

countries, very large, about one in every five of the adult male population being in this way possessed of a permanent stake in the country. The extent of cultivated land (exclusive of gardens attached to residences, and native holdings) enumerated in March, 1886, was 4,231,700 acres, and in February, 1886, the number of holdings was 37,658. The exports of agricultural and farm produce increased from £262,930 in 1875 to £1,157,603 in 1887. The exports of dairy-produce alone have more than doubled within the last three years.

The average yield of wheat for the year 1887-88—a bad year—was 22·94 bushels per acre for the whole colony, the average for the last five years being 27·62 bushels per acre. For Otago the average yield was 29·84 bushels, for Canterbury 24·83 bushels, for Wellington 26·58 bushels. The average yield of other produce for the same year (1887-88) for the whole colony was—oats, 31·24 bushels per acre; barley, 26·26 bushels per acre; potatoes, 5·44 tons per acre.

Respecting the quality of New Zealand grain, the opinion of an independent authority outside the colony is both interesting and valuable. The following remarks are taken from reports on the colonial sections of the Colonial and Indian Exhibition, 1886.* “The average produce of over 26 bushels per acre of wheat, of over 27 bushels of barley, and of over 32 bushels of oats, demonstrates the fertility of the soil, and places New Zealand in the position of being among the most prolific countries in the world. A large number of other samples were shown, such as Pearl wheat, weighing as much as 66½lb.; Tuscan wheat, 67lb.; Tuscan white, purple straw, 69lb.; Velvet Chaff, 67lb. These weights show the excellence of the quality. In fact, nothing finer than these wheats has probably been seen. The wheats of commerce which are shipped to England do not approach in quality these fine specimens. The samples of barley were simply magnificent, and such barleys as the Chevalier would bring enormous prices in England. In the quality of its oats, again, New Zealand is in the front rank. The samples of potato oats are unsurpassable. Whether such splendid grain as is here exhibited is common and can be obtained in quantity is doubtful; but, still, the fact remains that in all the chief grains New Zealand has shown by these samples a production of superb quality, and in prolific quantities.”

Manufactures.

The manufacturing industry has steadily advanced in importance during the last decade. In 1878 the total number of industries was 942, while in 1886 the total number of manufacturing establishments had risen to 2,268, employing 25,655 persons; the capital invested amounting to £5,697,117, and the produce amounting to £7,436,649. The more important manufacturing industries are naturally associated with the staple products of the colony—as, for example, saw-mills and sash-and-door manufactories; grain-mills; fellmongering, tanning, currying, and wool-scouring; meat freezing, preserving and boiling-down works; woollen mills, soap-and-candle works, quartz-crushing batteries, &c.

With regard to the tanning and currying industry of New Zealand, the following remarks concerning some exhibits at the recent Colonial and Indian Exhibition, taken from the work previously mentioned, may be found interesting: “The best Victorian and New Zealand tannages also have now a particularly bright colour, and the leather, when used for soles of boots, competes very closely in finish with good English tannages. . . . The New Zealand leather partakes more of the character of the Victorian tannages, and possesses the extra advantage of being tanned from stouter pelts, the New Zealand hides being much better grown, more compact, and of smaller pattern than Melbourne hides. . . . There is one point, however, that is a chronic and great defect in Australian and New Zealand leather—viz., the flaying is generally very defective.” The official reports also refer very favourably to some soap of New Zealand manufacture shown at the same Exhibition: “In New Zealand, Messrs. Hjorth and Co. showed the best toilet-soap by far in the Exhibition. Most of the qualities were milled, and in quality nearly, if not quite, equal to French manufacture.”

Conclusion.

Some attempt has been made in the foregoing introduction to give, within the limited space at command, a very brief sketch of the development and present condition of New Zealand.

The exhibits in the New Zealand Courts only afford an imperfect indication of the results achieved by the colony during its comparatively short period of existence; but a short summary of what has been accomplished may be stated in a few lines.

A mere handful of settlers has, since 1840, grown into a people numbering not far short of seven hundred thousand—a people that, thanks partly to good qualities inherent in the parent stock, and partly to the healthy climate and other favourable conditions of life, can creditably compare with any other race in the world. The beautiful and fertile islands of New Zealand have been traversed in all directions by roads and railways; land to the extent of nearly seven millions of acres has been brought into a partial or complete state of cultivation; and the natural resources of the country generally have been so well developed as to allow of a surplus, after supplying all local wants, amounting to over £6,000,000, being annually exported to other countries, the total value of products exported since the year 1853 amounting to £144,000,000.

The imposition of a property-tax of late years has enabled the collection of statistics which bear on the accumulation of wealth which has taken place in New Zealand during the fifty years of its existence. It appears that the tabulated value of real and personal property in the colony is over £218,000,000 sterling. This, divided by the population at the date of the rate, gives a sum of £373 per head. Against this must be placed the total indebtedness, public and private, in the colony, which amounts to a sum equal to £5 £150 per head. This leaves a surplus of £223 per head of population. As liberal exemptions are made in the collection of the property-tax, the actual rateable value taxed is only £102,000,000, the tax upon which is paid by 28,000 persons, holding an average of £3,643 each.

* H. Trueman Wood, editor. William Clowes and Sons, London, 1887.