

1890.
NEW ZEALAND.

FLAX AND OTHER INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

(REPORT OF THE) ON THE WINE AND FRUIT INDUSTRY, TOGETHER WITH MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, AND APPENDIX.

Brought up 12th September, 1890, and ordered to be printed.

ORDERS OF REFERENCE.

Extracts from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

WEDNESDAY, THE 23RD DAY OF JULY, 1890.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed, to consist of ten members, to consider all matters pertaining to the development of the flax and dairy produce and wine-producing industries; with power to call for persons and papers. The Committee to consist of Mr. T. Mackenzie, Mr. Valentine, Mr. Dodson, Mr. Marchant, Hon. Captain Russell, Mr. Walker, Mr. Wilson, Mr. Hamlin, Major Steward, and the mover; three to be a quorum."—(Mr. BERTHAM.)

THURSDAY, THE 31ST DAY OF JULY, 1890.

Ordered, "That it be an instruction to the Select Committee appointed, on the 23rd instant, to inquire into all matters pertaining to the development of flax and dairy produce and wine-producing industries, to add the fruit industry."—(Mr. HOBBS.)

REPORT ON WINE AND FRUIT INDUSTRIES.

THE Committee to whom was referred the question of the wine-producing and fruit industries have the honour to report,—

1. That the time at their disposal has been quite insufficient to enable them to deal with these industries in the manner that their importance demands.

2. As regards the wine industry, your Committee's investigation indicates that it is capable of extensive development if attention is directed to the subject of vine-culture.

3. That large areas of land of volcanic nature which are now almost unproductive could be utilised profitably in the cultivation of vines.

4. That an area of ten acres in a suitable locality would provide an ample maintenance for a family possessing the necessary skill.

5. That before New Zealand can expect to attain any position as a wine-producing country it is absolutely necessary that steps should be taken to eradicate the *Phylloxera vastatrix* by the total destruction of all vines in infected areas: such destruction would merely be anticipating by a short period the inevitable result of the action of the pest.

6. That, as a means to assist the development of wine-making, the Bill amending the Distillation Act should be passed. This measure enables the wine-producer to make use of the by-products by distillation, the results from which would be used for the purpose of fortifying the wine produced in bad seasons, when the grapes are deficient in glucose, thereby insuring early maturity and enabling the wine when exported to resist the effects of changes in temperature during transit.

7. As regards fruit, it is only necessary for the attention of colonists to be turned to its cultivation in an intelligent and earnest manner to insure the development of a very important industry.

8. The evidence before your Committee shows that it would be possible without difficulty to secure a satisfactory trade in fresh fruit at certain seasons with San Francisco and Europe if carried in cool chambers, which Government should require to be provided in steamers under mail-contracts. It is further clear that with the requisite skill and under proper conditions the colony could export to a satisfactory market nearly all varieties of tinned, dried, and crystallized fruit.

9. The readiest means of directing the attention of colonists to these industries which are specially suited for small-settlement districts, and of disseminating the requisite knowledge, would be by the establishment of fruit-growers associations such as have been formed in various parts of the colony, and your Committee recommend that these associations should be encouraged and assisted by Government, as is done in other countries.

10. In Europe, the United States, and the Australian Colonies the closest attention is being given by the various Legislatures to all subjects connected with the produce of the soil. With a view to the development of production, comprehensive reports are published, under the authority of the several Governments, of the progress of all such industries, and are gratuitously distributed.