

GERMANY'S CONSUMPTION OF FIBRE.

The following report on the fibre position in Germany is furnished by H.M. Ambassador at Berlin :—

None of the leading German industries are so thoroughly dependent upon foreign supplies for their raw materials as the textile industry in its various branches. Practically none of the raw materials needed are produced at home. Wool, flax, and hemp were originally home-grown, and to a certain degree this is still the case, but the quantities so produced have become insignificant, and official statistics so far as flax and hemp are concerned have been discontinued altogether.

Experiments are from time to time made to discover German-grown plants the fibre of which could be used by the textile industry. Among the more recent efforts in that direction figure nettle (*Urtica*), broom (*Genista*), and certain barks of trees. These attempts have not, however, matured into practical importance. Only two fibre-plants are at present produced in Germany—viz., flax (*Linum usitatissimum*) and hemp (*Cannabis sativa*).

The last official return concerning the cultivation of flax and hemp in Germany was published in 1902, and referred to the cultivation in 1900. The totals, compared with previous returns, are as follows :—

| Year. | Flax. Hectares. | Hemp. Hectares. |
|--------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| 1900 | 33,662.5 | 3,537.4 |
| 1893 | 60,956.0 | 7,921.3 |
| 1883 | 108,297.2 | 15,255.1 |

(1 hectare = 2.42 acres.)

This clearly shows the retrogression in the areas of cultivation, and it is generally believed that since the last return the cultivation of both plants has further and rapidly receded.

The following figures show the imports and exports of flax into and from Germany in 1911 and 1910 :—

| | | | <i>Imports.</i> | |
|--------------|----------|----------|-----------------|-------|
| Year. | Flax. | Hemp. | Flax. | Hemp. |
| 1911 | 73,797.3 | 62,821.4 | | |
| 1910 | 72,307.8 | 50,508.6 | | |
| | | | <i>Exports.</i> | |
| Year. | Flax. | Hemp. | Flax. | Hemp. |
| 1911 | 26,371.2 | 11,638.1 | | |
| 1910 | 27,677.7 | 9,369.8 | | |

APPLE EXPORT TRADE.

Mr. E. Rabbits, formerly an Orchard Instructor of the Department, stationed for some years in the Marlborough District, visited Great Britain during the latter part of last year, and took advantage of the opportunity to learn something of the fruit trade on oversea markets. In a letter on the subject to the Director of Orchards, Gardens, and Apiaries Division of the Department, Mr. T. W. Kirk, Mr. Rabbits conveyed some instructive observations. He writes,—

The vessel by which I travelled to London was the "Corinthic," which left Wellington on the 16th May of last year. She carried 15,000 cases of Tasmanian apples, transhipped at Wellington, and a few hundred cases of New Zealand apples from Hawke's Bay, all the fruit being for South America. It was carried as ordinary cargo, being distributed in three holds. Two of these were never uncovered for ventilation purposes, and when opened up at Rio de Janeiro the top cases were sodden with moisture, being nearly black with discoloration, and having a thick coating of mould on them. The after hatch, which had been ventilated, opened up in good order. At the South American port the steamer has to lie off a considerable distance and the cargo is discharged into lighters. The handling by the Natives is anything but satisfactory. I noticed that among the cargo for Rio de Janeiro was seven or eight large cases of fruit-trees (500 trees to a case) from a Victorian nurseryman, so that evidently South Americans intend to extend their own fruitgrowing industry. I was also informed that a New Zealand nurseryman is visiting the Argentine in order to establish a connection with growers there for nursery stock.