

here is that the process is not commonly known, and that, consequently, capital seeks better ascertained outlets. The Commission recommend that bonuses should be offered through the agricultural associations in both Islands for the manufacture of starch.

Olives and Mulberries.

The evidence on the subject of the culture of the olive and of the mulberry for silkworms is almost purely speculative. There seems, however, to be little doubt that both could be pursued with advantage in some parts of New Zealand. The Government have already published some very valuable papers on this subject, and the Commission think that, in drawing public attention to those papers and to the evidence appended to this report, they will best further the prospect of the establishment of this industry, which can be pursued profitably even by cottagers and without any costly appliances. They would recommend that every encouragement should be offered to the cultivation of olive and mulberry trees under the Forest Trees Planting Encouragement Acts, and that if the law does not at present apply to these trees, it should be altered so as to compass them within its provisions.

Honey.

The production of honey of fine quality is shown to be a matter of much greater importance than would appear at first sight. The Commission desire to draw the attention of the various Acclimatization Societies, Agricultural and Pastoral Associations, and others to the evidence, showing that the introduction of the Ligurian bee is highly desirable on various grounds, particularly as a means of fertilizing clover.

DRAINAGE AND IRRIGATION.

Several representations of a very practical nature have been made to the Commission, and appear among the papers, on the subject of encouraging permanent agricultural improvements by drainage and irrigation; and the Commission desire strongly to express their opinion that any measure which would gain that object without detriment to the public revenue is well worthy of the consideration of the Legislature.

FORESTRY.

Closely connected with the subject of agricultural industries is that of forestry. The necessity for conserving the native forests, and replacing them by planting as they are cut down, is so obvious that it might be thought superfluous for the Commission to urge it here. The fact is, though, that while the importance of this subject is verbally admitted on all sides, yet no representations have hitherto been powerful enough to get a single practical step taken in connection with it. The Commission are convinced that if they can induce the Government at once to institute a scheme of forest conservation and plantation, even on a very unpretending scale, they will have achieved a great object. It seems most inconsistent for elaborate efforts to be made to anticipate private enterprise in fostering local industries of problematical feasibility, while the one great local industry for which nature has lavishly distributed the material amongst all the divisions of the colony, the one great local industry which properly is a subject for State control, is all but entirely neglected. The demand for forest products is constant and unlimited, and the forest industry is one which, more speedily almost than any other, peoples the district where it flourishes with a settled and thriving population. The wealth to be derived from an economical disposal of the forests is literally incalculable. Hitherto it has been wasted to the extent of hundreds of thousands if not millions sterling, and the waste is going on every day unaccompanied by any recuperative process whatever. This ought immediately to be arrested by measures being taken for protecting the Crown forests, placing the cutting of them under regulations, and planting the cleared areas with a new growth of useful trees. There appears to be really no difficulty in the way of all this being done. The system of forestry which has been in existence in Southland since the year 1874 answers its purpose very fairly, and not only is self-supporting, but brings in a considerable revenue. That system should be extended without any delay to all parts of the colony to which it is applicable. The