

give every assistance and encouragement to the movement. We were supplied with some very interesting information by the provincial secretary of the Taranaki Executive of the Farmers' Union regarding the formation of the clubs, also the work which had been done in this direction in the Taranaki District by the Union, and we decided to again urge upon the various bodies representing the agricultural interests the desirableness of doing all that was practicable to foster this movement, from which such good results had been obtained not only in the United States and Canada, but also in those portions of New Zealand where it had been tried. Farmers' Unions, agricultural and pastoral associations, and the Otago Expansion League were accordingly circularized.

CHAMPIONSHIP SHOW, AND PROPOSAL TO FORM ROYAL AGRICULTURAL SOCIETY.

We received a letter from you in reply to our representations in regard to the establishment of a championship show, expressing regret that in view of the continuance of the general financial stringency it was inevitable that consideration of this matter must stand over for some time, but that as soon as the financial position had eased sufficiently you would again bring the question before Cabinet. We regret that the proposal has had to be postponed meanwhile, but hope it will only be for a short length of time. As a result of assistance not being forthcoming from the Government, we understand that a movement has been set on foot by the Council of Agriculture for the purpose of establishing a Royal Agricultural Society, but that owing to the response to the circulars sent out the executive of the Council considered that the time was not opportune to press the proposal; it is therefore in abeyance in the meantime.

ISLAND QUARANTINE STATION FOR IMPORTED PLANTS.

We discussed with the Director-General of Agriculture a proposal for substituting a system of plant quarantine for the present method of controlling the importation of plants into New Zealand. We were informed that the proposal is supported by the New Zealand Nurserymen's Association and the New Zealand Fruitgrowers' Federation, but we decided before coming to a final decision in the matter, in view of the existing financial position, to ascertain what the cost would be of getting sufficient suitable accommodation for the proposed station at Motuihi Quarantine Island in Auckland Harbour.

PROPOSED LEGISLATION.

Dr. Reakes informed us that a fresh draft Seeds Bill was in course of preparation, which would replace the Bill previously drawn, and until the draft was ready to submit to the Board nothing further could be done in the matter beyond getting the feeling of farmers and others interested in the various districts regarding the desirableness of such a measure.

We discussed at length the proposed legislation in connection with the sale of seeds, and gave full consideration to the report of a conference held some time previously between representatives of the agricultural community and of seed-merchants, in which the Department of Agriculture also took part. The Board considers that it is essential that legislation should be passed, and trusts that it will be brought before Parliament this session in order that it might be circulated amongst farmers. An Act on this subject has been passed in Australia.

We were advised by Dr. Reakes that the Department did not intend to go on with the Fertilizers Bill as drafted, and which had already been submitted to us, but that it was proposed to bring in a Bill amending the present Act so as to make it a little more workable on the technical points of chemistry. We fully concur that the introduction of such legislation is necessary.

RURAL EDUCATION AND ESTABLISHMENT OF AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE.

The question of rural education and the establishment of an agricultural college was discussed by us, and it was decided that inquiries should be made with regard to the various legacies that have been bequeathed for the purpose of encouraging agricultural education. The bequests of the late Sir John Logan Campbell, Josiah Howard, and others were mentioned. It was resolved, "That the time has arrived when the preliminary steps should be taken to establish one or more farm schools in the North Island, which eventually would be paid for out of the different legacies which have been bequeathed for that purpose." The Board thinks that sketch-plans should be prepared for the buildings necessary for a school for fifty pupils, and submitted, together with an estimate of the cost, to the Board for consideration.

FREIGHT RATES ON STUD STOCK EXPORTED TO SOUTH AMERICA.

We have also given attention to the question of freight rates for stud stock to South American ports. Dr. Reakes reported that the Department had some time since approached the overseas shipping lines with a view of obtaining reductions in the freight rates on purebred stock, and this had resulted in the companies agreeing to carry sheep to Montevideo at six guineas net per head, with a minimum freight of £200; and cattle at £30 per head for the first five, £25 for the second, and all over ten at £20 each. It was thought that the export of purebred stock would be very much facilitated if the shipping companies could see their way to still further reduce these charges, and to strike out the condition with regard to the minimum freight of £200, which might prevent small shippers sending away stock. We requested Dr. Reakes to communicate with the shipping