

bility of establishing, in connection with his department, a statistical bureau, for the collection and publication at short intervals of particulars regarding them. A reply was received, stating that the subject had been seriously considered by the Department without however seeing, with the means available, any mode of obtaining agricultural returns possessed of greater accuracy than those already published annually by the Governments of the Provinces of Manitoba and Ontario.

It is therefore much to be desired that the Provincial Government of Quebec will publish a similar report to those referred to, and the incoming Council might ask that it do so.

CUSTOMS MATTERS.

Customs Act Amendments.—As the Bill introduced last session by the Minister of Customs, entitled "An Act to amend chapter thirty-two of the Revised Statutes respecting the Customs," contained provisions that were deemed objectionable, the Council examined the Bill, and adopted a report thereon which was forwarded to the Minister. Thereafter the Assistant Commissioner of Customs came from Ottawa and discussed the various amendments with the Council, the result being that the Bill, as finally passed, was more in accordance with the views of importers.

The Council also deemed it well to advocate an increase of the Appraisers' salaries, seeing that, as urged by it, the Government had abolished the practice of allowing them to share in the proceeds of the fines; the Minister promised consideration of that recommendation.

J. C. Ayer-Customs Case.—In view of the severe terms in which the Chief Justice commented, when giving judgment in the J. C. Ayer-Customs case, upon the conduct of the Customs officers in regard thereto, the Council deemed it its duty to request the Minister of Customs to investigate their proceedings in relation to that case, in which request the officers joined. The Minister replied that as all the facts in connection with the Ayer seizure and the conduct of the Customs officers in relation thereto were before the Department, and as no new developments had transpired, any further enquiry was not deemed necessary.

It may be mentioned that one of the officers whose conduct had been impugned, addressed a lengthy defence to the Council, which was read, and that subsequently it was published in the newspapers by that officer.