

"We again emphasize that the producers should make all necessary preparations to meet whatever position may arise in the carrying-over of stock through the coming winter.

"JAS. G. WILSON,

"President, Board of Agriculture.

"WM. FERGUSON,

"Chairman, National Efficiency Board.

"The Hon. W. D. S. MacDonald, Minister of Agriculture, Wellington."

PURCHASE OF WOOL-CLIP BY THE IMPERIAL GOVERNMENT.

In connection with the purchase of the wool-clip by the Imperial Government the following resolution was passed and forwarded to you:—

"That, from the full information that has been placed at the disposal of the Board of Agriculture regarding the wool position, the Board wish to express their satisfaction with the terms offered by the Imperial Government, and to state that they consider that the acceptance of this offer by our Government is in the best interests of the Dominion."

FLOCK-BOOK REGISTRATION MATTERS.

We received a letter from the New Zealand Sheep-breeders' Association (South Island) stating that the council of the association was of opinion that the system of having one flock-book for each Island, containing under one cover the purebred flocks of all breeds, with reciprocation between the two associations, was the ideal system for New Zealand, certain breeds being distributed over the whole Dominion. We were advised, too, that the association was heartily in accord with the proposal that a National Live-stock Association be formed with representatives from the several breed associations. We discussed this proposal, and made the following recommendation:—

"That both the North Island and the South Island Sheep-breeders' Associations be communicated with, and it be suggested to them—

"(a.) That the South Island Association take over and include in its flock-book all the flocks of the following breeds now appearing in the North Island flock-book—namely, English Leicester, Border Leicester, Shropshire, and Ryeland;

"(b.) That the Southdown flocks be retained in the North Island flock-book, the flocks of this breed appearing in the South Island flock-book to be transferred to the North Island book; and

"(c.) That the Lincoln flocks at present registered in the South Island flock-book be transferred to the New Zealand Lincoln flock-book."

It was pointed out to both associations that the adoption of these suggestions would give effect to the resolution unanimously agreed to at the meeting of representatives of all the breed societies in the Dominion held with the Board last year, and subsequently endorsed by the Council of Agriculture at its 1918 conference.

Uniformity of Flock-book Rules.

As mentioned in our last report, the sub-committee which had been appointed to draw up a uniform set of rules for the flock-books of New Zealand submitted a draft. The draft as finally agreed to, of which a copy is appended, was forwarded to the various sheep-breeders' associations with a recommendation that it be adopted by the associations concerned.

EARMARKING AND BRANDING OF STOCK.

Three schemes for earmarking stock were referred to us, and we were also asked for an opinion regarding a suggestion from the Live-stock Division of the Department of Agriculture that earmarking-pliers should be standardized, and supplied to stockowners in the Dominion through the Department at cost price. A sub-committee was set up for the purpose of investigating and reporting upon these matters, and as a result of the report submitted by it we passed a resolution recommending the adoption of the earmarking system suggested by Mr. Bruce, Assistant Director of the Live-stock Division. We also endorsed the resolutions passed in September, 1916, at a meeting of Registrars of Brands, with the following additions—viz., That marks under the present system be retained, and that approved age-marking be allowed on the back or front of the free ear, or a mark to identify bought sheep.

NOXIOUS WEEDS ACT AMENDMENT.

Dr. Reakes laid before us a draft of a Bill amending the Noxious Weeds Act, 1908. The Bill as drafted placed on the local authority the onus of deciding what weeds in the schedule should be noxious weeds within its jurisdiction. Dr. Reakes suggested that it would be better to place the onus of taking any weeds out of the compulsory schedule upon the local authorities, and with this view members agreed. It was also agreed that horehound and inkweed should be included in the schedule. After the provisions of the Bill had been fully gone into it was decided to forward to you the following resolution:—

"That the Bill as drafted be agreed to provided that it be amended in the manner suggested by Dr. Reakes. The Board are also of opinion that, as it frequently happens that in one part of a district it would be useless to enforce the Act whilst in another part there is great necessity for its strict enforcement, clause 5 (c) of the Act should be amended giving the local authority the power to declare the provisions of the Act to be in force in such portions of the district under its jurisdiction as it considers necessary that they should be enforced in for the time being."