

APPENDIX IV.

REPORT ON OPPORTUNITIES OPEN TO NEW ZEALAND SHIPPERS TO BRITISH COLUMBIA.

Vancouver, B.C., 18th June, 1908.

ON referring to the possibilities of trade between New Zealand and British Columbia we would mention in the first place that very little is done here in manufacturing. Take, for example, ready-made clothing, shirts, and dress goods. These are either imported from eastern Canada, the United States, or Europe. Then, again, with shoemaking: there is only one factory in Vancouver turning out boots and shoes. These goods would not, of course, interest the New Zealand manufacturer, but we mention these facts to show how undeveloped British Columbia is so far as the manufacturing of staple lines is concerned. The principal industries are the conversion of lumber, canneries for salmon, and mining. Valuable deposits of mineral wealth are scattered all over the province, but development has not proceeded to the extent it should have done. The chief items in which New Zealand would be interested in the export to British Columbia are given in detail, but with many of these it is impossible to do anything until such time as you have a direct line of steamers to Vancouver with refrigerator-space, say, up to a capacity of 500 tons.

Frozen Meat.—Up to the present time Australia has held this business, but inquiries have been made for the New Zealand article in case it is possible to send it forward. The season of entry extends from October to April, and the estimated number of carcasses coming in during that time averages 30,000. Carcasses must not weigh less than 45 lb., and must not exceed 50 lb. The grade is "fair average quality, London—Sydney wethers." So far as we can learn, the f.o.b. cost, Sydney, runs from 2½d. to 3d. per pound. The Australian article pays a duty rate of 3 cents per pound; New Zealand the lowest. The freight rate from Sydney to Vancouver will be 1d. per pound, and with direct steamers running from New Zealand, and granting this freight rate, you would have the preference over Australia to the extent of 1 cent per pound.

Butter.—As is the case with mutton, butter enters from October to April, and during that period, in an average season, the imports should total from seven to ten thousand cases of 56 lb. each. In this article it has been impossible for New Zealand to compete, although the wholesalers are anxious to have New Zealand butter, and would give it the preference. The reason for this is that the whole of the available space on the vessels connecting between here and Australia, and which have the cold-storage installation, has been controlled by an Australian firm, chiefly in the interest of the Australian product. New Zealand butter is subject to 3 cents per pound duty, and Australian 4 cents. The freight from Sydney or Brisbane is 1d. per pound, and the average laid-down cost, with duty, on the Vancouver docks averages from 29 to 30 cents per pound.

Onions.—Imports have been, so far, from Australia, on account of the season being earlier than that of New Zealand. Shipments require to land in Vancouver not later than April. The cost varies according to the Australian season. Duty on Australian, 30 per cent.; New Zealand, 15 per cent.

Wool, Hemp, Kauri-gum.—As we have already outlined, practically no manufacturing is done here, and the market for wool, hemp, and kauri-gum lies in eastern Canada and the eastern American States. There is one factory in British Columbia engaged in varnish-making, but their imports of kauri-gum are not very large.

Canned Meats and Preserves.—Canned mutton has been imported for some years from Australia, but in very limited quantities. Even this has been confined to the one house, their goods being very satisfactory, and buyers say they have no reason to change unless they had a price offered that was much below what the present brand is costing. With respect to canned beef, it is impossible to compete in price, and ordinary preserves, such as jams, &c., do not come sufficiently low enough to make an extensive market. Some of the well-known English brands have a large sale, but this has only been brought about by constant and vigorous advertising for many years past and the reputation their goods have obtained with the general public.

Condensed Milk and Cream.—A fair quantity of milk and cream of New Zealand manufacture has been placed on this market, but before they make a success with the public it will be necessary for the New Zealand manufacturer to supply the market with a line that is similar to the locally made Canadian goods. For instance, New Zealand condensed milk is considered to be too thick and too highly concentrated. The Canadian calls for a milk that is fairly thin, and which will flow over the side of a spoon when it has been inserted into a tin. Cream must be "clear": an article with butter-fat pieces, or very thick sediment, that will not flow freely from a small incision in the tin will not sell. The cream must be unsweetened. The duty on condensed milk, New Zealand preferential, is 2 cents per pound, including the weight of the package; cream the same. Milk needs to land, with duty and all charges, not higher than \$5 per case of forty-eight tins; cream, per case of forty-eight tins, not higher than \$4.45 per case.

So far as this coast is concerned, an increase in the exports from New Zealand will depend upon placing steamers on the run that have refrigerator accommodation. With several articles it is, of course, unnecessary to provide cold-storage space: and, in closing, we might draw attention to the fact that there are possibilities for a fine export trade to British Columbia in Oamaru stone. A shipment of 400 tons came to hand last month, and further inquiries are being made. It is possible from time to time to introduce other lines, the climatic conditions of Canada making that possible.

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