

The following extract from the remarks of the Right Hon. L. S. Amery, formerly Chairman of the Overseas Settlement Committee at the Imperial Economic Conference of last year, is of special interest:—

“Migration by Families.—More particularly I should like to lay stress on what I referred to just now in connection with the ex-service free passages—the desirability of making it possible for the man who has a family to go across, because, from the point of view of future citizenship, that is the most valuable element we can send to you. It is true from the point of view of the individual employer a single man is preferred, but from the point of view of development the man who goes with a family of growing children—the citizens, the creators of the wealth of the future—is the most welcome settler. I should like to draw attention to this fact: that New Zealand, in this respect, has agreed with us on assisted-passage schemes very substantially ahead of any other Dominion in the very liberal assistance they give to the man with a family—that is to say, that children up to a certain age go entirely free and the older sons and daughters at a very reduced rate. I think to-day a man with quite a large family can get to New Zealand on practically no more than it takes a man and his wife alone to go to Australia. I should like to press very strongly the importance of that.”

CUSTOMS AND EXCISE.

For the past financial year the Dominion's general prosperity consequent upon the buoyancy of our export trade was reflected in the Customs revenue. Including £123,568 tire-tax credited to the Main Highways Account, the Customs and excise duties totalled £7,361,783, or £361,783 over the estimate. The main items of Customs revenue were,—

	1923-24. £	1922-23. £	Increase. £
Spirits	1,079,784	796,577	283,207
Tobacco, cigars, cigarettes	1,271,135	1,239,212	31,923
Apparel and textiles	1,798,287	1,621,913	176,374
Motor vehicles, tires and parts	770,132	409,535	360,597
Other goods <i>ad valorem</i>	1,940,899	1,662,532	278,367
Primage	417,198	341,087	76,111
Totals	<u>£7,277,435</u>	<u>6,070,856</u>	<u>1,206,579</u>

The values of imports and exports for the past six financial years are as under:—

	Imports. £	Exports. £	Excess of Exports. £
1918-19	26,437,284	32,263,792	5,826,508
1919-20	32,162,029	50,776,650	18,614,621
1920-21	67,463,269	48,219,672	19,243,597*
1921-22	35,986,060	43,794,883	7,808,823
1922-23	37,112,779	45,548,700	8,435,921
1923-24	44,401,756	51,652,606	7,250,850

* Excess of imports.

One of the chief factors has been the firm position of the wool-market, for, while wool no longer holds first place in our exports, it nevertheless is of such importance that fluctuations in wool-values may make all the difference between a favourable or an adverse trade balance.

Customs and excise duties (other than beer duty) for the current financial year are estimated to produce £7,350,000.

The Customs tariff of 1921, since modified to some extent, is, on the whole, working smoothly. On account, however, of the unstable conditions existing in various European countries, it is not possible to gauge definitely the effect of the increased preference granted by the 1921 tariff to goods of Empire origin. The operation of the preference provisions, moreover, does not work out as favourably to British manufacturers as was anticipated, owing to the fact that if only 25 per cent. of the factory or works cost of an article is due