

1886.

NEW ZEALAND.

SCHOOL OF FORESTRY, POMOLOGY, AND AGRICULTURE

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO PROPOSED ORGANIZATION OF).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

Mr. W. DE G. REEVES to Mr. McKERROW.

General Crown Lands Office, Forest and Agricultural Branch,
Wellington, 15th April, 1886.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report that, according to your instructions, I visited Whangarei on the 5th March for the purpose of examining the Kioreroa Block, lately the Whangarei High School Reserve, with the view of reporting on its capabilities as a site for a school of agriculture. I called on Mr. R. Thompson, Chairman of Whangarei County Council, who very kindly offered to show me over the block. I took advantage of this offer, and rode over a large part of the land in company with Mr. Thompson.

This block of land consists of about four thousand acres, and lies about two miles south of the Township of Whangarei, with a good road running through it, cutting it into two unequal parts. That lying to the east of the road, approximately about six hundred acres, is nearly flat, with a general inclination to the north-east, where a small creek runs into the harbour. In places, mostly near this creek, the soil is of fairly good character, but the greater part would want draining before it would be much good. The draining could be easily done by means of open ditches, as there is a good fall from all parts into the creek. At the southern end of the block are some high hills covered with bush, and lateral spurs run from these hills in a northerly direction, with nicely-sheltered valleys between, having good aspects, and mostly of a good soil. Some of them, in fact, have a great deal of limestone, as the rock crops out in numerous places at the heads of the small gullies. The land generally is covered with fern and tea-tree scrub; and the soil, except in the gullies, very light and thin, lying on a cold, hungry-looking clay, which wants working well before any fair return could be obtained from it.

I should think that the land, climate, and neighbourhood were admirably suited for a school of forestry, and where experiments in the growing of the best varieties suitable to the surrounding districts of all kinds of fruits, and the introduction of new kinds, might be carried on side by side with the forestry work, as well as experiments in the best means of eradicating the numerous blights that at present are so destructive to the orchards all over the colony, and be of immense benefit to the largely-increasing body of fruit-growers.

A school of agriculture would, I think, be out of place in this district, where the conditions of farming and the climate are so different from the rest of the colony; and it would be hard work to induce pupils from other parts of the colony to undergo a course of study in a place that is suited for little else than growing fruits, tobacco, and maize. It is most important that a school of some sort should be instituted where practical training could be obtained in the best modes of raising fruit, tobacco, and numerous other sub-tropical plants, and of combating the blights peculiar to them, as there is no doubt that fruit- and tobacco-growing are destined to play a very important part in the future of farming in the northern part of the North Island.

Mr. McKerrow.

I have, &c.,

W. DE G. REEVES.

No. 2.

REPORT ON THE KIOREROA BLOCK AS A SITE FOR THE PROPOSED SCHOOL OF FORESTRY,
POMOLOGY, AND AGRICULTURE.—(T. KIRK, F.L.S.)

THIS block, which has been set apart as a site for a school of forestry (section 24, "New Zealand State Forest Act, 1885") is situate about one mile from the Township of Whangarei, the eastern extremity of the block being closely adjacent to the railway wharf.

Extent, Boundaries.—The block contains 3,891 acres, and is of most irregular outline, so that the cost of fencing will be unusually heavy. Its greatest length is about five miles from