REPORT

OF THE

ROYAL SOCIETY

OF

Van Diemen's Land

FOR

HORTICULTURE, BOTANY, AND THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE.

1846.

Hobart Town:
PRINTED BY WILLIAM GORE ELLISTON, COLLINS STREET.

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PATRON:

HER MAJESTY

THE

QUEEN.

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REPORT

Of the Council of the Royal Society of Van Diemen's Land at the Annual Meeting in February, 1846.

In submitting to the Society their Report for the past year, the Council have much satisfaction in stating that they have at length succeeded in obtaining a properly-qualified Superintendent for the Garden, under whose able management the important departments of practical Botany and Horticulture promise to be conducted with greater efficiency and success than heretofore.

Mr. Newman (the name of the Superintendent) has already introduced upwards of two hundred species of plants, belonging to more than one hundred genera. None of these were in the Society's Garden at the time of his undertaking the management of it, and not a few of them, it is believed, are new to the colony. Most of the plants referred to have been raised from seed, and there are now 1600 potted, almost all of them thriving and ready for distribution.

The Society is thus effectually increasing its means both of exhibiting the classification of plants in the living state, and also of distributing a greater number and variety throughout the Colony.

A portion of the Garden is now being prepared for cultivating all the more valuable kinds of fruit trees. It is deeply to be regretted that the valuable trees

that were ordered from England last year have, through the negligence of the agents of the vessel in London, been entirely lost.

It is matter of congratulation that a Horticultural Society was recently formed by the professional gardeners of Hobart Town. To avoid the appearance of invidious competition, the Council resolved to have no public exhibition of Plants and Fruits in December last; and several of its Members sent contributions from their own private collections to the Show of the new Society.

It is considered of great importance, in relation to the agricultural interests of the Colony, to institute a series of experiments on the grasses, both exotic and indigenous, with the view of ascertaining which of the former are best adapted to our peculiar soil and climate; and whether the latter are susceptible of improvement from artificial cultivation. It was understood that seeds of all the grasses which have been introduced into England, had been ordered on account of the Society last year. These, however, have never come to hand. To insure their arrival, a similar order has been sent by one of the recent ships. It is proposed to proceed, in the mean time, with such grasses as can be obtained in the Colony.

The late Secretary resigned his situation in November last. The Rev. Mr. Lillie has agreed, with the assistance of other Members of Council, to act as Honorary Secretary until the Society's funds are in such a state as to admit of the appointment of a paid Secretary.

Under this new arrangement, and with the view of carrying out the higher objects of the Society as a

Scientific Institution, it is proposed that the Monthly Meetings, which have been hitherto almost exclusively occupied in ballotting for Members and appointing Office-bearers, shall be specially devoted to the reading of a paper and extemporaneous discussion upon some point either theoretically or practically connected with those branches of natural science which it is the design of the Society to cultivate and encourage.

It is earnestly hoped that the Members of the Society will exert themselves in their several spheres and according to their respective tastes, to give effect to this most important part of the Society's operations, and thus redeem it from the charge of limiting its attention to subservient and comparatively unimportant objects.

Agreeably to the suggestions of His Excellency, the President of the Society, the Council intend, as soon as they shall have adequate funds at their disposal, to fit up the rooms of the cottage lately occupied by the Secretary, as a Museum and Reading Room.

His Excellency has, also, with the most laudable liberality and zeal for the welfare of the Society, engaged to present a valuable collection of specimens of Natural History to the Museum; and, also, to apply to the Royal Society, the Linnean and Antiquarian Societies of London, (of all of which His Excellency is a Fellow,) and other Societies, to obtain duplicate books on Natural History and Science, as contributions to the Library.

His Excellency has further promised to write to the Secretary of State, to recommend similar con-

tributions from the British Museum, and other depositaries of learning and science in England.

The funds of the Society have been nearly exhausted in defraying the heavy expenditure of the past year, caused, in great measure, by the erection of a cottage for the Superintendent.

The Council beg, also, to report that, on a representation having been made to the Lieutenant-Governor of the state of the Society's funds, His Excellency has suspended the intimation of reducing the Government allowance to £200 per annum, until the Estimates for 1846 are laid on the table of the Legislative Council. As there is, at present, no salary for a Secretary, this will enable the Society to prosecute its objects with increasing effect.

It is confidently anticipated that the Society, with the zealous co-operation of its Members, and steadily following the leading objects for which it was formed, will effectually aid in unfolding the natural resources of our interesting island, and in promoting the good of the community at large.

For the information of such as are not Members of the Society, it may be proper to state, that the entrance money, which was at first proposed, has been abolished; and that One Pound per annum is the only charge.

Besides admission to the Garden every week-day, each Member is allowed to have plants to the amount of his subscription.

J. LILLIE, *Honorary Secretary.*