

No. 17.

New Zealand, No. 92.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 28th April, 1910.

I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your Ministers, <sup>A.—1, 1911,</sup> the accompanying copies of a translation of the new French Customs tariff recently <sup>No. 16.</sup> issued by the Board of Trade as a parliamentary paper.

2. I shall be glad if you will kindly draw the attention of your Ministers to Article VIII of the tariff.

I have, &amp;c.,

CREWE.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord Plunket, G.C.M.G., K.C.V.O.

No. 18.

New Zealand, No. 99.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 4th May, 1910.

I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your Ministers, <sup>A.—1, 1911,</sup> the accompanying copy of a despatch addressed to the Secretary of State for Foreign <sup>No. 25.</sup> Affairs by His Majesty's Consul-General at New York, regarding the high prices and importation of foodstuffs in the United States.

I have, &amp;c.,

CREWE.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord Plunket, G.C.M.G., K.C.V.O., &amp;c.

## Enclosure.

SIR,—

British Consulate-General, New York, 18th April, 1910.

I have the honour to enclose an extract from the New York *Times* of the 17th instant, in which are contained some interesting remarks made by Mr. William C. Brown, President of the New York Central Railroad Company, upon the increase of prices in the United States.

Mr. Brown has given considerable attention to this subject, and some of his remarks are of great interest, especially those connected with the fact that consumption is rapidly overtaking production.

In connection with this subject, it is interesting to note that a consignment of 891 carcasses of frozen mutton arrived a few days since in New York from New Zealand *via* London. It is stated in the Press that this is to be only the first of many shipments, and that the importers find that they can sell this New Zealand mutton at a profit in New York, even taking into consideration the fact that they have paid thereon a Customs duty of 1½ cents per pound. I have made further inquiries into the nature of this shipment, and am informed by an Englishman who is greatly interested in the meat trade that there is reason to believe that this meat was originally intended for the London market, and was diverted here at short notice; that this was probably done in view of the fact that so much has been said lately about high prices prevailing in the United States, and that it was thought feasible to try just what the market would take.

My informant could not trace the fact that any mutton had been brought here before from New Zealand, but the general impression is that this shipment would be followed by further ones. It is, of course, a fact that considerable Canadian mutton is used all along the border as well as in the large eastern towns, more especially in clubs, hotels, and private houses. The price of Canadian mutton is anywhere from 8 cents to 12 cents (4d. to 6d.) and has been as much as 15 cents (7½d.) a pound lower than native mutton of the United States, the native mutton of the same quality selling here at from 30 cents to 35 cents per pound. Consequently, if there is a large supply of mutton in Canada, it would appear that with the margin in question, even after deducting the import duty, there would be a good profit made in shipping larger quantities to this side of the border; and the fact that this meat does not come to the United States is not owing to the tariff rate, but arises possibly from some understanding with the big meat concerns in the United States or with the control of the refrigerator cars, distribution of the meats through the natural agencies, or some other reason besides the constantly heard of cry of protection.

It is stated that Australian meat has been imported here, and has arrived in excellent condition, being transhipped in England, and that in spite of the duty this has been sold at a good profit at 2 cents less per pound than native meat. The meat before being forwarded here was very carefully trimmed and dressed, so that every element of waste was cut down to the minimum. It is also said that there are a number of agents handling Australian meats in the market here, but my correspondent was not able to obtain the names of any except that of the Sayles-Zahn Company, who are believed to receive Australian-dressed mutton occasionally.

I have, &amp;c.,

Sir Edward Grey, Bart., M.P., &amp;c.

C. W. BENNETT, Consul-General.