

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE.

THE Board of Agriculture, at a meeting held on 15th June, dealt with a number of matters of a confidential nature that had been referred to it by the Minister.

The position arising out of the proposed commandeering by the Imperial Government of next season's output of cheese available for export was very fully discussed.

The Board had a long interview with Mr. D. E. Hutchins, F.R.G.S., with whom it discussed the various qualities and uses of the different varieties of trees which should be planted in New Zealand. Mr. Hutchins also furnished the Board with information concerning afforestation generally in Europe, Japan, and the various parts of the Empire.

Amongst other matters considered were the following: American meat trust; export of hides; supply of rock phosphate; exportation of stud sheep; Professor Bottomley's bacterized peat; sale of meat to the Imperial Government; noxious weeds; and proposed establishment of an experimental farm in the North Otago district.

A meeting of the Board was held on Thursday, 13th July, 1916.

The Board considered a number of questions that had been referred to it by the Council of Agriculture.

Amongst other matters, the Board had a lengthy conference with Mr. Morgan, Director of Geological Survey and Acting Under-Secretary for Mines, with regard to making a careful search in various parts of New Zealand for deposits of limestone and phosphate rock for agricultural purposes. Mr. Morgan pointed out that owing to several members of the staff having enlisted the Department was rather short-handed; a sum of money had been allocated, however, for the purpose of locating limestone-deposits throughout the Dominion, and the Department was making arrangements to examine the most likely localities, and hoped to be able to furnish a comprehensive and exhaustive report on the subject during the coming year. He stated that he was afraid no large deposits of lime would be found in the Taranaki District, but that it was probable some might exist on the banks of the Mokau River, and he promised to ascertain whether such was the case, and, if so, to obtain samples of the limestone in that district.

The Board agreed to endorse the recommendation of the Council of Agriculture that the Government be asked to withdraw the embargo on the export of hides.

It was decided that the President and another member of the Board should wait upon the Prime Minister and ask him to take steps to ensure that at the conclusion of the existing agreement between the Imperial Government and New Zealand producers to purchase all the meat available for export, the whole of the stocks in the stores at the end of the war should be taken by the Imperial authorities, and not thrown back on the hands of the farmers.

A recommendation from the Council of Agriculture that the Government should be asked to bring in a Seeds Bill to provide for the redressing of imported seeds wherever necessary, with the power to prohibit the importation of seeds badly contaminated with noxious-weeds seeds, was also discussed, and arrangements were made to obtain further information on the subject, as a Seeds Bill will probably be introduced into Parliament during the next session.

The Board also dealt with a letter from the Dominion Secretary of the New Zealand Farmers' Union calling attention to the fact that there was a very large quantity of wool lying in Wellington which was damaged by bidibidi (hutewai) seed, and for which a reasonable figure could not be obtained in the Dominion. The Council of Agriculture thought the Government should be asked to provide for the shipment of such "seedy" and dirty wool to Japan or other allied countries where carbonizing machinery is available, and it was decided to urge the Minister to give effect to this proposal.

It was also agreed to write to the Minister of Education endorsing the proposal made by the Council of Agriculture that sections of land should be provided,