

pose it will be necessary to procure as instructors men specially trained in the higher branches of agriculture and with a thorough knowledge of stock. In this connection the aim of the Minister of Agriculture is to establish at least one agricultural college in each Island, on the lines of the Hawkesbury Agricultural College in New South Wales and the College at Dookie in Victoria, and the Government believes this can be done without materially increasing the annual expenditure of the Agricultural Department. There is no intention to come into competition or interfere with the excellent work which is being done by the Lincoln Agricultural College. Very moderate fees will be charged to the students, but it is intended to make an arrangement by which scholarships for higher agricultural education may be tenable at our agricultural colleges, or, in the meantime, at our farms of instruction. In the way of opportunities for education in higher agricultural methods New Zealand has up to the present been behind other English-speaking countries, but Parliament will be given the opportunity of removing this drawback.

In this connection it is fitting that mention should be made of the munificent bequest of the late Sir John Logan Campbell, of Auckland, the terms of whose will provide for a sum of £20,000 being set aside as an endowment to the Council of the Auckland University College for the purpose of founding a Professorship of Agriculture. It may be stated that the late Sir John Logan Campbell was firmly convinced that agriculture would continue to be the main source of wealth to the Dominion, and that it was most desirable that our young settlers should be taught through the medium of the University of New Zealand to carry on the calling of farmers and graziers on a scientific basis. This splendid benefaction will be a lasting monument to Sir John Logan Campbell's patriotism and public spirit.

NATIVE-LAND SETTLEMENT.

A fair amount of activity has been shown in the settlement of Native land under Part XVIII of the Native Land Act of 1909, particulars of which will be found in the valuable report of the Under-Secretary for Native Affairs, already laid on the table of the House. It is with regard to the area of 966,355 acres vested in the Maori Land Boards under Parts XIV, XV, and XVI of the Act for European and Native settlement that the speeding-up process is necessary. The Presidents of the various Boards have been instructed to furnish exhaustive reports on the suitability for settlement and otherwise of the blocks vested in their respective Boards. Next session proposals will be submitted to Parliament which it is hoped will ensure the speedy settlement of these blocks by both Europeans and Natives, and will also facilitate the settlement of other Native lands, while duly conserving the interests of the Natives themselves. A Bill will be introduced this session amending, where it has been found necessary, the Act of 1909.

EDUCATION.

The average attendance in the public schools of the Dominion was greater during the year 1911 than in any previous year, reaching 142,186, or 6,448 more than that for the year 1910; the increase (which is still going on rapidly) was due partly to the increase of population, and partly to the effects of the more stringent provisions as to school attendance included in the Education Amendment Act, 1908. It is estimated that the average attendance for the current year will be nearly, if not quite, 148,000. A further step towards the improvement of the staffing of schools allowed by the Act just named was taken by substituting adult teachers for pupil-teachers in schools of certain grades. From all these causes it is necessary to augment considerably the amount provided for the salaries of teachers and for grants to Education Boards.

There are also large increases in the number of pupils holding free places in secondary schools and in the number attending classes for manual and technical instruction, and a consequent increase in the amounts asked for under these heads.

The Report of the Education Commission was laid upon the table of the House this afternoon. There will not be time this session to give it the careful consideration it deserves, and the Government has decided to defer until next session any legislation which may be necessary as a result of the Commission's labours.