

SESS. II.—1884.
NEW ZEALAND.

THE CULTIVATION OF THE WATTLE

(MEMORANDA RESPECTING).

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

Mr. T. THOMPSON, M.H.R., to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—Wellington, 23rd October, 1884.
I have the honour to ask your attention to an extract from a letter forwarded to me by Messrs. Potter and Co., merchants, of Auckland, covering certain information in connection with the production of wattle bark for tanning purposes.
The Hon. the Premier.I have, &c.,
T. THOMPSON.

Extract.

I ENCLOSE copies of some information *re* wattle-growing in Victoria, also the result obtained from a tree cut down by Mr. Bell, manager of the Riversdale Manufacturing Company, Avondale, Auckland. I may mention that this company have 10 acres planted with wattle. The trees have been planted three years, and are now 12ft. high. Other 30 acres were planted last year, and are doing well. We venture to think that this is a matter of sufficient importance to the colony to warrant you in asking if the Government will cause the enclosed information to be printed and circulated amongst members of Parliament.

MEMORANDA from Mr. BELL, Avondale. (Mr. Bell is Manager of the Riversdale Manufacturing Company, Avondale, Auckland.)

I CUT one of the wattle trees growing by itself on the Riversdale property, stripped and dried the bark, and it weighed when dry 56lb. This would give about 90 tons per acre for four or five years' growth. The tree I cut down would be four years old.

WATTLE-GROWING.—Information collected by, and Personal Experience of, F. N. REED, Tanner and Bark Merchant, Hawthorn, Victoria.

THE evidence given before the Wattle Bark Commission appointed by the Victorian Government was all to the effect that the wattle came to maturity at from eight to ten years; that trees of 8in. diameter, 2ft. from the ground, gave from 30lb. to 40lb. of bark, and that first-class trees gave $1\frac{1}{2}$ cwt.

The Commissioners cut down a tree six years old, 29ft. high, 1ft. in diameter, at 3ft. from the ground, and it yielded over $\frac{1}{2}$ cwt. of bark. It has been frequently stated by experts that, with a proper system of training and pruning, mature trees may be made to produce 50 per cent. more bark than in the wild state. One man, who paid a great deal of attention to wattle-growing, supplied the Commission with the following information: With cultivation you will have 19,360 trees, 15ft. high, per acre, averaging 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in diameter. At the end of four years one-half must be thinned out, from which would be obtained 4lb. of wattle per tree; this would give 17 tons per acre, and each year every alternate tree should be removed, producing about or over 17 tons per year, until, at the end of the tenth year, the yield would stand at 122 tons per acre.

It is very difficult to get any reliable figures with respect to the actual yield of cultivated wattles. The above statements are the best that can be had, but must be accepted with caution. The wattle requires to be drawn up long and tall, hence they are best sown very thickly. They should not be left without supervision. The plough should pass between the rows as they grow. They should be pruned carefully, not haphazard, as they may bleed to death, or be checked in the growth; and, again, the trees must be periodically thinned out. By attention to these directions an even sample of bark is procured, which would command a top price.