

It is a thing you cannot put down in black and white. It wants a man on the spot all the time. I am satisfied that I could teach others as I have been taught myself.

*To Mr. Craigie:* If a farmer took up tobacco-growing in New Zealand it would pay him better than wheat, potatoes, or any cereal crop. He would get a better return, provided we could manufacture the finished article and get the market, which I feel sure we could do. Our company has the best plant in New Zealand for manufacturing tobacco, and it would be a shame to see the thing go down. The difficulty comes after the harvest. I could give growers instructions in black and white up to the harvest, but after that I would have to attend them personally. Mr. Lowe's place at Harakeke, near Motueka, is favourably situated for growing tobacco.

*To Mr. Sidey:* I have had only Australian experience. The company here is a grower of tobacco, also a manufacturer. I have suggested to the company that they should transfer their growing operations to the Nelson District. The districts in New Zealand I have examined are Hawke's Bay, Blenheim, Motueka, round the Tasman, Akaroa, and as far as Christchurch. The farther you get south the worse the climate is for tobacco-growing. I have not been farther north than Hawke's Bay. I have seen tobacco growing in the districts I have spoken of. Nelson is the most suitable climate both for soil and climate. There is more land about Nelson than New Zealand will require to grow leaf. The Australian Government are building barns for growers for slow curing. They do not hand the growers cash, but give a bigger price for the leaf. A barn 16 ft. by 16 ft. will cure half a ton. A man could handle 10 acres of tobacco himself. Ten acres with good crops will produce 10,000 lb. Eight hundred pounds weight to the acre is an average crop. If a man had 10 acres he could handle them with the assistance of a couple of children for the transplanting. One barn would cure about 10 acres of tobacco, but no more. Every grower must have a barn. The Government must assist in the building of barns. It would be possible to have a barn large enough to serve a number of growers. If the Government advanced money to growers for the building of barns it would help to a great extent.

*To Mr. Poland:* The Government could also assist by appointing experts to assist the growers. I have seen tobacco grown in districts north of Hawke's Bay, but it is too heavy. I have seen only one sample from the North of Auckland, and when I say that the article from north of Hawke's Bay is too heavy I base my opinion on the sample from the North of Auckland.

*To Mr. Hudson:* The tobacco-plant feeds on the climate; it is not always the soil. It is more the climate than the soil. I think the sample I saw from the North of Auckland was a fair sample for the district. One factory would meet the requirements of Hawke's Bay and Nelson. The factory in Port Ahuriri would be as good a place as anywhere else. I prefer Nelson to Napier for a factory-site, for the reason that it is near Wellington. At Port Ahuriri, however, we have the plant all fixed up. The small man is up against a big problem when there is a trust in existence unless the Government help in some way. In regard to the operations of the British Empire Trading Company, I do not think they are out for the assistance of the tobacco industry. They have as much American leaf as they can handle, and they will not grow tobacco in New Zealand. It is to their advantage to import leaf, and their tendency would be to encourage the import rather than the local growing.

*To Mr. Forbes:* It is not likely that New Zealand will export tobacco-leaf. New Zealand will consume all the tobacco it can grow for the next twenty years. In Australia, after growing for thirty years, they have about caught up to the requirements of the country. We can get different grades of tobacco in New Zealand—dark, light, plug, cigarette, &c. We can grow different varieties to suit the taste of the public. Australia is not more suitable for tobacco-growing than New Zealand. I have sampled both and been through the districts, and I fancy Nelson every time. Motueka is an ideal district. It is sheltered by a range of hills. I reported to the British Empire Trading Company that Nelson was my district every time. I like it better than Australia. My brother has been fifty years in the trade, and he is of the same opinion. In Motueka you have the best district in Australasia, and the Government would be well advised to push the tobacco-growing there. The Americans cannot handle our tobacco. We have imported men from America for growing, and have had to return them. The American ideas do not suit these colonies in handling the tobacco after it has been grown. The conditions are different here—as different as night from day. The American tobacco has nothing to take out of it after it is grown, but the Australian tobacco has a lot to take out of it. The rankness is the worst thing we have, and it must be taken out. America is the home of tobacco. With time and handling afterwards we can grow tobacco equal to America. We can produce the same flavour as the American article by treating the New Zealand article. In three or four years from now we will have a New Zealand tobacco that you could hardly tell from the American. Much of the flavour of tobacco is brought about by ingredients; it is not all the leaf. New Zealand with skilful manufacture could overcome the difficulties now in our way. With careful handling of the leaf, proper curing, and proper manufacture we could supply all the demands of the Dominion.

*To Mr. Veitch:* American manufacturers put nothing into the tobacco that would act detrimentally on the health of the people. Anything that hurts the eyesight or offends the taste or injures any part of the human system is not made use of. Of course, there is no written law on the subject. Anything that is put into the tobacco I would put on my dining-table. If a man smokes so many cigarettes that he injures his health it is his own fault.

*To Mr. Sidey:* Australia has appointed a man from South Africa, a leaf-curer, to go round and instruct the growers as to slow curing. My brother also goes round and instructs. It is now proposed in Australia to give the growers assistance in cash. When the industry started in Australia the Government did not give a bonus. The local company's plant is quite up to date in every detail. It could be increased in size, but there is everything there to produce all the smoking-tobacco that New Zealand requires at the present time.