

**REPORT OF THE
CALIFORNIA STATE
AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY
FOR THE YEAR 1910**

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Report of the California State Agricultural Society for the Year 1910 by State Board of
Agriculture

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STATE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

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HORSE PARADE, CALIFORNIA STATE FAIR, 1909.

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SOCIETY

FOR THE YEAR 1910



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REPORT

OF THE

STATE AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

To His Excellency, HIRAM W. JOHNSON,
Governor of the State of California.

SIR: We have the honor to submit herewith, for your consideration, the Fifty-Seventh Annual Report of the State Agricultural Society.

Besides a statement showing the receipts and expenditures of the society for the past year, we include herein the statistical reports of such counties as have complied with the law by sending in returns, and also some articles on Agriculture and kindred subjects by gentlemen especially qualified to treat the questions considered.

REGARDING STATISTICS.

In spite of the best efforts we can exert, some of the counties continue to ignore the statute which makes it their duty to supply this society, on or before a certain date each year, with statistics of their products. If supervisors could know how much these reports are sought after by students of California and prospective immigrants to the State, and how much publicity the counties that do report receive as a reward for their efforts, we believe the situation would be different. But they do not know this, and, not realizing the benefit, they see only the cost and act on the belief, apparently, that they are favoring their county by saving the hundred dollars or so that would be necessary to secure the report which the law directs. How they can harmonize their oaths to support the Constitution and laws of the State in the face of a deliberate disregard of this particular statute is for them to explain.

As the matter of full and reliable state statistics is of very great importance, and as California is behind most of the other states in the completeness of its industrial data, we are disposed, by way of emphasizing the importance of the subject, to repeat the recommendations made a year ago, which were in effect that to repeal the law and abandon the attempt to collect industrial statistics would be to go backwards, to put California behind the less progressive states. Since this can not be thought of, the thing to do is to so amend the law as to make it effective. Several measures might be suggested to this end, but we believe the simplest and easiest thing to do would be to make county assessors ex officio county statisticians, require of them a house to canvass in making assessments and collecting statistical data, increase their compensation according to the increased work, and provide a penalty, first, for the

producer or manufacturer who declines to give the desired information; and second, for the official or officials who neglect in any way to carry out the provisions of the law. We suggest imposing this extra duty on the assessors because they are supposed to be better informed regarding values and industrial conditions in their respective counties than other citizens, and because, further, they are already required to collect certain data, and they might as well make one job of it and do the work complete. This is substantially the Kansas law on the subject, and there it works very satisfactorily.

Another effective remedy would be to add to the present law a provision that where county supervisors neglect or refuse to appoint a statistician on or before a certain date, say August 1st of each year, it shall become the duty of the State Agricultural Society to appoint a citizen of the defaulting county to collect the statistics of said county at the expense of said county, and in the event the supervisors refuse to allow such claim, then authorize the State Treasurer to pay the same and deduct the amount thereof from any money due or that may become due from the State to said county from any source.

We know you will agree with us when we say that if this statistical work is to be continued it ought to be so complete as to be of maximum value and a credit to the State, and we ask your valued assistance in helping to bring about such amendments to the present law on the subject as will insure such results.

A BRIEF RETROSPECT.

In 1906, after a spirited contest among the directors, pool selling and book making on the fair grounds were abolished, and the selling of spirituous drinks prohibited. This action on the part of the directors and a simultaneous change of management seemed to mark the turning point for the better. In spite of many obstacles and many discouraging conditions, chief of which was the San Francisco disaster, the fair that year was an improvement on the one of the year before, and each fair held by the society since has been better than the preceding one. This is significant in view of the fact that when the reforms referred to were inaugurated all kinds of dire consequences were predicted. The abolished privileges had been bringing the society twenty or more thousand dollars a year, and it was contended that without this revenue the society could not live. But it did live, and remarkable as it may seem, the deficiency the first year under the reform was not so great as the average deficiency of previous fairs. The touts and sports were not so much in evidence among the visitors, but in their place came farmers, merchants, and other substantial men of affairs with their families, giving the institution a higher and more dignified cast, which recommended itself strongly to the better element of our population. The reform was so radical, so thorough and so effectively enforced as to convince the doubting that the management was in earnest, and at once encouragement began to be received from the press and other influential sources that previously had been opposed to the society, or indifferent as to its welfare. To be sure the management worked hard and under adverse conditions to vindicate its course, but that it stands vindicated to-day must be admitted by all fair critics.