

wool-brokers; with myself as chairman. As the whole of the "Bawra" stocks of wool have now been disposed of, the special object for which the committee was set up no longer exists, but there is evidently a strong feeling throughout the country that the control of offerings at New Zealand wool-sales should continue, and that it should be in the hands of this committee, either in its present or in a reconstituted form.

Having regard to the fact that anything of this kind now done is a matter specially for wool-producers, together with wool-brokers, so far as the actual selling arrangements are concerned, it seems no longer necessary for the Government itself to be represented on the committee by one of its officers, and it would appear desirable therefore that a newly constituted committee should be established. The matter is being referred to the Board of Agriculture, in order that it may be fully considered from the producers' standpoint.

AGRICULTURAL INSTRUCTION.

The report of the Fields Division, which follows later, goes fully into agricultural instruction in its general aspects, this being a marked feature of the new Division's activities. It is evident that a much greater interest in this important subject is now being taken throughout the Dominion, and in this connection it is gratifying to record the fact that a generous donation of £10,000 has been made by Sir Walter Buchanan for the purpose of establishing a Chair of Agriculture at Victoria College, Wellington. Some three years since the question of the relative responsibilities of the Education Department and this Department in connection with agricultural education was fully discussed at a conference attended by representatives of both Departments, together with the Director of the Lincoln Agricultural College, and other gentlemen directly associated with this branch of instructional work. At that conference it was decided that the educational activities of the Department of Agriculture would deal with agricultural instruction only so far as it affected youths after leaving primary or secondary schools, and this still seems to be a satisfactory arrangement. Apart from any departmental arrangements, however, there is apparently some confusion of ideas in the country as to what is the best line to adopt in connection with agricultural instruction in institutions specially established for the purpose. We already have an excellent institution in Lincoln College, which has done a great deal of good practical training work, and has also furnished training facilities for students studying for University degrees. The establishment of the Chair of Agriculture in Wellington will doubtless result in an agricultural college being established in connection with it in due course, and the question of the extent to which higher training in agriculture, designed to equip students for the purpose of becoming instructors in agriculture, requires to be provided for in the Dominion demands consideration. So far as shorter courses of study are concerned, the farm-school, giving a two-years course particularly devoted to training in practical farm-work and the study of the principles of scientific agriculture and their application to farming practice, should afford a good means of training lads to become first-class farmers as distinct from instructors.

There is undoubtedly a great deal of scope in New Zealand for farm-schools of this kind, and given good management and good facilities for instruction they should, in the future, exert an important influence in raising the general standard of farm production throughout the Dominion.

LIVE-STOCK DIVISION.

The Director of the Live-stock Division, Mr. A. R. Young, and his staff have done good work throughout. Animal-disease has been kept well in hand, the meat and dairy-inspection services have been efficiently conducted, and the difficult task of administering the Rabbit Nuisance and the Noxious Weeds Acts has been carried out energetically and tactfully. In addition, the instructional work of the Division has shown marked development—a very satisfactory feature.

Following is the Director's report:—

STOCK CONDITIONS GENERALLY.

The weather conditions during the past year can best be described as erratic and very variable. Extreme seasonal conditions ruled in the southern districts and in parts of Canterbury, and to a less extent perhaps in the North, while the southern portion of the North Island experienced almost ideal conditions throughout the year both winter and summer. Stock losses occurred in parts of the South Island from snow and flood, and assistance in the way of providing free carriage of fodder was found necessary in some instances. The long spell of dry weather in the South throughout the summer and autumn has been serious as regards the provision of winter food, and this will be