

SESSION II.  
1918.  
NEW ZEALAND.

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# BOARD OF AGRICULTURE

(REPORT OF THE SECOND) FOR THE YEAR 1917-18.

*Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.*

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## REPORT.

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The Hon. Minister of Agriculture, Wellington.

SIR,—

Wellington, 15th May, 1918.

The second Board of Agriculture, whose appointment by His Excellency the Governor was gazetted on the 10th May, 1917, held four meetings during the year—viz., 29th May, 1917; 10th to 13th July, 1917; 4th October, 1917; and 6th and 7th February, 1918.

Besides having had the pleasure of a long conference with yourself upon the questions of the production of meat and dairy-produce and the storage and shipping from the Dominion of these products, in which you were good enough to give us full and confidential information on the various subjects, we have had several conferences on agricultural matters with the various associations connected with the breeding of horses and sheep, as well as poultry, and on another occasion a long conference with the National Efficiency Board on subjects in which both Boards were interested, connected with agriculture, land-settlement, rural housing, seed-growing, &c.

Our Board was also represented at the several conferences connected with the sale of butter, cheese, wool, hides, and skins when the Imperial Government purchased these products. The members of the Board interested in wheat-growing were also present at the time you met the wheat-growers, millers, merchants, and brokers at Christchurch in November last, when arrangements were made for the purchase and disposal of the coming season's wheat crop.

### QUESTIONS RELATING TO THE PRODUCTION, STORAGE, AND SHIPPING OF MEAT AND DAIRY-PRODUCE.

The Board devoted a great deal of attention to the question of increased accommodation for the storage of meat and dairy-produce in the Dominion; the prospects of shipping for these products; the policy that the Government should be recommended to advocate farmers to carry out in the immediate future regarding the holding and killing of stock; and other matters relating to the agricultural and pastoral industry generally.

All these questions were exhaustively considered in conjunction with the officers of the Department of Agriculture, and after we had had placed before us figures as to the stocks of perishable products in New Zealand, and the storage capacity available, we recommended that the additional storage required should, in the exceptional circumstances, be provided with Government assistance, as the companies concerned could hardly be expected to expend money in providing additional storage which after the war might not be utilized.

*Meat.*—We also discussed the advisableness of taking steps to conserve shipping-space by cutting mutton carcasses into two parts, and fitting the shanks of the hind legs into the chests of the carcasses, thereby reducing the length very considerably.

*Cheese.*—The question of the provision of additional cool-storage accommodation for cheese, which you had referred to us for our opinion, was also fully gone into, and lengthy interviews took place with your Department's officers on the subject. It had been urged that in consequence of the loss suffered by owners of cheese during the preceding season, and the probable augmentation of that loss the following season through lack of sufficient cool storage at the ports, the Government should provide a considerable amount of additional storage for cheese at Wellington and other centres. The information which was placed before us in connection with the matter bore out the urgency of the need for this accommodation being provided.