

investigation. As our production is practically dependent on the growth of grass, any improvement upon the existing varieties or any new grasses being made available or known must be of great consequence to New Zealand. The lucerne experiments should certainly be continued. It would be of great advantage if some demonstration plots could be grown in various localities on the west coast.

*Arataki, Hawke's Bay. (70 acres.)*

This farm is of small area, and was originally stated to demonstrate that vines could be successfully grown in that district, and for the growth of phylloxera-resistant stock. Now that vine-growing has been taken up by the public there is no further use for the demonstration, and the vines could with advantage be disposed of and the land used for other purposes. The orchard should be retained, as there are large quantities of fruit grown in the district. The Manager of the farm should consult with the fruitgrowers' association in the neighbourhood to ascertain what experiments could be carried out to solve the problems of the fruitgrowers of the district.

One very important work which might with advantage be undertaken, and which we have already alluded to, is the growing of drought- and frost-resisting grasses and plants for grazing purposes. One of the disadvantages of the Hawke's Bay climate is that it is subject to late frosts, which in some seasons cause a great deal of damage. Pumpkins, for instance, can be grown easily, but a frost may completely destroy the grown crop. Here again much benefit would be gained by the experiments were a committee of the practical men of the district being consulted as to their direction.

*Te Kawwhata. (2,842 acres.)*

In connection with the wine-growing and wattle-bark industries at this farm it is well to remember that these farms are run quite differently from any other business. A farmer puts his receipts into the bank and draws upon them as necessity arises, and at the end of the year (if he is a wise man) he makes a statement of his position. In the case of the Government farms the receipts go direct into the Consolidated Fund, and before any money can be drawn out of that fund a vote must be passed by the House. As this vote must not be exceeded, the returns which would be made by an ordinary farmer are liable to be curtailed. In this case the wattles require to be cut down and the bark stripped and crushed, which entails considerable expenditure. It is quite possible that funds may not be available for that purpose, and this may be the explanation of why one year the wattle plantation shows a large profit and in another a loss. This is a further proof that a Government experimental farm should not be put to commercial uses. It would be much better, therefore, for the Government to get rid of the portions of the farm devoted to these purposes. Should it be decided to sell the plantation a shelter-belt of wattle on the western side of the road should be left.

There is a balance of about 400 acres which is suitable for fruitgrowing, and this might be planted at once with proper fruit-trees which have been proved to be successful in the district. A small area of grass should be retained with the fruit-trees, and the farms disposed of as hitherto. In connection with this, however, it is important to note that the Board is not satisfied that the Government has been selling the land at a payable price, and very careful consideration should be given to this before the land is disposed of. Naturally the land should be cut up into such areas as would be most likely to sell as fruit-farms, and only those varieties of apples planted which are suitable for export and such pear-trees as are known to suit the district and the market. The whole farm might then be disposed of, and the funds devoted to fruit-farms in suitable districts, as is suggested elsewhere in this report.

*Weraroa. (800 acres.)*

This farm was originally bush land, and has been nearly all reclaimed, stumped, and the greater part ploughed. The land is of excellent quality, too good for experimental purposes, and in the midst of a very populous and thriving dairy district. It was stated to visiting members of the Board that this farm could be sold at from £60 to £65 per acre. What few experiments were tried before the present Manager took charge have been lost sight of, and no records retained. The dairy cattle there of the Grigg strain are undoubtedly valuable, but the Board was not impressed with the appearance of the American cattle, despite the fact that they might have been bred from strains having high milking records in America. It is thought that it would be much better to continue the Longbeach strain in itself, discarding the American sires as not being suitable mates for the New Zealand cows. The original Longbeach Dutch-Friesian cattle were bought in one small neighbourhood between Groningen and Leuwarden in Friesland, North of Holland, and were peculiar to that district only. It is quite likely, therefore, that the American strain may be almost considered a different breed, for we are assured that the farmers from whom the Longbeach cattle were bought were much averse to having their cattle called "Holsteins."

It is considered that the Manager should be allowed greater discretion in the mating of the cows, as he is responsible for the success of the herd.

As already stated, we think the Illawarra dairy cattle should be sent to Ruakura.

The stud Romneys should be sold and the Ryeland flock combined with that at Moumahaki, and kept either there or at Ruakura, whichever is the more convenient. The stud sheep should be replaced by ordinary commercial sheep and lamb-fattening resorted to.

The horses on the farms are a good lot, but rather many are kept for the amount of cultivation done.

The orchard is much too extensive. It might be cut down with considerable advantage and only sufficient retained for domestic purposes, and the land put to other and more profitable occupation.