THE THIRD

ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS

TO THE

AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY

OF

NEW SOUTH WALES,

BY THE

PRESIDENT.

SYDNEY:

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THE THIRD ANNIVERSARY ADDRESS TO THE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY OF NEW SOUTH WALES BY THE PRESIDENT OF THAT BODY.

GENTLEMEN,—On the first formation of this society, the 5th of July, 1822, I could not but feel flattered and sensibly grateful for the distinguished honor conferred by your unanimous election of me to be the first to preside over such a truly respectable and important society.

The public spirit with which a large sum was promptly raised by a club formed out of our own members, and transmitted to England for the purpose of procuring thence, as well as from other places, an improved breed of horses, cattle, and Merino sheep, and the united zeal which influenced the whole body to promote the public objects and interests which our prospectus set forth, gave the most reasonable hopes of the utility of such a society.

After the bye-laws were framed, and our foundation dinner was celebrated, when the society consisted of a patron, vice-patron, president, and upwards of seventy members, I resigned the presidential chair, and was succeeded by Mr. Justice Field.

After Mr. Field's departure from the colony, the vice-presidents conducted the business of the society until I again was elected to be your president; and at the anxious request of several particular friends, I agreed to fill the chair a second time—but however strongly I felt such a renewed mark of the confidence of the society towards me, it would have afforded me equal gratification had your choice fallen on some other member better qualified, and who could have devoted more time and attention to the presidential duties than myself.

Shortly after the promising foundation of the society, public measures were proclaimed, which materially affected the agricultural and commercial prosperity of the colony, and which tended not a little to disunite and damp the public spirited zeal which previously animated all. And though since that time the several rewards given by the society have done much service, and though several respectable members have been added to the body, nevertheless the society has been gradually languishing into a state of inertness, from which it can be but roused by the support to be expected from the encouraging wisdom of the measures of a more energetic Governor, and the revival of a sterling circulating medium.

At your last anniversary you were ably addressed by the senior vice-president, the *Rev.* Samuel Marsden, whose long residence, matured experience, and acquaintance with the capabilities of the soil and climate, peculiarly qualified him to give a faithful

description, not only of the agricultural events of the past year, but to point out those objects which called for the future attention of the society.

Having made those preliminary remarks, it now becomes my office to report to you such agricultural occurrences as have fallen within the scope of my knowledge during the last eventful year.

Owing to the long continued drought, it was apprehended that the grain crops had suffered such a diminution in quantity, that we should not have had a sufficiency for the support of our population, until the late harvest could afford relief. And the alarm was increased by the knowledge of the failure of the wheat crop in Van Diemen's Land—whence we were given to understand that we could not reasonably expect a supply, as their crops were not considered equal to the feeding of the ground and the consumption of the inhabitants, until the present crops became ready for use.

The measures of the several Governors, before 1822, were chiefly directed to erecting necessary public works and buildings at Sydney, and other principal towns, as also in constructing bridges and public roads leading into the interior, most of which were completed at the time the late administration assumed the government—consequently, the vast number of prisoners previously thus employed became disposable, and were distributed either to settlers, clearing gangs, or the government agricultural establishments. Hence those of the inhabitants of our principal towns, who depended upon the means which such depots of prisoners afforded, were compelled to retire into the country, when these public establishments were broken up—so that in the course of a few years the prisoners, who were great consumers of agricultural produce, and much of the idle population previously depending upon them for support, became employed in the interior, in clearing and cultivating the land, and thereby not only contributed to their own support, but towards the supply of marketable produce, of which they were formerly consumers. This, gentlemen, will in part account for the increased cultivation, and the diminution of idle consumers, and will assist in explaining the growing advancement of agriculture, and furnish additional reason for our scanty produce of the wheat and maize crops, in proportion to the land in tillage proving quite equal to the substantial supply of the population, and even leaving considerable surplus on hand, when the new grain was brought into the market.

I believe it may also be said, with strict attention to truth, that our exports of grain last year were nearly, if not quite, equal to our imports.

The records of time prove that our parallel of latitude 34, has been less subject to the want of the common necessaries of life as any other climate; and this may be reasonably accounted

for, from the advantage we derive from being able to grow two grain crops in the year, besides a succession of succulent and green crops for ten months out of the twelve.

This colony has got an unfair character with regard to its growth of grain, originating partly in the causes I have already explained; viz. the disparity of the number of cultivators to that of consumers. However, the cause is happily diminishing, as our rural population progressively increases. We have cleared and are still clearing, considerable extent of agricultural land; we are improving in the art of husbandry, and becoming better acquainted with the soil, climate, and season; and the advantages are so apparent, that I anticipate the time when we shall be able to boast of one of the cheapest in the world, with such agricultural and horticultural produce as is suitable to our climate. The harvest we have just reaped on this side of the Mountains, though its quantity is diminished on account of the drought, still proved a saving average crop. The extent of cultivation, compared with that of last year, is increased, and the quality of the grain very superior, and free from smut or grass seed.

Our cleared ground forms but a very small proportion of the extensive located tracts which are on this side of the Mountains fit for agricultural purposes. We are capable of supporting a much more dense population; and I am of opinion, that the encouragement of a tenantry, at moderate rents, regulated by the quality of the land would prove profitable to proprietors, and morally beneficial to the industrious cultivators who resided under the watchful protection of landlords of discretion.

Some say our soil, generally, is not sufficiently rich for agricultural purposes. To this I reply, that our forest land is equal, if not superior, to what is commonly met with in nature's wilds, in this parallel of latitude. We have abundance of ground calculated to reward the industry of the judicious husbandman. And the substrata of our soil generally consisting of tenacious clay, the moderately undulating character of the surface enables the intelligent agriculturalist to excavate holes, under sloping hills, bottomed on clay, which, from the situation, will fill with the first heavy rain, and if sufficiently large and deep, will give a constant supply of water fit for the use of man and beast. With judicious attention to this method, abundance of pond or tank water may be procurable on every farm or estate requiring it.

The settlers to the westward of the Mountains having become better acquainted with the grain seed season, and have had the advantage of increased rain in that direction, their industry has been rewarded by a still more abundant wheat crop than we can boast of on this side.

Before I dispose of the subject of wheat, I am anxious to urge upon the cultivators of grain—the great saving and advantage to

be derived by seeding the ground with unmixed grain. When it cannot be otherwise procured, it will pay the cultivator to draw and arrange the different varieties in ear out of the sheaves before it is thrashed. This process occasions some trouble and expense the first season, but its many advantages must soon remunerate the proprietor.

Wheat, barley, and oats, sown of the same species, will vegetate, grow, and ripen together; and if the modern and highly to be approved of practice of reaping the grain before it is maturely ripe, be judiciously attended to, and carried into use in this colony, the great loss so frequently suffered by its shaking under the influence of the powerful solar heat will be materially prevented. Besides, corn being reaped before it is quite ripe, will not so readily vegetate when exposed to wet, after being cut down; and after it is sufficiently fielded and secured in stacks, it will not so soon shew a disposition to propagate its own species as mature ripe grain. Heating and sweating, also not only hatches the eggs of the wheat moth, but softens the grain for the easy introduction of the weevil. In addition to these advantages, wheat reaped before the former customary appearance of ripeness, is proved to yield the most and best flour.—At Bathurst, I understand, the rain set in before the stacks were secured, or the harvest quite reaped—so that the wet penetrated the former with great injury, and much of the latter was destroyed by growing in ear in the unreaped fields. Early harvesting, in a climate like this, where the grain becomes so suddenly ripe, and where harvest-men are so difficult to be had, might have prevented much of the loss of grain so frequently experienced.

I cannot conclude this subject without expressing my opinion of the public benefit which must be derived from the additional grain grinding steam engines at work, and now being erected in the neighbourhood of Sydney and at Parramatta. When we have a few more such engines in the interior, with the assistance of the wind, water, and draught grinding mills at work, and in progressive construction, not only in our towns, but through our settlements, we may expect to be able, early in the season, to reduce our wheat to the secure state of flour, and save much of the destructive losses occasioned by the wheat-moth, weevil, and vermin.

The maize crop is very extensive this season; and, from the frequent rain, it is of the most luxuriant growth and promise of productiveness.

The rain came rather too late for the early potatoe crop, so as to cause the vegetation to revive in the balm's before they gave to roots. However, if allowed to stand, they will again flower, and throw to root for a second crop. All the green crops have a very promising appearance.

The drought retarded the growth of the early tobacco this season; but, those who persevered with judgment, will have rich aftercrops. We have to regret the apparently diminished zeal of the colonial tobacco-growers; a circumstance attributable to the sudden alteration made in the import duties on that article, and which occasioned heavy and unexpected losses to many who, under the expectation of the continuance of those high prohibitory duties to which it was subject, and which gave to the colonial grower so decided an advantage in the market, had undertaken the cultivation on a somewhat large and extensive scale, and that at a time when they had not acquired sufficient experience in the growing or curing of it to enable them to compete with foreign produce. I hope the society will continue to offer rewards to encourage the colonists to renew their attention to the cultivation and curing of tobacco; the congeniality of our soil and climate to the growth of which, renders it superior to that of most others. I have found the more richly the soil is manured, the more luxuriant the crop. The Chinese method of manuring in covered trenches, and transplanting by the edge of the manure, will be found to answer well.

The colonial orchards and vineyards had a rich supply of fruit trees and vines forwarded for its improvement last year, partly a present to the horticultural branch of our society from the Horticultural Society of London, through its secretary, Mr. Sabine, and partly purchased and selected with much pains and care by our colonial agent, Mr. Barnard. These estimable additions to our orchard and vineyard came out in the ship with the Venerable Archdeacon Scott, who kindly allowed his gardener to take charge of them during the voyage. But, notwithstanding all the care and trouble bestowed on them, still several died; and, all that survived, have been placed under the charge of Mr. Frazier, in the Botanical Garden, Sydney, until the society shall have prepared the garden recently located to them at Parramatta.

The shew of grapes is, perhaps, more abundant, this season, than ever before witnessed. Those shaded from solar heat are free from blight; but, all those exposed to it suffer disease, in the form of a black speck, which as my observation induces me to believe, is caused by the occasional over-powerful influence of the direct rays of the sun acting upon the dew drop resting upon the grape, as on a lens. I have most attentively watched this description of blight for years past; and, though I have considerable confidence in the correctness of my observations, still I may be wrong—and I would feel much gratified if any one can point out a more probable cause. Certain it is, that even a moderate shade tends to prevent the injury. The vines on which I made the above observation are planted in a rich alluvial soil, and that of a depth considerably beyond what it is possible for the

roots of the plant to penetrate. Mr. James Busby, has already furnished us with much valuable information of his experience " of the culture of the vine, and the art of making wine in France;" the well selected instructions he has favoured us with, must peculiarly qualify him to give us still more important information upon those heads—information derived from his subsequent experience of the capabilities of our soil and climate for the growing of the vine.

Mr. G. Blaxland, who has been honoured with a medal from the society (instituted for the encouragement of arts, manufactures, and commerce) for producing the best sample of Australian wine, has succeeded in introducing a species of small black grape which resists the blight, which all the other varieties we have are subject to, when exposed to the direct influence of the sun.

Dr. Townson has also paid great attention to the improvement of the orchard and vineyard; as likewise Mr. Bell, Mr. Campbell, sen. and several others.

Our colonial vineyard received from his Excellency Lord Charles Somerset, through Sir Thomas Brisbane, a most extensive variety of the vines grown at the Cape of Good Hope. These vines must become a valuable acquisition, having been reared in a very similar soil, and in the same parallel of latitude.

I understand, from high authority, that at Madeira the vines are planted in trenches six feet deep; this is a fact of importance, as the depth of the roots from the surface of the earth may give cool invigorating influence to the vine—very advantageous when contrasted with the superficial manner in which we are generally accustomed to plant the vine, necessarily exposing the roots to the heated state of the earth during long droughts.—The Madeira plan of rearing the vine over Trellises will be found to assist in preventing the blight, as the bunches of grapes will thereby become suspended, and better shaded by the over spreading leaves.

The reports from Port Macquarie state, that the sugar cane plantations there thrive with luxuriance, and the sugar possesses a quality in no way inferior to that grown in the West India Islands. From the increasing extent of its cultivation, we may reasonably expect a large supply of sugar, and even spirits, from the produce of that settlement; and if the soil and climate of Port Macquarie prove so capable of the growth of the sugar cane, we may fairly calculate upon the productiveness of that extensive, rich, and fertile tract of country, situate on either the banks of the Brisbane River or Moreton Bay, where government recently formed a small settlement.

The banks of this river have been explored at sundry times and distances, by Mr. Oxley, the surveyor general, and Mr. Gray and Major Lockyer, of the 57th regt. By the latter to

a great distance in an interior direction. The Major gives the highest character of the fertile appearance and promise of the tract of country he passed over. The soil consisted mostly of rich dark mould; the forest was open, though the trees were large, consisting mostly of the blue gum (eucalyptus piperita) of superior quality, and solidity throughout, and a species of pine, of elevated growth, and from one to four feet in diameter, growing in great abundance on the banks of the river. I understand one of our colonial vessels has used a topmast of this pine exposed to such trials for twelve months, as must remove all doubt as to its superior fitness and quality for masts and yards of ships. Vessels of small tonnage can navigate forty miles up the Brisbane, where it forms a semicircle, on extensive tracts of rich plains, ready for immediate cultivation.

When we see the government disposed to encourage companies in England, with munificent grants of land to promote agricultural enterprize and industry in this colony, would it not be an undertaking both creditable and profitable to this society, or as many of its members as would unite in the speculation, to petition the local government for a grant, including these plains, situate on the banks of the Brisbane, and there undertake the immediate cultivation of sugar cane, cotton, coffee, &c. and the export of the timber? If the colonial government could not give the extent of grant required, still its approval and recommendation would have the desired effect with the home government.—The promising capabilities of this settlement, and the re-establishment of Norfolk Island, where the sugar cane and coffee also flourish, ought soon to place us independent of all countries, for these and sundry other valuable productions and luxuries.

The settlement of Melville Island (if proved to answer the commercial objects its geographical situation seems to promise) may be found capable of furnishing us with spice and other tropical productions, and thus make us still less dependent upon other markets out of the territory.

The frequent heavy rains we have experienced for some time past have covered our forests and fields with unusual abundance of pasturage, so that our rapidly increasing herds and flocks must soon recover high condition.

The colonial dairy at present plentifully supplies our market with butter and cheese; so much so, that we must shortly export largely of the latter.

The open character of our forest trees, and their very extraordinarily scanty foliage, allowing of the growing and sweetening influence of the sun, naturally point out the pastoral superiority of our wilds. And though the indigenous grasses in season of drought, are rather thin and tufty, owing to indifferent clay soil in some places, and a wash of quartz or small gravel in others, still in rich soil they form a thick and profitable sward

And when we sufficiently discover and cultivate those rich foreign grasses, which can withstand our summer's heat and winter's chill, we shall by their cultivation be much better able to compete in the produce of the dairy with the mother country.

The English method of breaking up the curd until it is very fine and dry, is found to impoverish the quality of the cheese made here. The cheese, after being sufficiently pressed, is benefitted by being put in scalding whey for three or four minutes, which hardens and thickens the rind, so as to assist in preventing the rich butricious matter exuding. The immersion of the cheese afterwards in pickle for twenty-four hours, will contribute to its preservative qualities.

Experience proves the profitable advantage in the quantity of cream thrown up in dairies that are above ground, contrasted with those sunken under the surface. The dairy ought to be narrow, with windows on both sides, so as to allow of a thorough draught of air, which will keep both butter and cheese cooler than the underground building.

Our horses are increasing in number, and through the encouraging influence of the Turf Club, recently established, a considerably additional number of mares has been sent to these high bred English horses, Bay Camerton, Steeltrap, and Baron: horses peculiarly calculated to improve the blood, bone, and bulk of their offspring; and, thereby soon enable us to export from this preparatory climate, horses that will prove of real service in tropical countries, and in every way suited to ornament the turf stud, or the carriage in the Eastern world. The kings of England, since the reign of Henry the Eighth, patronised horse racing, and thereby encouraged our national superiority in the improvement of the breed of that noble animal; and none encouraged that public object in a greater degree than our present sovereign.

Our flocks of sheep are largely on the increase; and the anxious care very generally bestowed on them, can best account for the improving quality of our wool. The very superior Saxon sheep imported by Messrs. Jones, Pike, and Riley, are objects of great public interest, inasmuch as their fleeces appear to be of a considerably finer quality than the Spanish Merino we generally receive from England. Now, it is allowed, that the English Merino improves considerably in the quality of the fleece every shearing after arrival in this climate; and, the fact is undeniable, that their offspring improve in a still greater degree than the parent stock. Hence arises the interesting test, how far our genial climate is capable of improving the quality of the fleece of those already highly improved Saxon sheep. If it really shall appear (as is so anxiously anticipated) that its quality is likely to become still finer; we shall, in such case, merit the sound reputation of shortly supplying the British market with

wool superior to that of any other part of the world. When we now may truly boast of the important importations of Saxon, English, and French Merino sheep, added to the colonial flocks of last year, all calculated to improve the blood and fleece, we must, at the same time, fear that the number of coarse wooled sheep so frequently arriving from Van Diemen's Land, will tend (should their fleeces be exported) to give an unfair prejudice in the British market, against the improved quality of Australian wool. As our fellow colonists of Van Diemen's Land are naturally anxious for the improvement of their wool, it is not likely that many would part with their best, or, indeed, any other than their cast flocks. By the increasing attention paid to our flocks, disease amongst them is rapidly on the decline; and, even that worst of scourges, the scab, is progressively diminishing. I think it not out of place to mention to you, Gentlemen, that I have found, after many years use of it, Mr. Clater's ointment, recommended in his practical treatise on the diseases of sheep, the most certain and profitable remedy for the permanent cure of the scab. I will submit his prescription for the information of those who may not have seen it, viz.—" Quicksilver one pound, Venice turpentine half a pound, spirit of turpentine two ounces, work these well together in a marble mortar, until the mercury is thoroughly incorporated, and the globules of the quicksilver become invisible, (when rubbed on paper) which may require five or six hours active friction. Then take four pound of hogs' lard and melt it over a slow fire, and when new milk warm add to it the quicksilver, and keep constantly stirring until it grows cold. Four times the quantity may be made at the same time, by working it altogether in a large mortar or iron pot, with a wooden pestle five or six inches broad." Mr. Clater says, that one pound of this ointment is sufficient to dress seven sheep of moderate size for the cure of the scab; and, if slightly affected, will suffice for them from that number to ten. He adds, that many farmers and graziers are in the practice of dressing all their sheep and lambs every year, whether infected with the disease or not, they alledge that it tends to destroy filth, promote health, and cause them to thrive much faster. He adds, that the ointment should be kept stiff, if necessary, by the substance of one pound of black rosin in lieu of a pound of the lard. The wool is to be divided from the head to the tail, and the ointment slightly rubbed in on either side of the skin.

Experience has proved to me, that much less than what Mr. Clater recommends, will accomplish a cure in this climate, where, the disease appears to be materially milder than what the extreme vicissitudes of the English climate occasion. I have found a pound of the ointment sufficient to effect a cure of from twenty to thirty sheep, regulated by the nature and progress of the disease.

I am aware that there exists a prejudice against the use of mercurial ointment for the cure of the scab upon sheep; but, much of that prejudice has been occasioned by the, perhaps, fatal effect of the use of over strong ointment. Mr. Clater's is regulated to prevent such consequences; and, yet, I have observed the use of it, during our extreme summer heat, affect several of the sheep;—but, to such as were observed leaving off feeding, and to froth at the mouth, I caused a table spoonful of castor oil to be administered, which speedily operated as a mild purgative, and invariably removed such effects. The cure accomplished by this ointment is so radical, as well as constitutionally invigorating, that without exposure to fresh infection, or great hardships, those once cured will seldom again be subject to a return of the disease.

I have mentioned the efficacy of castor oil as a safe and mild purgative for sheep, when under mercurial influence; and I would beg leave further to add, that I have witnessed numerous instances of the permanent relief the operation of a tablespoonful afforded to sheep suffering from affections of the head and stomach so frequently occasioned by indigestion. The remedy is a mild and safe one, and a judicious shepherd never ought to be without his bottle of castor oil. I cannot dismiss this part of my subject without recommending the society to take into consideration the expediency of offering medals for the cultivation of the castor oil tree (Ricinus Communis) and the making of the oil expressed therefrom. The seeds of this tree have been planted in different parts of the colony, and are still seen growing luxuriantly in their neglected state, for years past; therefore we have proof of our climate and soil being suitable for the cultivation of this most useful medicine for the human, as well as the brute species.

Bowel complaints are the most common in this colony, and this mild efficacious aperient timely administered, is perhaps the most judicious remedy a rural population locally detached from easy medical assistance might administer with freedom. In addition to its utility when given to sheep, it is a most certain and safe purgative (in the quantity of half a pint) to a horse, an ox, a cow, and in proportionably diminished doses to the young of those animals. These facts, Gentlemen, I trust, will influence you to encourage the cultivation of a production suited to our climate, and essentially important for the medicinal advantages I have alluded to—besides which, with proper care and attention, we may find it profitable as an export.

Early in the last year Messrs. Hovell and Hume (the former one of our members) returned after having successfully explored in sixteen weeks that extensive tract of country, situate between Lake George and Western Port. Their discoveries are exceedingly important, inasmuch as they have satisfactorily ascertained

that the surrounding country through which they travelled is not as hitherto supposed a barren desert, but mostly open forest pastoral land, of no very inferior quality. And though in the course of their tour they had to travel over four chains of lofty mountains, still there remains considerable hope that some future explorers may find a more ready pass between, or over some less elevated range of the mountains, and thereby give increased facility to our interior communication with that valuable extent of plains and well watered rich agricultural land they describe to have passed over in their southerly tour, from the Mountains to Western Port. The public will be better able to judge of the merits of Messrs. Hovell and Hume's discoveries by a perusal of their journal which is about to be published. It is to be hoped that several other colonists, influenced by the praise-worthy example of those gentlemen will, with similar public spirit, make tours into the interior in unexplored directions, when doubtless the discovery of occasional rich tracts of agricultural land will place not only the government, but the public under obligations for such successful enterprise.

We cannot but lament that our parent state is burthened by an overgrown population, when we are aware of the happy asylum the discovered, and yet unexplored tracts this great territory holds out for so many millions of industrious emigrants; and we must regret it still more, when we see the preference given to the frozen regions of North America, for no better reason we apprehend, than the less distance of the voyage, and the free institutions existing there.

If the capabilities and salubrity of this climate were sufficiently known, certain it is that many emigrants who are directing their course elsewhere, and have the means of paying their passage and establishing themselves here, would, for their own interests and future prospects, give this colony the preference to all others under the British crown. I congratulate you, Gentlemen, upon the prospect of a renewed intercourse between this colony and the honorable company's settlements in India, which promises to open a market for some of our exports; to enable the oriental invalid to visit this climate, which is so peculiarly calculated to renovate health that has been impaired, by residence in those intertropical regions, which are so often destructive to the European constitution.

Bathurst, for instance, though situate to the northward of Sydney, differs from it in climate most materially, occasioned by increased elevation. There, in summer, the mornings, evenings, and nights, are considerably cooler; and the winter frosts, and falls of snow, assimilate it nearer to the temperature of the English climate. The healthful character of the Bathurst climate cannot be better explained than by the assurance that only one

natural death, out of the number of its resident population has taken place, since the settlement was established in 1815.

At Bathurst, pulmonic complaints, and dyspepsia, are but little known; and, asthmatic sufferers who have gone there from Sydney, experience perfect relief in its atmosphere. Perhaps, the remarkably salutary influence of that climate, may not only be attributable to elevation, but, in part, to the generally dry character of the slight sandy loam surface situate upon clay, granite, sand stone, or limestone rock. The superstrata of some plains and vallies, consist of rich black mould; the surrounding country is deliciously watered, mostly with constant running streams; and there the native herbage and grasses, prove as nutritive and healthful to our herds and flocks, as the climate does to the human race.

In August last, the ship William Shand, Captain Kenn, arrived here, having on board the surviving and long looked for English cattle and Merino sheep, belonging to the stock club of the agricultural society, under the care of Mr. Merrett, an elderly individual. The stock consisted of three Durham heifers and a bull, five Devonshire heifers and a bull, forty-eight Merino ewes and five rams. Agreeably to the rules of this club, the proprietors of the forty-seven shares drew by lot a ewe for each share, and the remaining cast ewe, with the five rams, and the ten head of cattle, were sold to the highest bidder of the members of the club only. The cattle averaged £56 2s. per head; the rams and ewe £19 5s. 8d. each.

The sheep were selected, it appears, by Captain King, Royal Navy, (a member of the club) with anxious care and considerable trouble, out of Merino flocks of the highest reputation for purity of blood in England; and the cattle were procured by our most worthy parliamentary friend and agent, Mr. Buxton, and his friend Major Close; who appears to have taken charge of the stock, superintended the embarkation, procured the necessary supplies, and made the most judicious arrangement for their health and safety during the passage; and, performed all such troublesome service with such care and ability, as places the society under lasting obligations to that gentleman, as well as Mr. Buxton, for such generous and disinterested attention to those public colonial objects the proprietors of the stock club had in view. The ample provisions and careful arrangements which Major Close made for the safety of the stock during the voyage, were materially defeated, if we may believe the statement of the man in charge, by the jarring disagreements which took place between the master of the ship and himself, and the mates; and it is supposed that to this circumstance may in some measure be ascribed the death of the valuable Durham bull and a heifer, a Devonshire bull and cow, together with the whole of the increase on

the voyage, also Merino ewes and rams; and several of these which were landed were in a most miserable state of existence, from the hardships they had been exposed to. The cattle retained the appearance of the well selected quality of their breed; but the sheep were diseased with the scab, and several in such a thin, bare, sickly looking state, that it was distressing to see them. However, I am glad to understand that, from the care bestowed upon them, and the influence of climate, all the cattle and sheep landed have recovered, and are likely to do well

In the course of the last year Thomas Potter Macqueen, Esq. a member of parliament, and a gentleman of high reputation and considerable fortune, sent out his agent, Mr. MacIntyre, a distinguished agriculturalist, to take charge of an estate of ten thousand acres of land, granted from the crown to Mr. Macqueen. Mr. MacIntyre brought with him several sheep of the pure Merino breed, and also some cattle of approved British breed, and the large purchases made in the colony, on Mr. Macqueen's account of horses, cattle, and sheep, afford no bad proof of the judgment of that gentleman, in directing a portion of his wealth, to participate in the advantages of our growing agricultural prosperity.

The Australian Agricultural Company have at length done some little in pursuance of those objects, for which they received a grant from the crown of a million acres of land. Two chartered ships have arrived from them, bringing their agent, Mr. Dawson, and agricultural servants in charge of 712 pure Merino sheep procured from France, and also several horses and cattle of the highest improved British breed. If this company proceed actively they cannot fail to reap the advantages which must eventually accrue to them from the application of their capital in the agricultural pursuits they profess to follow. We have innumerable tracts of land suited for the enterprise of companies, provided they bring population, and expend upon their grants their chartered capital. But let it not be expected that companies can be supplied with many government laborers, for there are not a sufficient number of that class at present to serve the government and the constant demand of the inhabitants for them; and as our rural population increases, they will form a very inadequate proportion of laborers for our wants.

Our staple export wool increases, as well as improves in quality annually; the latter can be best accounted for by the anxious readiness with which proprietors give from £90 to £354 per head for imported Merino tups, and £70 and upwards for Saxon rams; the improving advantages of the fleece from such spirited competition must tend to raise higher and higher the character of Australian wool in the British market.

It has been mentioned abroad that some individuals in Sydney are in the habit of importing coarse wool from Port Dalrymple,

Van Diemen's Land, with the intention of re-shipping it for England, where it might sell a little dearer in the name of Australian produce. I trust the report is not correct, and that if any individual is in the habit of purchasing the refuse wool of Tasmania, that it will either be expended by our manufactures of coarse cloth, or exported, bearing the undisguised name of the country of its growth.

The quality of our timber, especially the red cedar (Flindersia) appears to be getting into use, and improving in value in England. It is to be apprehended that much of our wood already exported, was not selected with that care and attention to quality which the choice in our extensive forests admits. The tonnage expense is the same, and our timber sent to the London market should be of superior quality, for it has all the self interested prejudices of the established contractors for wood out of other countries to contend with. The blue gum (eucalyptus piperita) and the pine tree found in such abundance and magnitude on the banks of the Brisbane River, must become valuable exports for ship planking and masts, as also the iron bark for ship trennels. But it is to be feared, that unless government receive these woods into his Majesty's Dock-yards, and there by the test of experience, over-rule the illiberal opposition against their use, by self interested suppliers from other places, their real utility and advantages must still remain longer clouded.

The stringy bark (eucalyptus robusta) is a timber that would be much sought after in England, if its qualities were properly known. The joists, rafters, battens, and floors of our houses and stores, chiefly consist of this wood, which is lighter than most of our other woods, and clearer of knots and gum vanes, and equally durable with British oak, with the advantage of being difficult to ignite; so much so, that if a burning coal or red hot iron drop on a floor boarded with it, it seldom occasions a blaze or further harm than is to be seen in most houses where fires are in use. It produces indeed only a black char as far as the power of the burning heat extend; and to this valuable house building timber we are indebted for so few accidents in our buildings. Our rose-wood (trichilia glandulosa) is so beautiful, of so close a grain, and takes such a high polish, that its value must soon be known to the British cabinet makers. Hitherto the clearing of our forest land has been performed without any advantage to the proprietor for the timber grown thereon.—Not so in America, as there half the expenses of clearing is often defrayed by the potash procured from the woods burnt. Much of our timber contains it in great quantity—therefore its production would tend powerfully to the improvement of the country, and it is consequently an object worthy the best attention of the society.

Our fellow-Colonists in Van Diemen's Land have exceeded us

in procuring a very valuable export in the bark and extract of the black and green wattle trees (Acacia Meloncxylon, and acacia decurrens.) As these trees grow in profusion throughout Cumberland it would be sound policy in the Society to offer a reward for the most improved method of manufacturing the extract from the bark.

If the growth of flax and hemp are persevered in they must soon become exportable produce. Even the wild cotton plant (asclepias Cyriacus) so great a nuisance in our cleared ground has been found capable of being manufactured into a cloth between a silk and cambric quality, and has been exported last year in a considerable quantity through the enterprising speculation of Mr. John Raine. If the Hides and tips of the horns of our oxen were relieved from the English import duties they would soon become a considerable export. As the increasing number of steam, water and wind mills for grinding wheat promises shortly to enable us to reduce the wheat of the Colony into a secure, and profitable exportable state of flour, the grower of grain need no longer fear the receipt of an encouraging price for surplus produce above what our markets and distilleries require; as the Isle of France, Cape of Good Hope, and the Brazil markets are open for our flour at very generally profitable prices.

Our Colonial oil fisheries and sealing trade are on the revival, and it is to be hoped, that much additional attention will be given to such promising and lucrative speculations.

The last year terminated with important changes in our high ruling authority, and has given us for our new Governor and Patron of this Society General Darling, an officer greatly experienced in the government of Colonies; and we may reasonably calculate upon the measures of his Excellency promoting the prosperity of the Colony in a greater degree than has been hitherto experienced.

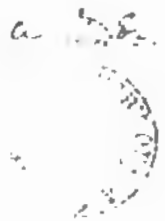
The want of information connected with the objects and interests of the society, has forced me to extend my address beyond what I intended. I fear Gentlemen, that the public have too good grounds in feeling disappointed in the society's not having before this, published transactions founded upon the agricultural observations and experience of many of our intelligent members. Individual authority gives different degrees of credibility to publications, but transactions coming from a society constituted like this, would be read with interest and valued with the confidence which the wisdom of such a body ought naturally to entitle us to. Such an annual publication would prove a useful guide to the young colonist, and instruct the population of the parent state in the real capabilities of our soil and climate, and thereby determine the undecided adventurer as to the prospects which

this Colony holds out for emigration, compared with those of others.

Our collection of books is gradually enlarging, having received in the course of last year a complete series of the transactions of the Society of Arts in a present from that body,—also several Geological works from Professor Barnard, of Oxford, likewise from Mr. Barnard the three first volumes of the Mechanics Magazine.

The Treasurers' accounts have been audited by the Committee —there appears to be a sterling balance of £285 in favour of the Society, and £35 13s. 9d. currency, advanced by the Treasurers, which will be more than discharged when the arrears due by some members are paid up.

J. JAMISON, President.



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