

New Zealand becoming the Dairy Farm of the Empire.

Mr. Massey: Of course; the dairy-farmers in New Zealand have already taken action. It has become a tremendous industry. The export of dairy-produce from New Zealand to Britain last year amounted to nearly £18,000,000 worth, and it is still increasing rapidly. It may be selfish to suggest that New Zealand is going to supply the British market with dairy-produce altogether, but I believe we are going a long way towards it in the next few years. In fact, New Zealand is rapidly becoming the dairy farm of the Empire.

Tobacco-growing in New Zealand.

As far as the other tariff items are concerned, New Zealand is interested in the proposal to extend the preference on tobacco from one-sixth to one-fourth. Tobacco-growing is another struggling industry in New Zealand. I am not going to predict that the industry will prove successful. All that I can say is that, so far as I am able to judge, the tobacco-plant grows very luxuriantly in the Dominion. It has been suggested to me that the growth is too rank to produce a good smoking-tobacco. I do not know if that is so, but I do know that we can produce plenty of what is called raw material. Whether we shall be able to produce good smoking-tobacco remains to be seen. Personally, of course, I hope so. We are giving growers in New Zealand a little encouragement by way of preferential duties.

Preference on Apples: Effect in New Zealand.

As regards apples, as I have already indicated, we are particularly concerned in that industry, and I think that 5s. per hundredweight will go some considerable way to assist the fruitgrowers in my country—and they need it. Apple-growing is only a young industry yet in the Dominion, but already no less than an area of 31,000 acres is planted in orchards, which, of course, include other fruits, but mostly consist of apple-trees. That is a fairly good commencement. Of the 31,000 acres I have no doubt that about 28,000 acres are apples. The apples are of good quality; there is no question about that. We have been rather unfortunate in that several shipments have been damaged, but I think the fault was in the handling of the apples, not keeping them just at the right temperature on the voyage. I do not suggest that absolutely, but I think so. But I believe there is the making of a fine industry in New Zealand in the growth of apples. It is not a new thing; it is a new thing as far as export is concerned, but there are settlers in the northern district of the Dominion who went on to the land sixty years ago, and who grew apples very successfully. These men started practically with very little capital or experience, because they came from the manufacturing centres of Britain and settled on the land in its natural state, with practically no good market and nothing but their own industry to help them. I cannot remember one who has not acquired a competency by his own industry.

These settlers at first had to depend largely on fish, which was very plentiful. They grew maize to a certain extent, and vegetables, and incidentally most of the clothing for their children was made out of the flour-sacks that brought the flour for their consumption. We have now gone rather past those days. However, I am sanguine about apple-growing, and I welcome this extension of preference.

Prospect of opening up Canned Salmon Industry.

It may be news to some of the members of the Conference that New Zealand is also interested in the canning of salmon. I was pessimistic about the acclimatization of salmon in New Zealand waters for a long time. New-Zealanders tried to acclimatize salmon many years ago, and had very little to show for it for a long time. But there are plenty of fish now. We have not allowed the public to take fish for export yet, but I think we shall be able to do so next season. I know the salmon are doing very well indeed. There are two varieties, the quinnat salmon and the Atlantic. I had a beautiful fish sent to me not long ago weighing 26 lb. Fishermen state that the salmon abound in hundreds of thousands. I am looking forward in a year or two to our entrance into the market with canned salmon.

Honey Export increasing.

Then there is another growing industry in which we are greatly interested, and that is honey. Last year we exported to England 1,187,000 lb. of honey. That is a very good start. The increase in the export is to some extent due to the fact that a number of partially incapacitated men who came back from the war and whose pensions provided only a bare living were given the opportunity of going in for either poultry-farming or bee-farming. A number of them are taking up bee-farming, and have been fairly successful, and they will increase. I am confident there will be production in the future much greater than that which I have just quoted.

Wine-production in New Zealand.

I do not know that wine can be produced to any extent in New Zealand; I am not sanguine about it. But we can grow grapes. We have more than one climate in our country, but, I think, generally the atmosphere is too moist. There are two wine-growing districts, Central Otago, and Hawke's Bay on the east coast, which are quite dry enough, and good wine is produced in the latter district. But in other parts I doubt whether we could make it a great success.

Trade with Russia and Empire-development.

I think it is quite likely we shall come into competition with Canada in exporting barley before very long, because we have a good deal of land suitable for that particular purpose. In reference to the Russian wheat proposal, I think just at present, when we are struggling to assist in lifting the