

## FURTHER PAPERS RESPECTING SERICULTURE IN NEW ZEALAND.

## No. 14.

The HON. SECRETARY, Canterbury Acclimatization Society, to the Hon. Mr. GISBORNE.  
 Sir,— Christchurch, 16th June, 1870.  
 I have the honor to forward you the enclosed Report on Sericulture, from the Council of the  
 Canterbury Acclimatization Society.

I have, &c.,  
 S. C. FARR,  
 Hon. Sec., Canterbury Acclimatization Society.

The Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

## Enclosure in No. 14.

## REPORT OF CANTERBURY ACCLIMATIZATION SOCIETY.

REPORT of Committee appointed by Resolution of the Council of the Canterbury Acclimatization Society on the 25th day of March, 1870, "To collect information respecting the planting of Mulberry Trees and the rearing of Silkworms, and transmit the same to the General Government."

YOUR Committee having in view the circular letter of the Colonial Secretary, addressed to the Secretary of this Society, and dated 10th February, 1870, wishing to ascertain whether this Society could offer any practical suggestions on the subject of silk culture, and especially whether they would be able to assist in the rearing and distribution of mulberry trees, or other trees suitable as food for the different varieties of silkworms, if the Government obtain the support of the Assembly for the purpose of assisting the establishment of such plantations, have not confined themselves strictly to the objects specified in their appointment, but have ventured to take such steps in the matter and to make such suggestions as appear in the following report.

The culture of silk in this Province does not, so far as your Committee have been able to ascertain, appear to have been carried on by any one for the purpose of profit, but simply by way of experiment or amusement.

Of silk culture simply for amusement, there does not appear to be anything worthy of record. As to its culture experimentally, very little seems to have been done; and the only evidence your Committee have obtained is that of the two gentlemen, residents at Christchurch, whose reports are hereunto appended.

The propagation of the white mulberry (*Morus alba*) does not appear to have received any attention in this neighbourhood, but the few trees to be found seem flourishing and doing well; and your Committee are satisfied of the suitability of this climate and soil to their culture.

Your Committee are informed by Mr. A. M. Johnson, the Curator of this Society, that his attention has frequently been directed to the question of silk culture in this Province, and that, about five years ago, steps were taken by himself to introduce silkworm eggs, supplies of which were obtained from Melbourne and Sydney, and distributed from year to year amongst members of the Society; but we do not hear of any practical result, except in the two cases before mentioned, owing probably to lack of interest arising from an insufficient knowledge of silk culture as a branch of industry, and of the pecuniary profit likely to be derived from its systematic development.

Your Committee are strongly of opinion that Sericulture may be established and carried on here with great success, if encouraged by the Government and judiciously promoted.

An agreeable and profitable employment, without fatigue, would be afforded to those unfit for more laborious work—the old, the infirm, and the younger children; and might be beneficially introduced into our asylums and hospitals, and other charitable institutions.

Land, at present comparatively unproductive, might be turned to more profitable account in the cultivation of the mulberry; for it appears from the Report of the Commissioners of Her Majesty's Government and Chamber of Commerce at Shanghai, that "the cultivation does not interfere with other crops, as the mulberry trees grow on the hills in places not available for ordinary agricultural purposes."

Owing to the discovery that cocoons thoroughly desiccated may be pressed and packed for exportation and will yield as good silk as if reeled at once in the localities where they are produced; the only impediment to a successful prosecution of silk culture in this country appears to be removed, and the process reduced to the greatest simplicity, so that it may be even carried on at the homes of the working classes concurrently with their other avocations.

The Provincial Government having, in answer to your application, consented to make a white mulberry plantation if the necessary trees could be procured, your Committee have ventured to take advantage of the sailing of the barque "John Knox," for Sydney, and have arranged with Captain Jenkins of that vessel to bring over a supply of young trees on his return voyage, so that the plantation may not be delayed.

Your Committee are of opinion, that every exertion should be made to speed the establishment of this branch of industry in the Province; and although there are no funds of this Society at present available, they think it may be assumed, from the tenor of the circular of the Colonial Secretary above referred to, that the General Government contemplate rendering pecuniary aid for such purpose.

Your Committee would suggest that a liberal donation be made by the General Government to such of the Acclimatization or other Societies of the several Provinces as may be willing to undertake