

## REPORT.

Board of Agriculture, Wellington, 27th July, 1925.

To the Hon. the Minister of Agriculture.

SIR,—

In your letter of 20th February you express the wish that the Board of Agriculture should make an inquiry as to the steps which should be taken to give more adequate attention to agricultural education, as follows:—

“With reference to the question of agricultural instruction, the Government is desirous of having a full inquiry made into all phases of it, including the extent to which further instructional facilities in the form of an Agricultural College or Colleges need to be provided in order to adequately meet the requirements of the Dominion as a whole. The matter has been discussed in Cabinet, and a decision arrived at that your Board should be asked if it would undertake this inquiry.

“The order of reference will be as follows:—

“(a.) What new agricultural training institution or institutions are required in order to provide facilities in accordance with the Dominion’s present-day requirements for the efficient training of—

“(i.) Students desirous of taking a University degree in agriculture, fitting them fully to become either instructors or research workers in agriculture:

“(ii.) Students desirous of becoming farmers, well equipped with a knowledge of the principles of scientific agriculture as applied to the work of practical farming in all its branches?

“(b.) The probable number of students of the kind mentioned in sub-paragraph (i) of (a) that could be utilized in New Zealand after taking their degrees.

“(c.) How such an institution or institutions should be equipped as regards staff, laboratories, and farming-land.

“(d.) Where each or any of such institutions should be situated in order to serve most efficiently the present requirements of the Dominion as a whole.

“(e.) To what extent, and under what conditions, could the Canterbury Agricultural College be utilized (subject to the approval of the Board of Governors) as an integral portion of the general scheme?

“(f.) What estimated Government expenditure would be involved by giving effect to the Committee’s recommendations regarding paragraphs (a), (c), (d), and (e) immediately above.

“I appreciate the fact that the members of the Board are all more or less busy men, and that it may be a matter of some difficulty for them all to find sufficient time to devote to this inquiry, but it is felt that, with the knowledge already in their possession, and their intimate knowledge of the requirements of the Dominion in the matter of agricultural instruction, they are well equipped to go into the whole question to the best advantage, and to advise the Government as to the course which should be adopted in establishing a higher and better system of agricultural instruction than exists at the present time.

“It was further decided to ask the Board to associate two responsible Government officers representing the Education and Agricultural Departments respectively with it in the inquiry. I should be glad if the Board would undertake this responsibility, and commence its sittings for the purpose at as early a date as is quite convenient to you and to its members.

“Full discretion will be given to call evidence, visit existing educational institutions, Government farms, &c., and generally to do any acts which may seem necessary or desirable in order to enable information to be obtained and fully consider a report to be prepared for the information and guidance of the Government.

“The Director-General, Department of Agriculture, will be pleased to confer with you at any time with a view to making detailed arrangements as to procedure, and any other matters which require to be settled in connection with the conduct of the inquiry.”

The Hon. George Fowlds represented the Senate of the New Zealand University, Dr. Reakes represented the Agriculture Department (at times, in his unavoidable absence, Mr. Cockayne took his place), and Mr. La Trobe represented the Education Department.

In compliance with your wish, the Board held a series of meetings for the purpose of taking evidence on the subject, commencing on the 4th March, at Wellington, and continuing at Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch. At each place educational authorities gave evidence, and public notification was given that the Board would hear any other evidence on the subject. During the course of our visits we inspected Ruakura Farm in connection with the instruction given to lads in agriculture. At Auckland, Orakei was viewed, as it was stated that some 50 or 100 acres of this land would be allocated to the Auckland University College Council. Calling at Levin on our way to Wellington, we made a thorough inspection of the Agriculture Department’s Weraroa Farm. We then visited the Wairarapa to see the farm given by the people of the district for the training of returned soldiers who wished to go on the land. Evidence was taken as to the suitability of these two latter farms as a site for an Agricultural College. At Christchurch further evidence was taken and a representative of the Otago University Council stated the views of his Council so that the Board had