

- “(2.) Where any agricultural and pastoral society or societies, farmers’ union, or other established organization, combined or otherwise, of a district, or the Governors of a high school, desire to have a boys’ agricultural club started, the organizer should be invited to their district for the purpose.
- “(3.) He should then call a meeting in the district of those interested in the movement (and personally invite as many as possible) for the purpose of forming a committee to assist in the proper carrying-out of the club’s competitions, and the Department’s agricultural instructor should be also associated with such committee.
- “(4.) That the agricultural and pastoral associations be invited to co-operate in the movement by opening classes and offering prizes for the best animals or produce exhibited by members of these clubs.”

SUGGESTED LEGISLATION FOR PRESENTATION TO PARLIAMENT.

Copies of the Seeds Bill, the Noxious Weeds Amendment Bill, the Rabbit Nuisance Amendment Bill, and the Fertilizers Bill, which you forwarded to the Board and asked for our views as to the proposed measures, were carefully discussed with Dr. Reakes.

SEEDS BILL.

A copy of the Seeds Bill which had been brought before Parliament was fully considered. We were informed that the seed-merchants were objecting to clause 11 in the Bill, dealing with the sale of seed by farmers to other farmers for sowing. After having gone fully into the matter with Dr. Reakes, the following resolution was passed :—

“That, having heard the objection of the seed-merchants to clause 11 of the proposed Seeds Bill, the Board of Agriculture is of opinion that some provision should be made to prohibit the sale by one farmer to another unless the seed offered for sale is either submitted to the Government Biologist for examination or that the seed is certified to have been machine-dressed.”

Later Dr. Reakes reported to us that a conference had been held by the Department with representatives of the seed trade and the farmers, for the purpose of discussing in detail the provisions of this Bill. At that meeting there was great difference of opinion, and finally the following resolution was passed, which practically amounted to the abandonment of the Bill :—

“In the opinion of this meeting the bulk of the seed trade is being carried on on sound and satisfactory lines. The passing of legislation on the lines proposed will hamper both seed-merchants and growers, and result in inconvenience and additional expense. The committee thinks that steps should be taken under existing legislation to prosecute known unscrupulous seed-dealers, and that an educational campaign should be carried out to impress on all farmers the advisability of buying only high-grade seeds and demanding guarantees of the germination and purity of all the seed they buy.”

After we had discussed the altered position we agreed to defer further consideration of the Bill to a later meeting, the members of the Board in the meantime to ascertain the feeling of farmers and others interested in their respective districts as to the measure.

FERTILIZERS BILL.

We also had before us a rough draft of an amending Bill controlling the sale of fertilizers, but full consideration of this was deferred pending further particulars being supplied.

LEGISLATION FOR THE CONTROL OF FIREBLIGHT.

We were informed by Dr. Reakes that it was proposed to introduce an amendment to the Noxious Weeds Act providing for the inclusion of hawthorn in the schedule to the Act which gives power to the local authority to declare weeds to be noxious weeds within its jurisdiction. After having heard the explanation of the proposals, the Board endorsed the Department’s suggestions in regard to the control of the disease, it being optional on the part of the local body to bring it into force if deemed necessary.

NOXIOUS WEEDS AMENDMENT BILL AND RABBIT NUISANCE AMENDMENT BILL.

Some alterations in the provisions of the Noxious Weeds Act and Rabbit Nuisance Act, as suggested by the Department of Agriculture, were agreed upon.

SHIPPING-SPACE FOR STOCK AND FRUIT TO NORTH AND SOUTH AMERICA.

At the request of a number of fruitgrowers and prominent stockbreeders, the Board felt the urgent necessity of further steps being taken to have the South American markets made available for New Zealand producers, and therefore passed the following resolution, which was sent on to you : “The Board of Agriculture is of opinion that further efforts should be made to secure shipping-space to South America for stud stock and for fruit, and recommends that the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture take the necessary steps to give effect to this.”

We are pleased to note that arrangements were made to ship New Zealand produce and stock to South America, and that another steamer is now scheduled to leave New Zealand for the Argentine about the middle of July, 1921.