

timber have been destroyed by fire, and some portions are covered by fern or scrub. Most of the land is of good quality. In the immediate vicinity a section of good volcanic land, comprising about seventy acres, would be available for experimental purposes, for which it appears specially adapted, the lower portion being level, the upper part forming the base of a low hill. At present it is covered with forest, which, however, is of a light character. The open land in the reserves might be made available for farming operations, planting, &c., with but little delay. Altogether, the site is well adapted to the purposes of a school of forestry and agriculture. It is approached by a fairly good road, which is now undergoing improvement; but the position is not equal to that of the Kioreroa Block. As it is situated nearly fourteen miles from Whangarei railway-station, the cost of carriage would form a serious item in the working expenses of the school.

A site at the Bay of Islands appears to offer certain advantages, especially with regard to experiments in the introduction and testing of sub-tropical economic plants. It is, however, limited to 250 acres, which would not be sufficient for the purpose of a joint school of forestry and agriculture. I regret to say that, owing to the brief space of time at my disposal, I was unable to ascertain its capabilities.

No. 3.

Mr. T. KIRK to the Hon. J. BALLANCE.

General Crown Lands Office, Forest and Agricultural Branch,
Wellington, 9th June, 1886.

SIR,—

In compliance with your instructions, I have the honour to submit a memorandum on the organization of a school of forestry, pomology, and agriculture. I hope that the addition of pomology to the arts named in your instructions will meet with approval. I have endeavoured to show a way of rendering the institution self-supporting within a reasonable period, and would request particular attention to this portion of the scheme, even if you should consider other parts of the plan too expensive to be adopted at present. The proposed plantations would realize a permanent income of £600 per annum within eight years. Should it be considered desirable on grounds of economy, the school might be started with a small staff—say, general manager, forester and gardener, and superintendent of farm-labour. This course could not be recommended, as it would be impossible to turn out good foresters, fruit-growers, or farmers with such a limited amount of theoretical teaching. The experiment has been tried in Melbourne with a school of agriculture, where it is stated to have proved a costly failure.

I have, &c.,

T. KIRK,

Chief Conservator of State Forests.

The Hon. J. Ballance.

MEMORANDUM on the Organization of a SCHOOL of FORESTRY, POMOLOGY, and AGRICULTURE. By T. KIRK, F.L.S.

So far as the Kioreroa Block is concerned, the 24th section of "The New Zealand State Forest Act, 1885," provides that the site shall become vested in the Commissioner of State Forests on the opening of a school of forestry and agriculture on the block. It is therefore necessary in the first place to consider the formation of either joint or separate schools of forestry and agriculture.

In a report on the suitability of this block for the purposes stated I have pointed out the great advantages arising from its position, specially considered with regard to forestry. Its accessibility, and the varied character of its surface, with the variety of surface-soil, afford equal advantages for the establishment of a school of agriculture, although the soil is not of the best quality. The most serious drawback is the absence of a few acres of really first-class soil. This, however, more directly affects the experiments which it is proposed to carry on in the culture of sub-tropical economic plants, but is of much less importance from an agricultural point of view. It is, moreover, a defect which could be remedied at a small outlay.

The rapid development of fruit-culture in the colony, and the important position which it is fast attaining as a leading industry, render it most advisable that its pursuit should be encouraged as far as possible without undue interference on the part of the State. It is therefore proposed that the school should afford facilities for acquiring a comprehensive knowledge of pomology, in addition to forestry and agriculture. Instruction in this important branch of industry may be given without any increase in the cost of the teaching-staff.

With regard to the formation and characteristics of soils, their working and management, drainage, &c., teaching would be identical in all the branches. So also, to a certain extent, with the nature and requirements of plant and animal life, animal and vegetable physiology, the general teaching would be identical, although important differences would occur in detailed teaching. Up to a certain point, therefore, the general course of teaching would be practically the same in all three subjects—a matter which will be found of great assistance in commencing work.

At the outset it ought to be laid down that no student should be admitted who fails to pass an entrance examination based upon the sixth primary-school standard. Students should be