

# FLOCK HOUSE FARM OF INSTRUCTION



**T**HERE is an ever-increasing need for trained workers in New Zealand agriculture and the old conception that only the dullard of the family should become a farmer must be disregarded today as farming becomes more specialised and more efficient. The importance of the primary industries to this Dominion demands that the brightest and best boys be educated to take over the ultimate responsibility of working farms. Unfortunately many lads who have some enthusiasm for a farming life are being lost to other walks of life, and one of the chief reasons lies in the lack of opportunities to engage in that calling. It is to overcome this that the Flock House Farm of Instruction has been reorganised and a comprehensive curriculum introduced to give a number of New Zealand boys each year an opportunity of obtaining a sound farm training before entering an agricultural college or going on to a farm for further experience.

**A**S well as giving an initial training in all branches of farming with the companionship of other boys, this course should make a trainee self-reliant when he continues his farming career. There is much to learn on a farm nowadays and many farmers are far too busy to give personal tuition in the rudiments of farming operations, so that the course of instruction at Flock House is helping to fill the need for a greater number of farm assistants to be made available to the industry.

## Flock House Station

Flock House Station was originally established in 1924 by the Trustees of the New Zealand Sheep Owners' Acknowledgment of Debt to the British Seamen's Fund for the training in agriculture of overseas boys. It was taken over by the New Zealand Government in February, 1937, and is now operated under the direction of the Fields Division of the Department of Agriculture.

It is now open to any New Zealand youth between the ages of 15 and 18 who has passed the necessary medical examination and is of good character and keen on agriculture. There is no entrance fee, the only cost being that of the regulation clothing outfit, a list of which is given later. The course occupies 12 months.

The property consists of about 8000 acres lying between the Rangitikei River and the west coast, and varies from rich alluvial flats along the river frontage to typical sand dune country along the coast. About 6000 acres are stocked, the balance being devoted to an afforestation scheme.

The property is farmed as far as possible along commercial lines, with due regard to the initial purpose of training. The farm tools, buildings, and implements are typical of those which would be used on any well-equipped farm of similar size and farmed on extensive lines.

**Livestock on Flock House Station are as follows:—**

**Horses:** Sufficient good-quality draughts are kept for adequate tuition in all horse work. Suitable hacks are available for all stock work.

**Sheep:** Approximately 9000 sheep are wintered, including 6000 ewes bred to Romney and Southdown rams, ewe lambs from the former being retained for replacements in the ewe flock and wether lambs and Southdowns fattened.

**Cattle:** There is a herd of about 100 good type Jerseys and the usual young stock. About 1000 head of well-bred Aberdeen Angus cattle are run, including a breeding herd of 350 cows. All steers are fattened on the property. A small stud herd is also kept.

**Pigs:** Purebred Berkshire sows are bred to Tamworth boars and all pigs are fattened.

## Curriculum

While the new syllabus is based on practical lines, it is essential that all trainees be taught the fundamentals and principles of agriculture, and the course has been designed to give complete understanding of what the trainee is doing and why.

The main points of the course of instruction are as follows:—

There will be approximately 70 lectures. Full use is to be made of the bulletins of the New Zealand Department of Agriculture and other literature, and these are to be studied in conjunction with the appropriate lecture. Every phase of agriculture is to be covered and cyclostyled lecture papers are supplied to each trainee.