

manure, which is in great demand in New Zealand. So as to ensure that it will be supplied at first-hand cost your Committee would urge that the handling of the output be undertaken by the Government, and that they also, if necessary, provide the requisite shipping.

*Nitrates.*

The shortage of the world's supply of nitrates, and the fact that New Zealand has an abundant supply of water-power and unlimited deposits of lime, place it in a good position to produce its own supplies at a reasonable price, and at the same time it is possible that an export trade might be developed. Evidence was submitted to the Committee that the Bowen Falls is an ideal source of water-power for this purpose, and that a syndicate was prepared, if it could get the rights for this power from the Government, to undertake the manufacture of nitrates. The Committee would urge that the Government undertake the manufacture; or, failing that, that private enterprise be encouraged to do so, and that the requisite water-rights be granted, with certain safeguards as to the price of the product and the right of resumption; but the Committee must emphasize that there should be no further delay in dealing with this question.

*Potash.*

During the war there have been no importations of this valuable fertilizer, and in consequence much of our land is suffering more or less impoverishment. The available source of supply was in German territory, but we understand that it is now under the control of the French Government, and no doubt France would grant an application from this country for a sufficient supply for its requirements. In view of this it is recommended that the Government communicate with the French Government without delay, and, if the price be not prohibitive, arrange for a supply of this fertilizer.

WOOL-SCOURING.

Evidence was submitted to the Committee by those interested in the wool-scouring business as to the desirability of having the wool-clip, or a proportion of it, scoured in New Zealand. It was claimed that besides providing additional employment for a large number of people a considerable saving in freight would be effected by the removal of the impurities, and that several valuable by-products would be secured if the scouring-operations were conducted on scientific lines. At present these by-products are lost to the Dominion by the export of greasy wool and the existing methods of scouring.

*Valuable By-products.*

It was stated that in wool-fat in the 1916 wool-clip the Dominion lost £279,750, and in potash 4,650 tons, valued at £69,750 at pre-war prices, and this loss is and has been an annual one. In addition to this the saving in freight by shipping scoured wool would run into many thousands of pounds.

*Conference recommended.*

The Committee feels that these figures and statements are too important to pass by without directing the attention of the Government to them. It recommends that a conference of the representatives of the wool-growers, exporters, and wool-scourers be called, and that they be asked to ascertain if a scheme cannot be prepared whereby this serious national loss may be prevented. The question of the treatment of seedy wool in this country could also be considered by this conference.

FOSTERING LOCAL INDUSTRIES.

One of the outstanding, and certainly regrettable, facts disclosed to your Committee was the prejudice existing against many of the articles manufactured in our own country. Take, for example, boots. Even though quite as good an article can be produced in New Zealand as may be imported from Britain or America, the