

paratively small cost; and agricultural colleges have been established by various County Councils at very large expense, scholarships being freely granted in all departments of the work.

If agriculture and dairying are ever to be brought to that comparative state of perfection to which other arts have already attained, it will only be by making use, as others have done, of the many aids which science offers; and if the practical man is ever to realise upon his farm all the advantages which science is capable of putting within his reach, it will only be when he has become so far acquainted with the art by which he lives, and the sciences, especially that of chemistry, as to be prepared to listen to the suggestions these are ready to make to him, and to attach the proper value to the explanations of his various processes which they are capable of affording. The advantages of the study of science in relation to agriculture are now becoming more fully appreciated, thanks to the system of technical instruction which is available in most centres, and it behoves this colony to offer every possible information and assistance in the science of agriculture to the farmers.

FARM OR INTERMEDIATE AGRICULTURAL SCHOOLS.

The Canterbury Agricultural College already attends to the higher branches of instruction—is, in fact, our Agricultural University; but to the bulk of our youths such a course as is there given is financially beyond them. An intermediate course would, I venture to say, be of great advantage. The results obtained by the farm-schools of Preston, Crewe, Bedford, and Leeds lead me to suggest the adoption of similar schools in New Zealand.

These schools would, if established, form a connecting link from the primary schools to the Agricultural College, where scholarships obtained at the farm-schools might be tenable. As an instance, I might suggest the Wairarapa as one suitable district in the North Island. The Town Lands Trust of Masterton is in an excellent position to carry out such a scheme. Surely it would be possible to obtain from the large landowners of the district a sufficient area of land either as a loan for the benefit of education or at a nominal rental. I cannot do better than briefly describe the farm-schools of France, so ably reported on by the late Mr. Jenkins on behalf of the Royal Commission on Technical Education, and the schools at Preston, Bedford, and Holmes Chapel.

Mr. Jenkins's report states that these schools have in France been established for over thirty years—this was in 1884. There were at that time twenty-three schools in operation. They are of special interest on account of their being the means whereby a certain number of young men, sons of labourers and small farmers, receive a fair amount of scientific and general instruction, and a good practical training in farm-work, free of cost to their parents. The pupils are really apprentices, and are bound to serve with the director for two or three years as the case may be. The number of apprentices varies according to the extent of the farm and the nature of the agriculture of the district. Thus in a pastoral district there must not be more than one apprentice to from 12 to 15 acres, but where the growth of cereals is the principal object as many as thirty apprentices may be received on a farm of 250 acres, and in small farm districts a relatively large number may be allotted to a certain acreage. The number of apprentices must, however, never be less than twenty-four. Besides these agricultural apprentices, each farm-school may receive three garden-apprentices, who must be attached exclusively to the garden and the nursery-ground.

It is most essential that the number of apprentices shall never be too great for the area of the farm, so that there shall be sufficient farm-work for them to do; it is also considered desirable that the apprentices shall be sufficiently numerous to avoid the necessity of employing any resident labour. In any case, the apprentices are bound to work exactly like paid labourers, according to their strength and knowledge.

Apprentices are received at the age of sixteen. The following is the staff: One inspector-accountant, one farm-bailiff, one garden-nurseryman, one veterinary surgeon.

The State makes an allowance of £10 16s. per annum towards the keep of each apprentice. At the termination of the apprenticeship the young men who have acquitted themselves in a satisfactory manner receive a certificate of apprenticeship, with a present of £12 or £24, according to the length of their apprenticeship, this amount being supposed to represent what they might have saved out of their wages during that time if they had been paid as ordinary indoor farm-servants. The director is absolute master of the establishment, and can discharge and appoint the members of his staff. His farm must give the apprentices the best professional education, and must be a model to the whole district as a profitable example of cultivation. In his school he must explain in the most simple manner the most important operations, both practically and theoretically, while avoiding the discussion of ideas that are speculative or recondite. He is, in fact, enjoined to confine himself to explanations of occurrences and processes that take place before the eyes of the apprentices, and always to bear in mind that the object of the farm-school is to make good cultivators, not men of science.

The director is further bound as follows: (1.) To keep a regular set of books, as far as possible by double-entry, and constantly posted up to date. (2.) To submit his books in their entirety to the examination of the persons appointed by the Government for that purpose. (3.) To send to the Minister for Agriculture in the first two months of each year a statement of the results of his farming operations during the preceding twelve months, accompanied by the annual inventory. (4.) To send within the first ten days of each month a bulletin of the proceedings on the farm and in the school. Further, if the Government should be of opinion that, taking a sufficient lapse of time into consideration, the profit of the farming is less, on the whole, than that of other farms in the neighbourhood, it reserves to itself the right to withdraw its authorisation of the holding being termed a farm-school.

The duties of the staff are: (1.) The inspector-accountant must teach the apprentices as simple a form of book-keeping as is possible, having due regard to efficiency; and he must complete their elementary education as regards land-surveying, cubic measure, levelling, &c. He must