

Lyttelton, on alternate trips. The round trip will occupy twenty-three days, and the service is expected to result in the development of an important trade in bananas and other Island produce. The South Island especially is expected to benefit by this service, having previously had no direct steamer connection with the South Sea islands.

The Government steamer "Hinemoa," which has been engaged in the Auckland - Norfolk Island trade is now to be withdrawn.

The "Maui Pomare" will, at five-weekly intervals, run a service from Auckland to Norfolk Island and return, between her round trips to Samoa. Our trade with Norfolk Island is expected to develop considerably as a result of this improved shipping connection.

PROSPECTIVE OVERSEAS MARKETS.

The continued expansion of production in the Dominion and the increasing need for wider markets for our products is accompanied by a gradual yet appreciable change in the nature and extent of the production and demand of overseas countries. The United States of America and certain of the European countries have during the past two decades shown an appreciable change in the character of their exports and imports. Industrial production is generally increasing, and the demand for foodstuff and raw materials in the Northern Hemisphere appears likely to call for gradually increasing supplies from the more recently developed countries of the world. America and Continental Europe seem likely to offer to New Zealand a greater market than we have found there in past years.

As an appendix to this report there will be found a statement showing the total imports of a number of countries of certain classes of goods which New Zealand has available for export, together with the proportion of those imports at present supplied direct from this Dominion. The Department recognizes fully that no conclusive deductions may be drawn from any such figures, and that many factors, such as quality and transportation costs, tend to affect and limit the ability of the Dominion to supply requirements. The table, nevertheless, indicates in general terms the small part which we at present play in many important markets, and points the way to certain directions in which inquiry is justified in an endeavour to widen the field of sales for our produce. In some instances, of course, our exports are sent on to foreign markets by transshipment through English ports—a factor which is sometimes overlooked in the valuation of our trade with the United Kingdom.

The Department has at all times given its assistance to commercial interests seeking information in regard to prospects in particular markets overseas.

OVERSEAS TRADE REPRESENTATION.

In previous departmental reports some reference has been made to the work of our Trade Representatives overseas. It is evident that the work of these officers is gaining an increased importance and with the development of foreign business the services of our Trade Representatives are increasingly called upon.

The Dominion has no officers abroad engaged exclusively in work of this character, but an appreciable part of the time of certain Government representatives is given to matters affecting trade relationships between the Dominion and the countries in which those officers are stationed.

Messrs. H. J. Manson and W. R. Blow, who are located in Melbourne and Sydney respectively, are called upon to give some part of their time to the answering of inquiries touching business relationships between the Dominion and the Commonwealth. The services of these officers are used for the purpose of making investigations in matters relating to markets for New Zealand produce and in advising the Department of commercial or industrial developments of interest. Mr. Manson, as our senior trade officer in the Commonwealth, acts also in relation to trade questions which necessitate reference to the Commonwealth authorities. Mr. Manson has been provided with sample goods for display in his offices, and also, when opportunity offers, for small exhibitions. Mr. Blow has done similar work in Sydney, and has supplied interesting reports on special questions relative to the market in New South Wales for New Zealand products of a special or perishable character. Both these officers are, of course, largely concerned with the development of New Zealand's tourist traffic.

Mr. W. A. James, of Vancouver, and Mr. H. Stephenson Smith, of San Francisco, are carrying out similar functions, and have been able to assist in many matters touching trade relationships between this Dominion and Canada and the United States.

The Department has honorary Trade Representatives in South Africa—Messrs. H. Middlebrook at Durban and B. R. Avery at Johannesburg, and these gentlemen are, when occasion arises, most helpful in enabling the Department and New Zealand commercial interests to get contact with appropriate parties in the Union of South Africa.

The Department also has an honorary representative, Mr. H. C. Tennent, at Honolulu. Regular steamer connection between the Dominion and Honolulu has enabled Mr. Tennent to give excellent service in bringing New Zealand products before the notice of traders in that area. This trade is growing satisfactorily and the prospects for further development appear bright.

Mr. J. P. H. Mertens, Antwerp, Belgium; the Secretary, British Chamber of Commerce in Marseilles, France; and Mr. R. L. B. Gall, Calcutta, India, are all giving their services in providing the Department with information and in answering any inquiries which may be put to them either for official purposes or on behalf of local trading interests.

In addition to these Trade Representatives and honorary agents, the Department is fortunate in being able to have the assistance of British Trade Representatives in countries or centres where we have no direct New Zealand representation. In New York, Montreal, and elsewhere the British