

THIRD MEETING. 28th January, 1873.

Sir David Monro, President, in the chair.

The report and accounts of last year were read and adopted.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR 1873.—*President*—Sir David Monro; *Vice-President*—The Bishop of Nelson; *Council*—Hon. J. Renwick, C. Hunter-Brown, George Williams, M.D., R. Lee, J. Shephard; *Hon. Treasurer*—J. G. Holloway; *Hon. Secretary*—T. Mackay.

The Secretary reported the receipt of new books from London, and a further supply was ordered.

The President suggested that a copy of Hooker's "New Zealand Flora" should be ordered, and at the same time remarked that when a new edition of this work was next published, it would add much to its value and usefulness if it was illustrated. It was considered, therefore, that a suggestion to this effect should be conveyed to the Board of the New Zealand Institute in order that they may communicate with Dr. Hooker on the subject.

A conversation arose on the question of the utilization of the Botanical Gardens in Nelson. It was generally considered that, if the provincial funds would allow of it, these gardens might be turned to good account in trying experiments of "Economic Botany;" for instance, in the proper cultivation of sugar-beet, sugar-grass (*Sorghum saccharatum*), and other plants, as well as trees, whose products might be suitable for local industries.

1. "On the cultivation of Sugar-beet in New Zealand," by T. Mackay, C.E.
(ABSTRACT.)

As the cultivation of sugar-beet, and its manufacture into sugar, has been occupying of late a considerable amount of attention in New Zealand, the following information, gained principally from some practical acquaintance with the subject, may not be uninteresting at the present time:—

There are in cultivation four kinds of beet, viz.:

1. The long red, or garden-beet, so much used as a salad.
2. The white Silesian, or sugar-beet, with its sub-variety, the rose-coloured.
3. The sea-beet, the leaves of which are well known as an excellent substitute for spinach.
4. The mangold-wurzel, or field-beet. Von Thäer, a German writer on agriculture, is of opinion that the field-beet is a hybrid betwixt the red garden-beet and the white sugar-beet. Others say that it is the original stock, and that the finer varieties have been produced from it by higher cultivation—a more likely conjecture.

Of the white sugar-beet (*Beta alba*) there are more than one species. It has a pear-shaped root and light green top, green leaves with lighter-coloured