

ON THE LAND

The establishment of a Chair of Agriculture at Canterbury College was discussed by the North Canterbury Executive of the Farmers' Union at its recent meeting, when it was resolved to wait on the College Board and ask that a chair should be established. Mr. D. Jones said that New Zealand farmers were in a worse position in regard to agricultural education than the farmers of the most progressive countries. There had been some talk of a Chair of Forestry, and if the two subjects could be combined, it would be an excellent thing. The union could confidently ask the board to consider the proposal not only because Canterbury was the agricultural centre of New Zealand, but also because Canterbury College had large land endowments which would benefit by improved agricultural methods.

THE HONEY CROP: THE SEASON REVIEWED.

The Director of the Horticultural Division of the Department of Agriculture has received from the Apiary Instructors the following report concerning the honey crop prospects:—

Auckland.—Large quantities of honey for export are now arriving at the grading store in Auckland. The quality generally appears good. Local prices remain unchanged. Beeswax is in demand at from 2s to 2s 3d per lb.

Wellington. At the time of writing there is still a quantity of honey being gathered by the bees. The summer is likely to prove late in closing, thus giving a lengthened opportunity to the gatherers. The crop has been fair to good, and anything gathered from now onward will not materially affect the output. A number of small consignments are arriving at the grading stores for export. Prices are not so firm as formerly, owing to large consignments of Californian arriving on the English markets. Section honey is scarce, and beeswax is bringing 2s 3d per lb.

Christchurch and Dunedin.—The season is practically finished. Extracting is still engaging the attention of beekeepers in some districts, but the bulk of the crop has been secured. Consignments for export are now coming forward. As previously reported, the crop in Southland is a failure, consequently none is available for export. The quality of the honey this season is excellent, as is usual when the clover blooms freely. Prices are firm, sections to 8s 6d per dozen. Pat honey: None forward. Beeswax is in strong demand, and is quoted at 2s per lb.

WINTER FEED.

During the course of an article in the *Journal of the Department of Agriculture* Mr. A. McTaggart, M.Sc., A.C., writes:—

The provision of winter feed in quantity sufficient to carry live stock satisfactorily through that period of the year is a matter that should, particularly in certain districts, be given more consideration. In some parts the condition in which dairy cattle, for instance, struggle through to the spring is deplorable; and this is due to neglect on the part of their owners to provide the all-necessary winter feed. The climate of certain of these districts is highly suitable for the growing of suitable forage crops, and this is so to some extent

even in the winter period itself. Apart from the provision of such feed in the form of hay, ensilage, or roots (mangolds, swedes, and turnips), in most parts of the country arrangements may be made for the growing in winter of certain forage crops, and their possession during this period by any farmer can be turned to profitable use, whether for feeding dairy cattle, beef cattle, or sheep. Among such crops may be mentioned Buda kale, thousand-headed kale, emerald rye, and winter vetches, prairie grass (*bromus unioloides*) and crimson clover, Western Wolds rye-grass (for strong lands), oats and vetches, oats and field peas, and dun oats. The last-named and emerald rye and winter vetches are perhaps the only crops that will grow during the winter experienced in the southern districts of the Dominion, whereas all grow elsewhere during this period. With the climatic and soil fertility conditions possessed by New Zealand there should be no excuse for live stock to any extent wanting food. Most districts grow roots well, and where hay cannot be made ensilage can be provided. Where, owing to unforeseen circumstances or other causes, all three cannot be produced, winter feed, embracing certain of the crops mentioned, may still be grown.

Ensilage-making affords an economical means of conserving surplus feed, produced in seasons of good rainfall, for use during winter or during dry seasons that follow. In Australia ensilage has been kept for a period of ten years, and at the end of that period was still palatable and otherwise satisfying to stock. Such conserved fodder is of special value to prevailingly or seasonally dry sections of the country. The extensive practice of this principle of surplus-feed conservation and the adoption of ensilage-making generally in districts unsuited for haymaking, thus present further means of increasing the country's agricultural output.

Summer forage—in the form of maize, millets, sorghums, oats, and vetches, or oats and peas—serves to materially supplement the pasture when dried up somewhat in late summer and early autumn. This provision of abundance of succulent green feed for cutting and carting out to dairy cattle tends to keep up the milk-yield, and hence, if generally carried out, will considerably augment the output of dairy products throughout the Dominion. Lucerne produces the same stimulating effect, and is of great value in feeding in any form to all live stock, summer or winter. The growing of this fodder wherever possible throughout the country will vastly increase agricultural production, so palatable and nutritious is it to all kinds of farm animals. Its perennial supply of the most nourishing of animal foods, when once the crop is established, and its suitability for providing feed in form of pasture, green feed, hay, and ensilage, render it easily the most valuable forage crop in the agricultural world. Where lucerne cannot be grown successfully red clover can be substituted, also with excellent results.

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