

SESS. II.—1891.
NEW ZEALAND.

REPRESENTATION OF NEW ZEALAND AT CHICAGO EXHIBITION

(CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO).

Laid on the Table of the House of Representatives by Leave.

MR. R. J. CREIGHTON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 29th April, 1891.

I have the honour to forward to you, under separate cover, a copy of the regulations for foreign exhibitors at the World's Columbian Exhibition, which is to be officially opened at Chicago, State of Illinois, United States of America, on the 1st May, 1893, and closed on the 30th October following.

This Exhibition is intended to celebrate the four hundredth anniversary of the discovery of America by Columbus, by a display which shall fully and fittingly represent the civilisation and industrial progress of the United States in the various branches of art and science, manufactures and inventions, transportation, agriculture, mining, fishing, &c. It is also intended to be competitive, and to ensure a full representation of the world's industries in competition with the United States, the Governments of the various countries in which the United States has diplomatic representatives have been invited by the President to participate in the World's Columbian Exhibition.

Doubtless the New Zealand Government has been communicated with by Her Majesty's Government, to which an invitation was addressed, but I deem it expedient also to invite your special attention to the regulations in question which have been issued by the Director-General of the Exhibition.

Should New Zealand desire to be represented at the Columbian Exhibition it will be necessary to appoint a Commission, and notify the Director-General of such appointment as soon as possible (paragraph. 2). Applications for space and negotiations relative thereto must be conducted with the Commission of the country where the article intended for exhibition is produced (paragraph 3). It follows, therefore, that, although the official invitation may come through the Imperial Government, all subsequent negotiations must be direct with the Director-General by the New Zealand Commission.

On a previous occasion I had the honour to bring this question to the attention of the New Zealand Government, and received an assurance that it would be considered. As I have not been informed of any action, or contemplated action, on its part, I venture to revive the subject, and to suggest the importance of having New Zealand worthily represented at the Chicago World's Fair in 1893. In addition to the liberal appropriation by Congress, the various States of the Union have voted adequate sums of money, and appointed Commissions, to ensure the proper display of their respective products, whether of the field, mine, workshop, or factory. Indeed, the keenest rivalry is felt in this matter, because it is clearly understood that as a result of the Exhibition object-lesson the drift of population, capital, and enterprise will follow the broader lines of development combined with natural resources which the States may severally display. New Zealand would stand on precisely the same footing as any State of the Union or foreign State, and the commercial advantages that may fairly be expected to result from a full and complete display of New Zealand manufactures, and products of the farm and mine, cannot very well be over-estimated. It is an opportunity for display which may not occur again in a century, and it is therefore one by which New Zealand may be expected to profit. That it would develop trade and open new markets cannot, I think, be doubted. But unless the colony is prepared to make a creditable display in each of the twelve classified departments, as I am convinced it is well able to do, it would be better not to exhibit at all. There is a growing and intelligent interest in New Zealand affairs in the

United States, and direct trade between the two countries is steadily increasing. It depends altogether upon New Zealand whether it will stimulate the commercial intercourse or let it drag in an era of the keenest business competition and rivalry. A great many of your natural products may find a paying market in the United States, especially furniture woods, which are now practically unknown; and with regard to manufactures, your woollen cloths would stand almost unrivalled. Flax is on the free-list, to the great advantage of New Zealand, and the McKinley Tariff also makes free of duty "all forms of cabinet woods in the log, rough, or hewn." There is a great scarcity of native woods for cabinet-work in the United States, owing to the reckless destruction of the virgin forests, and failure to plant to repair the waste, and a full display of New Zealand furniture woods would probably result in orders for this country.

These are only a few of the considerations which might be suggested, but there is another which I venture to think should not be overlooked. The United States has taken a new departure in commercial legislation under the reciprocity sections of the McKinley Tariff, and although the interchangeable articles are limited to tea, coffee, sugar, and hides, so far as this country is concerned, the success which has already attended this policy, restricted as it is, will naturally induce Congress to enlarge the list of commodities to increase American trade with other than sugar-producing countries. Brazil has modified its tariff to comply with American requirements, and Spain has just concluded a convention with the United States giving it the control of its West Indian markets, under pressure of Cuba, which could not have its sugar shut out of the States. Under the spur of this policy several of the British West Indian possessions have refused to entertain Canada's proposals for reciprocal trade, for the reason that it would shut them out of the American market, and, in self-defence, they are moving to be included among the privileged countries under the American commercial system. New Zealand should, I think, be in a position to take immediate advantage of any further modification of the American tariff, and that end would be best attained by giving American manufacturers and speculators an opportunity of acquainting themselves personally with its commercial and industrial resources at the Columbia Exhibition.

I have, &c.,

Hon. Colonial Secretary, Wellington, New Zealand.

ROBT. J. CREIGHTON.

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