

RUAKURA FARM SCHOOL.

Early this year Dr. Reakes advised the Board that a commencement had been made with the training of lads at Ruakura, and was proceeding quite satisfactorily. Forty youths were at present undergoing a course of instruction, and it was found that Mr. Smallfield, the resident instructor, required assistance to enable him to cope satisfactorily with the syllabus laid down, and a junior instructor was therefore being appointed.

RESOLUTIONS FROM COUNCIL OF AGRICULTURE.

The following resolutions, which were referred to us from last year's conference, were fully considered, and replies as set out hereunder have been sent:—

1. "Now that the country is in a better financial position the Government be urged to adopt a more progressive policy in regard to the training of future farmers."

Reply.—The principle of this remit was approved, and it was decided to advise the Hon. Minister of Agriculture accordingly. The Hon. Minister has now replied as follows:—

"While the Government realizes the necessity which exists for the provision of suitable facilities for the training of youths in agriculture, the financial position during the past few years has been such that funds could not be made available for the establishment of farm schools. However, as your Board is aware, a commencement has this year been made by the opening of one school at the Ruakura Farm of Instruction, and as additional funds become available it is hoped to extend the instructional work in this and other directions."

2. "That it is desirable that an official scheme be prepared and put into operation to carry out field experiments under uniform conditions."

3. "That Lincoln College, Cawthron Institute, and the Department's experts should meet and agree upon the technicalities of a concerted plan of experiments, such plans to be submitted to the Board of Agriculture."

Reply.—These matters were fully considered, and the Board was pleased to learn from Mr. A. H. Cockayne, Director of the Fields Division, that a conference had been arranged between the officers of the Department, the officers of Canterbury Agricultural College, and the Cawthron Institute to discuss the question of field experiments and promote a comprehensive scheme, such scheme to be submitted to the Department and the Board of Agriculture.

4. "That the executive of the New Zealand Council of Agriculture make an effort to secure a reduction in shipping freights on stud stock shipped to the Argentine."

Reply.—The Director-General of Agriculture advises me that he has received advice from the Chairman of the Overseas Shipping Committee to the effect that this matter has been carefully considered, but, in view of the fact that the rate on live-stock to the Argentine was considerably reduced early in 1922, it is regretted that at the present time it is not possible to consider further reductions.

5. "That the Conference requests the Board of Agriculture and the Department of Agriculture to take the necessary steps to endeavour to obtain the sanction of the British agricultural authorities to allow New-Zealand-bred stud stock to land in England."

Reply.—Dr. Reakes informed the Board that he had set out in a memorandum to the Hon. Minister of Agriculture the full position in regard to the introduction of New Zealand stock into Great Britain, and had represented how unfair was its operation against the Dominion, where animal-disease is so well controlled. He had pointed out that on account of the distance it was unlikely that stock would ever be shipped in any number, and that, as New Zealand obtains most of its stud stock from Great Britain, it was anomalous that we could not send stud animals there. The subject was to be discussed at the Imperial Economic Conference, and the Right Hon. the Prime Minister had taken this memorandum Home with him. It was decided to cable Mr. Massey stating that the Board was particularly anxious that he should press the British Government, through the Economic Conference, to modify the existing restrictions. A cable was despatched accordingly.

6. "That the time has now arrived when a scheme should be adopted whereby all draught stallions travelling or standing for hire in New Zealand should be licensed and subject to veterinary inspection by the officers of the Department of Agriculture."

Reply.—It was decided to advise the Hon. Minister of Agriculture that the Board had again had this matter under consideration, and that the Clydesdale Society was entirely in favour of the Bill as presented to the House in 1913, and that the Board trusts that next session he will be able to have it put through, in order that a much-needed improvement in the quality of draught horses may be brought about.

7. "That the question of cattle-tick in the North Island be considered. (Note.—I am instructed to direct the special attention of the Board to the transport of stock on the railways. It is understood that the Department of Agriculture has been endeavouring to arrange with the Railways to refuse to carry stock without permits, and, as there is considerable danger of the spread of tick through transportation on the railways, the Board's attention is specially directed to this point.)"

Reply.—This question was discussed with the Director-General of Agriculture, and it is evident that every possible precaution is being taken by the Department's officers to prevent the spread of cattle-tick from localities where it is at present known to exist. All cattle are required to be treated before being allowed to leave the affected "A" area. In the "B" or buffer area a special staff of officers is engaged in keeping a close supervision and to assist settlers in dealing effectively with ticks on any property upon which they are found. No cattle are allowed to leave these properties or their vicinity without first being properly treated to destroy any ticks which may possibly be upon them.