

find out what is the relation of the material used or handled to the wages paid when comparing a particular industry with the same industry in some other country, but one must be very careful lest he fall into an error in taking a general survey.

I do not propose to read these three groups of figures, but will make a few general remarks. These are given really largely from memory, but you may take them as correct; they will only be a decimal or two out at the most. In a recent speech that I read by Sir Charles Feilding he announced the startling fact that in a period of exactly twenty years before war was declared the product-value of land in England was £4 5s. per acre, which during the period increased by only 2s. 6d. per acre, making the total productive value £4 7s. 6d. per acre; whereas in Germany the productive value of agricultural land had increased by £2 19s. per acre, making £8 19s. for Germany as against £4 7s. 6d. for England. That is cause and effect. I want to say this: that the Efficiency Board had evidence from some of the best men in New Zealand, and this statement was never questioned: that if the lands of New Zealand were treated scientifically, as they are treated in some other countries, and improved machinery and methods were used, we could increase threefold our primary productions in New Zealand.

I now just want to make a point with regard to profiteering. As between 1910 and 1916 the value of primary production as a whole increased 75 per cent. whilst the secondary and manufacturing industries only increased 43 per cent. I am not going to try and find the profiteer, but those figures, I believe, are unassailable. That appears to disprove the suggestion that the secondary and manufacturing industries have profited during the war to an equal extent with the primary producers.

Now I want to say a few words with regard to the point that some people even entertain to-day—namely, that our ambition to produce goods for ourselves is unsound, and that we should turn all our attention to developing the primary industries. In a book published by Sir John Foster, Minister of Commerce in Canada, there is some very interesting information on this subject. He tells us that there was a time, and not so very long ago, when a very large proportion of the Canadian people thought that Canada would never be anything else but an agricultural and lumber country. Then the author goes on to say what has happened. About the year 1901 Canada thought she would look outside for a market for her manufactures, and she succeeded in sending out goods to the value of 16 million dollars. That has been increasing year by year, until in 1915 she exported goods to the value of 85½ million dollars—a very nice advance, especially when we remember that in that amount there were no food or forest products—manufactured goods only. I think we may look to Canada for another example as to what the value of home industries are to any country, and this is what we find: that Canada had 19,000 industrial establishments, employing 514,000 persons, who received 58 millions sterling in wages; 160¼ millions of Canadian raw material was converted into marketable articles valued at 281 millions sterling. Over 17 millions sterling worth of manufactured goods were exported to other countries. These figures show to what an extent Canada is providing for herself.

Now I come to the last point, and that is to claim that it is the duty of the Legislature to see that the people are employed in proper proportion—the one section to another. I mean by that that we should not direct all our attention to something that may fail—that we should not put all our eggs in one basket—but have as great a variety of productions as possible.

I have drawn out three tables in which the entire population of New Zealand, Tasmania, New South Wales, Victoria, and Queensland is absorbed. In Table A we have every producer—that is, every one who is a direct producer, whether in agriculture, pastoral, mineral, and the small primary industries and manufactures. In New Zealand the total percentage of producers to the entire population is 26·2. The percentages in the other colonies are—Tasmania, 24·8; New South Wales, 24·9; Victoria, 25·2; Queensland, 28·0. Queensland has the pride of place. She has the largest percentage of producers, and the smallest percentage of dependants and non-specified. New Zealand has nothing to be ashamed of; we stand second. In agriculture New Zealand has employed 5·4 of her population, as against 5·48 in pastoral; Tasmania is 10·4 and 1·3; New South Wales is 4·8 and 4·2, and Victoria 6·5 and 2·3. In the small industries New Zealand is ½ per cent.; Tasmania, 1½ per cent.; New South Wales, ¾ per cent.; and Victoria not quite ¾ per cent. I refer the Committee to the other figures in that table.

To Mr. Luke.] There is not an industry in New Zealand at the present moment that is not feeling the dearth of labour.

To Mr. Sidey.] The wood-pulp I have referred to was sent to Switzerland. I will furnish the Committee with a copy of my report to the Efficiency Board on the subject of wood-pulp.

To Mr. Sidey.] In regard to immigration, the policy must first be determined—which industries you are going to develop—but care must be taken that you do not provide two persons for one job.

To Mr. Forbes.] So far as profit in the boot trade is concerned, it is amongst the lowest in the Dominion.

A. E. ORCHARD, New Zealand Asbestos Supply Company, examined.

In connection with the development of asbestos in this country I wish to bring before your notice the following points: The material is only up to the present found in inaccessible parts of the country, and therefore the question of roads and a means of arranging all transport of same should receive consideration. Our present claim is about sixteen miles from the main road along a bush track, and the material has to be brought out on pack-animals. We took out close on 40 tons last season, and found the expense of treating same to make it marketable more than our company can stand at its present organization. We have, however, disposed of about 30 tons, which leaves a loss of about 25 per cent. of the material actually mined. This should be dealt