

data on the many points at issue, and it is intended to correlate our results with results obtained under different methods of management in ordinary farm practice by a system of special farm surveys and records of selected farms, which are also being set in train. From year to year and from one rotation period to another very important results must certainly accumulate along these lines, and I trust to have opportunities of reporting progress from time to time.

SALE CROPS.

To return to my main theme: I have not thus far expressed any opinion on the possibilities of higher profits being derived from the raising of cash crops—that is, of crops other than those grown for the maintenance and fattening of stock. Potatoes are grown for this purpose, and when their cultivation is undertaken with thoroughness and with knowledge there is little doubt that they may average out at a handsome degree of profit. Potatoes are a crop, of course, which could be very easily overdone, but we have not yet by any means reached the limit of their profitable production in the North Island. Other crops which have been suggested, and in some quarters strongly advocated, are industrial crops, such as *Linum* for fibre-production, sugar-beet for sugar, and colza for oil.

In general, the cost of production of these crops, the capital and labour involved, the risks of partial failure, and the necessary preliminary industrial development are all factors militating against success; while, on the other hand, we shall not—to use a colloquialism—be “up against it” in the matter of utilization of our agricultural lands so long as our dairying and stock industries remain at a profitable level, which promises to be the case for many years to come. Take the case of *Linum* for fibre, for example. At the present time first-grade Irish-grown scutched fibre is making £150 per ton, and the prospects have improved to such an extent that Canada is now developing considerably a flax-fibre industry, while representations have also been made for the promotion of flax-growing for fibre in New Zealand. Before any move should be made in this direction it ought to be reasonably certain that the business would be an unusually remunerative one. Now, the facts are that *Linum* for fibre is a very risky crop to grow and to handle. 5 cwt. per acre of scutched fibre is a very good yield. The cost of growing and preparing a crop in New Zealand, including the laborious operations of hand pulling, retting, &c., would amount to about £15 per acre, possibly considerably more. The cost of scutching in Ulster used to be 8s. per cwt. of scutched