

*To Mr. Sidey.*] I am not aware of the recommendation of the Efficiency Board that there should be a Board of Science and Industry in order to bring the two into line. We want to see a business man in charge of the Industries Department. He ought to be a man with special knowledge. If we could put as much life into our industries in New Zealand as is put into the Department of Agriculture it would be very helpful to the industries. The proposed Minister should give all his time to industries and commerce, and should not have half a dozen other Departments to attend to. Further, he should be in touch with the Minister of Customs and with the Minister of Labour. If the necessary up-to-date machinery is secured there is no reason why we should not increase our manufactures here, provided we go on right lines and suitable industries are started; there is no reason why we should not do as well as any other place. You talk about labour troubles, but that does not concern us in the slightest. The object to strive for is efficiency, and the biggest curse in this country is the inefficient employer. In regard to particular industries, I may say, as to the Woolston Tanneries, that we are trying to help boot-making in every possible way. Some time ago we thought of going in for making tanning-extracts. We wrote to the Government on the subject, and asked them if they could give us any information. I got a reply referring me to another Department, to whom I wrote, and was referred to Kirk's book on New Zealand trees. A careful perusal of that work disclosed only one reference to tanning-bark—a reference to the bark of a tree called the towhai. That book was written some thirty years ago. I think, however, that the difficulties to be contended against are not insurmountable. We are willing to go in for it. Last Saturday I was talking to Mr. Young, one of the gardeners here, and he recommended the planting of wattle on the sandhills at New Brighton, and he said that in five years we would be able to get wattle-bark for tanning. I am aware of the Government experiments in the North Island. Then, with respect to sodium sulphide: If the war had continued much longer the freezing-works would probably have been hung up for want of sodium sulphide. That is a depillatory, and is used in taking wool off the skins. As to sulphuric acid, the freezing companies were depending on supplies from Australia. Then there is clay in New Zealand which will make very good alum; and we can also make hydrochloric acid here. We have bought some land at Woolston, and are going to erect up-to-date scouring-works there for scouring wool. It must be better to send the wool Home scoured than to send it away unscoured. Then there is glove-making. At present large quantities of gloves are imported into New Zealand. We are sending a man to America to make inquiries into this industry. If we do not get sympathy from the authorities in New Zealand we will go over to Australia. Good felt can be made out of hair in this country.

*To the Chairman.*] As to encouraging industries, suggestions have been made in connection with the Canterbury Progress League. If you get a good man—it all hinges on that.

*To Mr. Sidey.*] I do not think the tanning industry near Dunedin has experienced the same difficulties as we have in connection with the Government and certain officials. We have had special treatment. There is wattle-bark coming from Australia; at present we are buying from Natal, where the wattle is now being grown from seed obtained from Australia. Turkey and the Argentine also export it.

*To Mr. Luke.*] Lanoline is the principal by-product from wool-scouring works. I am not quite certain, but I think there is also a fertilizer of some value.

*To Mr. Forbes.*] Last January we started to turn out leather which gives promise of being better than anything ever turned out in New Zealand. We sent some sole-leather to America—sole-leather that could not be sold here—and it was sold there. If that leather is considered good in America I do not know what they will say about our new leather. People have written to us telling us that they are satisfied with this leather. It is one of the best discoveries that have ever been made. We have knocked the Australians "kite high" as far as the manufacture of box calf is concerned; the box calf has now a beautiful finish. The best hides we get come from Italy; but the New Zealand hides are much better than the Australian for same work. The Australian is much spoiled by branding—a large portion of the hide is destroyed by branding. I think the cattle should be branded either by earmarking or by being branded on not so important a part of hide as is now done.

H. J. MARRINER, representing the Canterbury Chamber of Commerce, examined. (No. 40.)

I have come before the Committee to go into the matter of railway accommodation as regards Canterbury. I come on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, as I am chairman of the Railway Committee. We are up against a very unfortunate problem here, and we wish, if we can, with your help to get that remedied. The position is this: there is not adequate accommodation for imports and exports—there is not sufficient accommodation at the railway-station at Christchurch to deal with the incoming and outgoing goods. The accommodation which we have at the present time has been little altered for forty years. The fact that we have our goods delayed places us at a disadvantage with the rest of the Dominion. Sometimes we have to deal with goods that have been lying in the trucks for a week or a fortnight. Therefore we ask you to urge the Government to take into consideration immediately the enlargement of the yards, and also of the railway-station, as outlined in Mr. Hiley's report. Another drawback is that owing to the port being six miles and a half away we have not the means of getting goods to the steamer in time to be shipped on the same day. If a merchant receives a letter at 9 a.m. for goods for Wellington he cannot get them away on that day. We ask, then, for greater facilities and quicker transit to get the goods alongside the steamers. We also request a duplication of the tunnel, as the traffic is more than the single tunnel can do. Further, we are anxious that the East and West Coast Railway should be pushed on to completion. This linking-up would benefit the whole Dominion. It would open up the dairying-lands of the West Coast, where the rearing of cattle is