

NEW ZEALAND BRANCH, COMMERCIAL INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE,
LONDON.

The Government has appointed the Secretary for Industries and Commerce as corresponding Representative in New Zealand to the above department of the Board of Trade. This opportunity of exchanging commercial information is of the greatest value to the commerce and industries of the colony. It is to be hoped that all commercial and industrial classes of the community will take the fullest advantage of the opportunity thus offered to obtain and exchange commercial information. The Department is supplying free to all Chambers of Commerce in the colony regular weekly issues of the *Board of Trade Journal*, where it will be available for reference, and also at the Head Office, Brandon Street, Wellington.

In conjunction with the Commercial Intelligence Branch of the British Board of Trade, arrangements have been made with the Imperial Institute to co-operate in giving information with regard to inquiries of a technical character. This gives the colony an opportunity to take advantage of the laboratories of the Scientific and Technical Department of the Imperial Institute for the purpose of chemical analysis and investigation.

TRADE REPRESENTATIVE, MR. J. G. GOW.

On the 25th March, 1901, Mr. J. G. Gow was appointed Trade Representative for the colony of New Zealand, with instructions to proceed to all parts of the colony with the object of meeting producers and manufacturers, and to obtain information and samples to enable him to bring prominently before the commercial communities of South Africa, India, China, Japan, and elsewhere the products and manufactures of this colony. After spending about five months in different parts of New Zealand acquiring the necessary information and samples, Mr. Gow sailed for South Africa, *via* Australia, on the 17th August last, reaching Natal on the 7th October. Mr. Gow remained in South Africa until the 9th December, during which time he visited most of the important commercial centres in South Africa, and had interviews with the representative commercial men at each place, eventually sailing for London, and reporting himself to the Agent-General on the 9th January of this year. Up to the end of February Mr. Gow was engaged with the distributors of New Zealand produce in London, and in visiting the principal merchants of Bristol and Cardiff, leaving London again on the 10th March to visit Manchester and other towns in England, proceeding thence to Scotland. On the 3rd April Mr. Gow was instructed to proceed to Calcutta and China, thence to Japan.

As soon as Mr. Gow's full report is available, the Department propose to print the same in pamphlet form and circulate it fully amongst the commercial community, Chambers of Commerce, farmers' unions, and other kindred associations. Good results should follow the circulation of Mr. Gow's report, which ought to give a lot of practical information regarding the possibilities of the extension of our foreign trade. Attached are interim reports from Mr. Gow, dated Durban, Natal, 7th and 18th October; and Cape Town, 4th December, 1901; and London, 7th March and 12th April, 1902; also letters addressed to Mr. Gow from Captain Simpson, 24th September; and Mitchell, Cotts, and Co., Durban, 15th and 17th October, and Cape Town, 4th December, 1901.

DIRECT STEAM-SERVICE TO SOUTH AFRICA.

Tenders closing on the 14th February were invited for this service, but unfortunately only two tenders were received, neither being exactly on the lines indicated in the advertisement. This has led to negotiations being carried on, which have not yet resulted in a complete agreement.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

Early in October last, at the cabled request of the Premier of Western Australia, Mr. F. T. Boys was instructed to proceed to Perth to give evidence before a Select Committee sitting there to consider the food-supplies of Western Australia, the particular mission of Mr. Boys being to bring under the notice of the Committee the ability of this colony to supply frozen and canned meats, butter, cheese, potatoes, oats, hams and bacon, and tinned fish. The evidence before the Committee was mainly directed to the supplies of fresh meat, and it was generally conceded that under certain conditions a considerable trade in frozen meat could be established between this colony and Western Australia, the first essential condition being direct transport from New Zealand to Fremantle; second, the rebate of the tariff at present existing. Once these conditions prevailed, the question of establishing a market in Western Australia could be safely left in the hands of the merchants of New Zealand and of Western Australia.

At present the principal item of export from New Zealand to Western Australia is oats, of which, during 1901, 6,400 tons was shipped consigned to Western Australia for transhipment at Sydney and Melbourne. This does not include oats purchased in New Zealand by Melbourne and Sydney merchants and ultimately forwarded to Western Australia, which would probably amount to one-third of the quantity consigned direct.

At the conclusion of Mr. Boys's evidence the Chairman of the Select Committee addressed him as follows: "Mr. Boys, I am sorry myself that the prospects of the object of your visit are considerably discounted by the introduction of the Federal tariff. For my own part, when I was a Federal candidate I expressed the hope that we should see some reciprocity of trade between New Zealand and Australia. I see no provision for that in the tariff that has been put before the Parliament by the Federal Ministry. However, there is one thing, that this tariff may have many modifications, and if it has I only express the hope that this modification will be of the kind to enable the products of New Zealand to find their way on to the markets of Australia, with the chances of competing with the products coming from other States of Australia. I am sure I am only re-echoing the sentiments of the Committee when I say we are much obliged to the Government of New Zealand, and to you, particularly, for coming here giving us this valuable testimony on the very important question intrusted to this Committee.

Mr. Boys's report is attached (see Appendix F).