

No. 107.

New Zealand.—Miscellaneous.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 4th October, 1911.

With reference to your telegram of the 22nd September, and in confirmation of my telegram of the 2nd instant, I have the honour to inform you that the King has been pleased to approve of the retention of the title of "Honourable" by Mr. George Fowlds, who has served for more than three years as a member of the Executive Council of New Zealand.

A notification to this effect will be published in the *London Gazette*.

I have, &c.,

L. HARCOURT

Governor the Right Hon. Lord Islington, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., &c.

No. 108.

New Zealand, No. 345.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 6th October, 1911.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of your Ministers, the enclosed copy of a letter addressed to the Board of Trade by Messrs. W. Weddel and Co., and of the reply from that Department, on the subject of the Customs duties levied in France on meat products imported from Australia and New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

L. HARCOURT.

Governor the Right Hon. Lord Islington, K.C.M.G., D.S.O., &c.

Enclosures.

16 St. Helen's Place, London E.C., 19th September, 1911.

SIR,—

France and British Colonial Frozen Meat.

In view of the vigorous agitation in France in favour of facilitating the importation of frozen meat into that country, and as such agitation seems likely to meet with some success in the direction of reduction of Customs duty, we beg to submit, for your consideration, the suggestion that the present is an opportune time to approach the French Government with a view to securing for British colonial produce equal fiscal treatment with similar produce from Argentina.

For example, on Australian and New Zealand mutton Customs duty of 50 francs per 100 kilos is charged, as compared with 35 francs per 100 kilos levied on Argentine mutton.

Such discrimination against Australia and New Zealand seems unwarranted, and at variance with most-favoured-nation treatment.

Our interest in the matter is as merchants, and also as representatives on this side of some of the largest frozen-meat shippers in Australia and New Zealand, and we venture to express the hope that you will see your way, after examination of the facts, to take what steps you deem necessary to remove this unexpected obstacle to business between the British colonies and France.

We have, &c.,

For W. Weddel and Co. (Limited),

GEO. GOODSIR, Director.

The President of the Board of Trade, Whitehall, London.

Board of Trade (Commercial Department), Gwydyr House, Whitehall,
London S.W., 30th September, 1911.

GENTLEMEN,—

I am directed by the Board of Trade to advert to your letter of 19th September, addressed to the President of this Department, relative to the Customs duties levied on Australian and New Zealand meat imported into France.

In reply, I am to inform you that there is no commercial convention or treaty in existence under which the products of Australia or New Zealand are entitled to most-favoured-nation treatment on importation into France. Such products are accordingly dutiable at the rates of the "General," not the "Minimum," French tariff.

The question of negotiating a commercial agreement under which Australian and New Zealand frozen meat should obtain most-favoured-nation treatment on importation into France would seem to be one primarily for the consideration of the Dominion Governments concerned.

I am to add that a copy of your letter is being forwarded to the Colonial Office.

I am, &c.,

WALTER J. HOWELL.

Messrs. W. Weddel and Co., 16 St. Helen's Place, E.C.