Affairs of this Society, seven of whom shall form a Quorum; and that such General Committees shall meet always at Parramatta, as being more central for all, and convenient for the Country Committees.
[See pages 17 and 18.]
- III. That an Annual Subscription of Twenty Dollars be paid by each Member into the hands of the Treasurers, for the general purposes of this Association.
- IV. That a separate Subscription Fund be formed, in shares of £25 each, for the purpose of introducing from the Mother Country, and elsewhere, a more improved breed of cattle, horses, sheep, &c.
- V. That another separate Subscription of Eight Dollars be entered into for the importation of fruit and flower plants and seeds.
- VI. That the General Meeting of the Society shall be held Quarterly.
- VII. That the Annual Meeting shall be held in July, when the Reports of the Secretaries

- and Treasurers shall be submitted by the President, and an Election take place, by Ballot, for the Officers and Committee for the Year ensuing, and the general Business of the Society transacted.
- VIII. That any Person, desirous of becoming a Member of this Society, shall be proposed by five Members, in a Letter addressed to the Secretaries, to be laid before a General Quarterly Meeting, and be balloted at the next ensuing General Quarterly Meeting.
- IX. That the like Rule shall apply to any Proposal for the Expulsion of any Member.
- X. That not less than twelve Members, assembled at any General Quarterly Meeting, shall be a Quorum for the Election, and twenty for the Expulsion of any Member.
- XI. That three-fourths of the Members present, at each General Meeting, must concur in such Election or Expulsion; and that votes, by proxy, be not admitted on any occasion from male Subscribers.
- XII. That every newly-elected Member shall pay into the Hands of the Treasurers the Sum of Twenty Dollars on his Admission, and shall not be considered a Member until the same is paid; but that if such Member be elected at the April Quarterly Meeting, his Subscription shall be considered as paid for the Year following the succeeding Anniversary.
- XIII. That any Member may introduce a Friend at the Meetings of the Society, with

the Approbation of the President, or other presiding Member; such Friend being a non-resident in New South Wales, or an Officer bearing His Majesty's Commission.

XIV. That an Annual Shew of Stock, and Exhibition of Samples of Wool, Seeds, Implements, or any other Articles tending to the Improvement of Agriculture, shall be held at Parramatta, on the first Thursday in October, to be open to the Public, for Premiums to be given as a Reward for Improvement or Superiority, in such manner as the Society may, from time to time, offer and direct.

XV. That the President shall call a Meeting of the Committee, at such Times as he may find expedient, for the Transaction of such Business as may arise from time to time, and be considered to embrace the general Interests of the Society.

XVI. That Thomas Fowell Buxton, Esq. M. P. be requested to accept the Office of Protector of the Parliamentary Interests of the Society.

XVII. That Messrs. Paxton, Cockerell, Trail, and Co. of Austin-friars, London, be requested to accept the Office of Mercantile Agents of the Society.

XVIII. That the General Committee be empowered to purchase such Agricultural Books as they shall think proper; and that any Subscriber be at liberty to suggest any work to the Committee's approbation.