

to come to New Zealand. Arrangements are being made by the Associated Chambers of Commerce in the Commonwealth for the entertainment of the visitors, who will have every facility placed at their disposal to enable them to make themselves acquainted with the country.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister extended an invitation to the members of the Congress to visit New Zealand.

The subjects for discussion and resolution at the Congress to be held in Sydney will be "trade of the Empire, with the kindred subjects of products, manufactures, tariffs, and shipping," and on these matters the recommendations of the Congress are likely to exercise great influence not only on commercial intercourse, but upon Imperial trade relationships. This Congress should have especial interest for Australia and New Zealand, as it will bring a splendid representation of British commercial men into closer touch with the colonies. It is hoped that the delegates will be able to visit New Zealand, as the opportunity of getting so commercially influential a delegation to visit this Dominion is a great one, and may not soon recur.

#### FIRST INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF REFRIGERATING INDUSTRIES.

A matter of great importance was the International Congress of Refrigerating Industries organized and held in Paris during October. This Dominion was represented by Gilbert Anderson, Esquire, whose report to the Hon. the Prime Minister will be found appended hereto; and it was hoped, through the agency of this and similar congresses, to in time get the restriction removed that at present prevents the entry of our refrigerated products to Continental countries; but the action of the French Government has somewhat dissipated that hope, inasmuch as she has increased the duty on frozen meat from 35 to 50 francs per 100 kilos. One result of the Congress has been the formation of an International Cold-storage Association, which will endeavour to further the matters dealt with by the Paris Conference. The Produce Commissioner also attended the initial meeting of this association held in Paris on the 25th January.

#### MR. GILBERT ANDERSON'S REPORT.

The Congress was opened in Paris on Monday, the 6th October, in the main hall of the University of Paris, the Sorbonne, and lasted for a week.

The opening ceremony, after the distribution of tickets, badges, and programmes, was the reception by the President of the Congress, M. André Lebon, of the official delegates representing the different nationalities of Europe, United States of America, Argentina, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

In the afternoon the official ceremony was held in the amphitheatre of the Sorbonne. There were probably some three thousand persons present, the Minister of Agriculture being in the chair. M. André Lebon gave an address on the importance of refrigeration, and the benefit to be derived from the Congress. The other speakers were Professor Linde, who spoke on refrigeration from a scientific and commercial point of view. Various speakers representing the different nationalities also spoke, Sir Montague Nelson being the representative of the British section.

The work of the Congress was divided into six sections, separate rooms in the Sorbonne being especially allotted to each section. The following is the work which has been done during the week:—

The First Section was of a highly scientific nature, and discussed questions pertaining to low temperature and liquefaction of air. Professor Onnes, who has been making recent experiments with the liquefaction of helium, gave a very interesting paper.

Other interesting papers were also read and discussed, of more or less of a technical character than a practical every-day's work.

The most interesting subsection was that devoted to hygienic subjects, such as the dietetic value of refrigerated food, chemical and bacteriological experiments, and also the subject of mould and its effects on refrigerated produce.

One of the most valuable papers read at the Congress was that of Dr. Rideal, of London, who has made lengthy experiments in regard to the temperature at which food should be kept, the benefit or otherwise of low temperature in reference to the nutritive qualities of meat, and its effects in distributing germs of possible life of bacteria, the paper going to prove that the refrigeration of all foods assisted their healthiness. Dr. Rideal claims that of all foods subject to low temperature there would be a decided benefit, as far as frozen meat was concerned. He emphasized the necessity for great cleanliness in handling the products in the first instance, the use of strong disinfectants in all buildings where animal food was handled, but more particularly he emphasized the need for great care in handling the products in a cleanly manner, especially in the retail shop.

A subject of considerable importance as far as the freezing industry in the colonies is concerned was the necessity to see that all slaughtering appliances were in the very best order.

He also mentioned a fact which must come as a surprise to many—namely, that the calico wrappers used for covering carcasses of meat were sized or stiffened with a substance which on examination he found to produce mould and bacteria when brought into favourable conditions, such as dampness or thawing. It should be required that all freezing companies must have a guarantee that the calico wrappers are made of pure cotton.

An interesting paper was the growth of mould, and the question as to whether the same was harmful or not—read by C. J. Tabor, of London. Other papers in this section dealt with the chemical sides of the question.

Section 2: The subject under this section was of a very technical character, consisting in papers and discussions on refrigerating machinery, the effects produced by compressing the gases, the various quantities and standards used in the industry.

One subject in particular causing considerable discussion was that of a proposal to establish a standard of refrigerating measures and units specially for machines.