

THE FROZEN-MEAT TRADE.

Mr. F. T. Moore, of Johnsonville, has been employed to write a report on the meat-export trade of the colony, with special reference to the different prices of sheep and cattle in the different localities, and why such differences exist; the whole subject to be treated with the greatest care after having carefully investigated and obtained the fullest information possible by personal visits to each producing district in the colony. When Mr. Moore's report is completed it is proposed to publish it in pamphlet form and circulate it amongst all those interested in the meat-export trade of the colony.

Considerable discussion on this trade is being carried on in the colony at present, and suggestions are being made that all the freezing-works should be run on co-operative lines in the interests of farmers, and in some instances State control is strongly advocated. Whatever may be the merits of these different schemes, there can be no doubt that the distribution and selling of frozen meat should be put on a better footing than it is at present. In my opinion, the number of ports of discharge should be materially increased and the number of consignees reduced. At the present time the New Zealand frozen-meat industry is responsible for the existence in London of quite a number of meat merchants, brokers, and salesmen, who compete against one another in the disposal of meat from this colony, with the result that prices are often unnecessarily depressed, besides which the expense of salaries and commission directly and indirectly borne by the producer must be considerable.

In my opinion steps should be taken to secure the discharge of frozen meat at Liverpool, Bristol, Manchester, and Glasgow, and also at South African ports. This would relieve the pressure in London, open up other extensive markets, and to some extent do away with the enormous number of London brokers and salesmen, who, by their competitive efforts, are prejudicing the values that should obtain. By making London the one port of discharge it is no doubt a great advantage to the steamboat companies who freight the meat, yet freights on this product are no lower, relatively, from New Zealand to London than from those countries which have the opportunity of shipping their meat to other ports. Unless some combination is effected regarding the disposal of New Zealand meat, the Government should, in my opinion, for the benefit of producers, consider the situation with a view to bringing about better conditions both as regards disposal and regulation of supplies. Any increase in the number of ports of delivery of frozen meat would carry the same advantages to our exports of butter, cheese, frozen rabbits, flax, and other produce.

CONCLUSION.

There seems to be a desire on the part of the commercial community of the colony to take advantage of the existence of this Department to obtain information referring to matters of trade and commerce both inside and outside of the colony, the number of inquiries being received from outside the colony on matters referring to the possibilities of trade and different colonial industries having been very numerous. Notwithstanding that the Department is quite in its infancy, the work done during the past year has been very considerable, and the efforts of its small staff have been severely taxed.

The attached letters are specimens of acknowledgment of the usefulness of the Industries and Commerce Department to the representatives of British and foreign houses visiting New Zealand, and desirous of extending their business relationships with this colony.

APPENDIX A.

Mr. F. G. PEARCE to the DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE.

SIR,—

Gilmer's Royal Oak Hotel, Wellington, 6th June, 1902.

I have to thank you for yours of to-day's date.

I am greatly obliged to you and your Department for your kindly courtesy and ready assistance, and shall trust that I may be able to utilise the same by placing some considerable amount of business in New Zealand produce on behalf of my firm.

Yours, &c.,

F. G. PEARCE,

of Messrs. Kerley and Tonge (Limited), Mitre Square, London.

T. E. Donne, Esq., Department of Industries and Commerce, Wellington.

APPENDIX B.

Mr. C. ASANO to the DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRIES AND COMMERCE.

SIR,—

Gilmer's Royal Oak Hotel, Wellington, 13th June, 1902.

I beg to express my hearty thanks to you for your kind assistance and information given to me during my stay here. I got all information required, and will leave for Sydney to-morrow per s.s. "Talune."

I have, &c.,

C. ASANO,

Representative of The Mitsin Bussan Kaisha, Japan.

T. E. Donne, Esq., Secretary, Department of Industries and Commerce.