

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

BOTANIC GARDEN BOARD, 1881-82

(THIRTEENTH ANNUAL REPORT OF THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

MEETINGS of the Board were held on the 28th July and the 11th November, 1881.

During the year the principal work has been: the extension of plantations, the improvement of paths, cleaning of creek-beds, and the erection of dams to restrain the storm-water and to catch gravel for metalling the paths.

A very unusual expenditure has been required during the present winter to remedy the damage done to the garden by the excessive rain. It has also been found necessary to renew the boundary-fence between the domain and Upland Farm, as upwards of nineteen acres of gorse have been cleared from this part of the domain, and the ground prepared for planting with coniferous trees.

The entrance has been improved by the extension of the flower-borders, in which a very complete series of native flowering shrubs has been planted out.

In the upper part of the domain a fresh nursery-ground has been laid out, and surrounded with deciduous trees, a large number of them having also been planted in other parts of the grounds.

The experimental culture of sorghum was attempted, and a considerable area planted with several varieties, but, owing to the late date at which the seed was received, and the unfavourable season, the result has not been so satisfactory as might have been expected. The quantity of sugar which the canes yielded at different periods of growth was, however, determined, and the results will be found in the Laboratory Report for the year.

A special grant, made for the purpose of obtaining rare plants from the mountain ranges in various parts of the colony, enabled very complete and interesting collections to be made from the Tararua Ranges, Southern Alps, and Stewart Island. Some of these have been reserved for the garden and for view, and the remainder has been distributed to other domains in the colony.

A large supply of forest-tree seeds has been received from Government, and distributed to all parts of the colony, according to the attached list. From the cordial manner in which the recipients acknowledge these seeds, it is evident that very valuable results in the promotion of forestry throughout the colony may be obtained by a small outlay in this manner. The seed-beds in the nursery-ground have been prepared to receive the seeds reserved for the domain, but the sowing has been deferred till spring, on account of the very wet character of the present season. As none were raised from seed last year, the supply of young trees for distribution is now rather lower than usual, there not being more than 2,000 seedlings in stock.

During the past year about 1,000 young trees have been presented to various public bodies, and about 1,200 sold to private individuals.

In March last a second consignment of fruit and ornamental trees was received from Japan, but, unfortunately, did not arrive in good condition, so that it is doubtful if many will survive.

The expenses of the sorghum-cultivation, and the trenching and preparation of the new nursery-ground for experimental purposes, was defrayed by Government out of a general vote for such purposes, as the Board received no direct grant from Parliament during the past year.

The Board has to acknowledge valuable donations of plants and seeds from Messrs. Guilfoyle, Travers, Buchanan, Mason, Seaton, Williams, McNab, Mantell, Drake, Donald, Harding, Hector, Baron von Mueller, the United States Department of Agriculture, and Sir Joseph Hooker.

The attached statement of accounts shows the revenue of the Board during the year, and the manner in which it has been expended. The balance now to the credit of the Board is £302 1s. 8d.

Approved by the Board, 8th August, 1882.

G. RANDALL JOHNSON, Chairman.

JAMES HECTOR, Manager.