

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE
BOARD OF STATE
VITICULTURAL
COMMISSIONERS, FOR 1887**

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Annual Report of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners, for 1887 by Various

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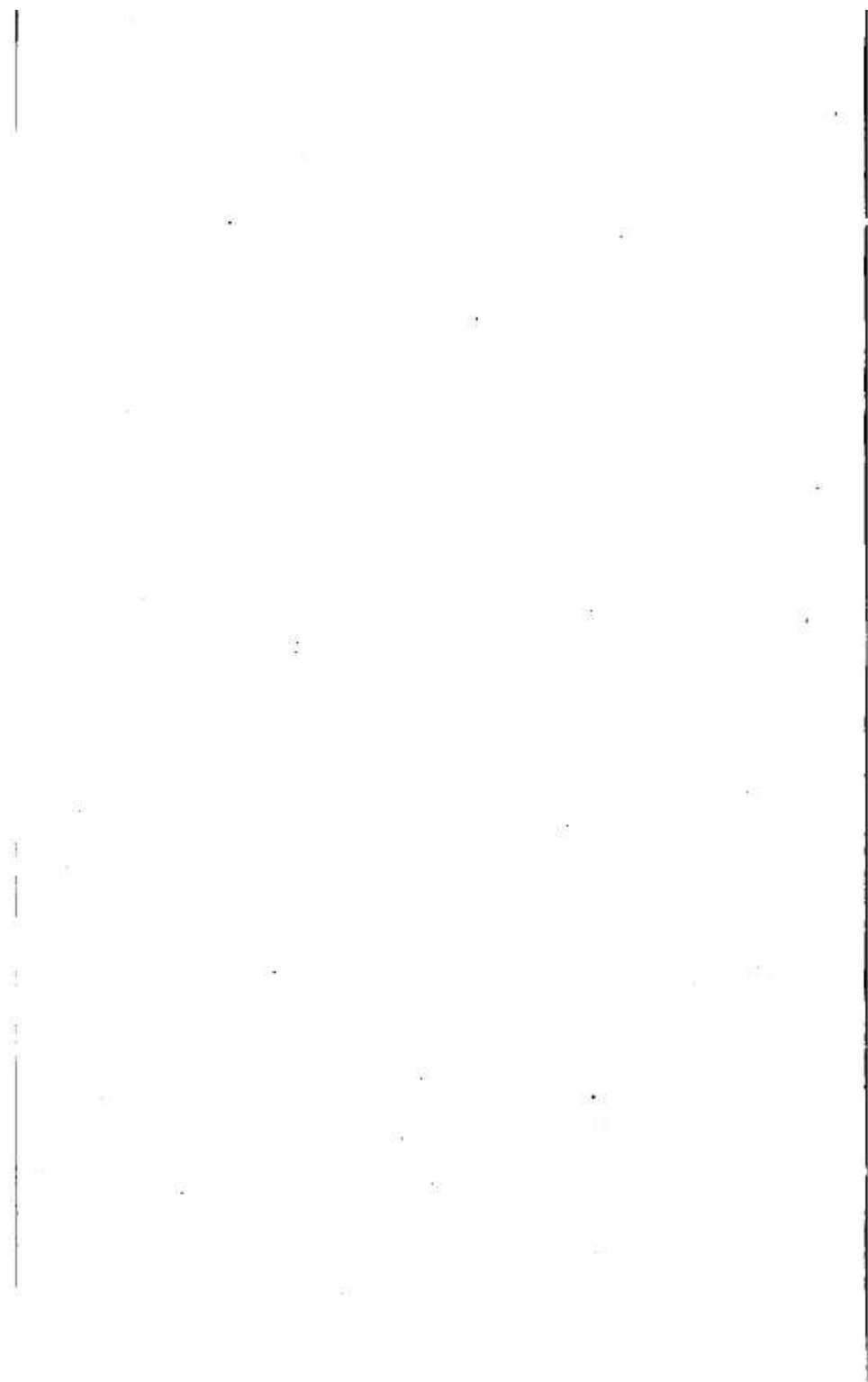
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CONTENTS.

	Page.
Officers and Members of the Board of State Viticultural Commissioners	5
Report of the President, Arpad Haraszthy	6
Report of Charles Krug, Commissioner for the Napa District	43
Report of Isaac DeTurk, Commissioner for the Sonoma District	51
Report of George West, Commissioner for the San Joaquin District	54
Report of L. J. Rose, Commissioner for the Los Angeles District	57
Report of the Secretary, with minutes of the meetings of the Board	60
Report of the Chief Executive Officer	79
Oidium (Tuckeri) and the Use of Sulphur	90
The Pure Wine Bill	97
Bleaching Seedless Sultana Raisins	103
How to Avoid and Correct Imperfect Fermentation	107
Vineyards in the south of France—Report on	113
Electricity—Experiments in treating wines with	119
Herbaceous Grafting	126
Report of W. B. Rising, State Analyst	129
The Arsenic Remedy for Grasshoppers	140



OFFICERS AND MEMBERS
OF THE
BOARD OF STATE VITICULTURAL COMMISSIONERS.

ARPAD HARASZTHY	President, Commissioner for the State at Large.
CHARLES A. WETMORE	Vice-President, Commissioner for the San Francisco District.
CHARLES KRUG	Treasurer, Commissioner for the Napa District.
I. DeTURK	Commissioner for the Sonoma District.
W. S. MANLOVE	Commissioner for the Sacramento District.
GEORGE WEST	Commissioner for the San Joaquin District.
L. J. ROSE	Commissioner for the Los Angeles District.
G. O. BLANCHARD	Commissioner for the El Dorado District.
J. DeBARTH SHORB	Commissioner for the State at Large.
CLARENCE J. WETMORE	Secretary.
JOHN H. WHEELER	Chief Executive Viticultural and Health Officer.

STANDING COMMITTEES:

- Executive*—I. DeTurk, George West, and W. S. Manlove.
- Auditing*—W. S. Manlove.
- Finance*—L. J. Rose and J. DeBarth Shorb.
- On Phylloxera, Vine Pests, and Diseases of the Vine*—I. DeTurk, George West, and W. S. Manlove.
- On Conference with Board of Regents of State University*—Arpad Haraszthy, Charles A. Wetmore, and Charles Krug.
- On Instructions for the Office of the Chief Executive Viticultural Officer*—Arpad Haraszthy, Charles Krug, and I. DeTurk.
- On Distillation, Counterfeits, and Adulterations*—J. DeBarth Shorb, Charles Krug, and George West.
- On Raisins and Table Grapes*—George West, L. J. Rose, and W. S. Manlove.
- On Compensation to be Paid the Chief Executive Officer*—Charles Krug, I. DeTurk, and George West.

Offices of the Board :

204 MONTGOMERY STREET, SAN FRANCISCO.

REPORT
OF
ARPAD HARASZTHY,

President of the California State Board of Viticultural Commissioners.

SAN FRANCISCO, April 12, 1888.

To his Excellency R. W. WATERMAN, Governor of the State of California:

SIR: Herewith you will find transmitted my annual report for 1887-8 as President of the State Board of Viticultural Commissioners, together with other documents necessary thereto.

Owing to your recent succession to the gubernatorial chair through the death of the late Governor Bartlett, it is the first report you will have received from me; and as my term of office expires by limitation on the nineteenth of this month, it will also be the last I will be called upon to make during your administration. In view of these facts, I deem it necessary, for your information, to dwell at some length on the work accomplished for the benefit of the State by this Board. This is the more necessary since, in certain quarters there exists, apparently, a *determined ignorance* regarding the work accomplished by this Commission, as well as a *sustained endeavor* to cloud the great actual value of its labors.

Respectfully,

ARPAD HARASZTHY,

President of the California Board of State Viticultural Commissioners.

REPORT.

SIR: The old Mission fathers planted the grapevine in California immediately or shortly after their arrival, previous to 1770. They planted small tracts close around their Missions, guarded them jealously with high adobe walls, cultivated them carefully, gathered their fruit, and made wine. These wines, so far as we can learn, did not enter into the trade of those days, but were consumed by the good fathers, their occasional visitors, and their immediate retainers. Even after the arrival of Americans in 1849, and with them representatives from every civilized nationality on the globe, but little advance was made towards increasing the area of viticulture, until the year 1858, when, through the publication of vine articles in the reports of the State Agricultural Society, and in the newspapers, a general and widespread interest manifested itself in vine planting, and the area of our vineyards became very greatly increased. A very large proportion, however, of these new plantations consisted of table grape producing vines, and the remainder was almost exclusively composed of the old Mission variety.

Towards 1862, vine planting arose to a genuine enthusiasm, and a lively interest was shown in selecting better varieties for the table, for the wine press, and for raisin curing.

Of the three Commissioners appointed by Governor Downey in 1861 "to report upon the best means and ways to promote the improvement and culture of the grapevine in California," Don Juan Warner returned a clear, concise report on the state of vine culture at that period within the limits of our State. On the other hand, the late Agoston Haraszthy went to Europe, and after visiting all its most important viticultural districts, made an elaborate report on the European methods of cultivating the vine, making wine, and curing of raisins, adding practical suggestions to the California vine grower, and at the same time bringing two hundred thousand grapevine cuttings and rooted vines of every attainable variety to be found in Europe, Asia Minor, Persia, and Egypt. These were afterwards gradually distributed in small lots to different parts of the State, and formed invaluable nuclei for experimentation. No report was ever received from the third member of the above Commission.

Towards 1870 the production of wine and table grapes became greater than the demand, and our viticultural industry began to lag, and finally became so discouraging that in 1875 many vineyards were either abandoned, uprooted, or replaced by orchards and grain fields.

In 1879 the demand for table raisins and wine grapes caught up with the supply, and a renewed interest was awakened in viticulture. Our raisins were looked upon with charity in the East, our rich clusters of table grapes admired and sought for, while our wines, though still very crude, had found more numerous and less exacting customers.

Up to 1880 those who believed in the value of varieties of grapes for wine making, other than the old Mission, were few and far between. With the exception of a very limited number of vine growers, none believed any grape could be as good as the Mission, and we have even at this date a Quixotic spirit existing in some parts of our State, still advocating the planting of this very poor, quality-lacking grape.

Experience has shown that it only produced an ordinary, coarse, heavy, flavorless white wine, taking an indefinite period to mature. Such questionable qualities as it may possess in the production of a white wine are more than overbalanced by the miserable red wine made from it. And to this cause, more than any other, I attribute the bad reputation our wines had earned, both here and in the Eastern States, previous to the more general planting of other and finer varieties of grapes.

Many claims have been made by the admirers of the Mission grape, but none have been proven. It bears unevenly, ripens unevenly, and takes upon itself almost every disease that comes along. In this respect we have to congratulate ourselves, for soon the phylloxera and the grafting knife will have rid us of its presence in our vineyards. In point of fact, most of our vineyards are now planted with vines more hardy, resisting disease better, more constant bearers, producing finer qualities and greater quantity than the Mission ever succeeded in doing under the most favorable conditions. Through the persistent efforts of a few enterprising viticulturists, small quantities of wine have been produced from the imported varieties, whose character was so distinctive and so strikingly showed superiority over those made from the Mission, that new faith in the future of California wines was born, and the belief spread that under proper conditions, our State might some day make wine of a superior grade, and eventually rival some of the better wines of European countries.

At the beginning of 1880, our viticultural interests were in a complete state of chaos. In spite of the efforts made by our wine makers and wine merchants, only a limited market had been secured for our wines in the Eastern States, and though the demand showed a steady annual increase, it was at the slowest of rates. Even that small increase, however, was considered gratifying, and hailed as encouraging.

The crop of the year 1879 had been a short one. The old stocks had been exhausted, and suddenly the price of all kinds of wine went up, and the supply was barely sufficient to meet the demand of the market.

This awakened the more general interest of the public in vine planting, but there was a woeful lack of knowledge, a want of system, no beaten paths to follow, and but a few acknowledged authorities to apply to for information. Numerous newspaper articles appeared calling attention to the value of viticulture in our State, and expressing the desire for the formation of some State institution, where such practical knowledge might be obtained as was necessary to the successful conduction of this important branch of agriculture.

Under these influences, soon after, the State Legislature took the matter under advisement, and in March, 1880, the State Board of Viticulture was created, and provided with a modest fund to meet its necessary expenditures.

The numerous duties falling to this Board are fully outlined in the Organic Act, then created and approved April 15, 1880, and enlarged in 1881, and which you will find in our First Annual Report, on pages 5, 6, 7, 8.

Under this Act the State was divided into seven viticultural districts, each having a representative in the Board, appointed by the Governor, and chosen from among men practically conversant with viticulture in its various branches, and recognized in their districts as suitable for the position.

Besides the Commissioners from these seven viticultural districts, there were to be appointed two extra Commissioners to represent the State at large, thus forming a Board consisting of nine Commissioners. The offi-