

be due to the widespread unemployment following the trouble in the coal and timber industries, and to the recent tariff restrictions imposed on certain New Zealand commodities, notably butter and cheese. The virtual embargo on potatoes has also debarred New Zealand from a lucrative market. Generally speaking, however, every effort has been made to extend our trade with the Commonwealth. The field is a large one, and despite the fact that the Dominion has to compete with commodities produced under somewhat similar conditions in Australia the high quality of some of our manufactures and products enables them to command ready sales. The proposal to re-establish a regular steamer service between the South Island ports and Melbourne, Mr. Manson states, has been received with the utmost satisfaction in business circles, and it is considered that the re-establishment of the service will have a stimulating effect on trade between Victoria, Tasmania, and New Zealand generally.

In regard to Sydney, Mr. W. R. Blow reports that he has had increased inquiries from business people in Australia, and many calls from New Zealand business men. In order to give Mr. Blow a better status in trade circles, it was decided in May of last year to add the designation "Trade Commissioner for New Zealand in New South Wales" to the designation already held—i.e., "New Zealand Government Agent at Sydney." Mr. Blow has assisted many Australian business men when visiting New Zealand by giving them letters of introduction, and as a result many manufacturers have made permanent arrangements in this Dominion for the distribution of their manufactures. Similarly assistance has been afforded to New Zealand business men visiting Australia.

Recently a shop has been opened in Sydney for the exclusive retail sales of New Zealand produce and manufactures. The establishment of this shop has been closely watched, and has been materially assisted by this Department and by the Sydney officer. Agencies have been secured for tinned foods, smoked and fresh fish, oysters, cheese, bacon, toheroa soup, and other specialty lines. From this store, which has been opened most auspiciously in one of Sydney's main thoroughfares, New Zealand tourist booklets will be issued to customers, and, as it is controlled by interests who have a close knowledge of New Zealand affairs, it should prove most useful from a propaganda point of view.

Following a visit to Sydney and Melbourne by an executive officer of this Department a few months ago, advantage was taken for a full inspection to be made of the work conducted by the New Zealand Government offices. Certain recommendations were made both to the Government and to the Public Service Commissioner in the direction of increasing the efficiency of both offices.

CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE.

The Department is represented on the executive of the chambers of commerce in each of the four chief centres, and continues to keep in close touch with commercial activities and problems. This close relation has proved to be a great advantage, especially in the interchange of views on matters relating to the development of trade and in regard to questions which directly affect State Departments.

The annual conference of the Associated Chambers of Commerce, with a Dominion-wide representation, was held in Wellington in October last. The business discussed was of great importance to the commercial interests of New Zealand. The Associated Chambers of Commerce is increasing in importance and influence as the medium of conveying the considered opinions of the trading community.

The monthly bulletins issued by the Canterbury Chamber of Commerce on the trend of business in New Zealand are a feature of the work of that chamber, and form important contributions on economic matters affecting the welfare of the Dominion.

COMMERCE TRAIN.

As noted in last year's report, the Auckland Chamber of Commerce engaged a special train in October–November last to enable sixty members of the chamber to visit, in nine days, various points in the Auckland Province. The project was both novel and educative, and, as the idea first emanated from this Department, it is pleasing to record that the experiment was successful in every way.

The facilities provided by the Railway Department proved to be most suitable and comfortable for the tour. Besides four sleeper compartments and several day cars, the train possessed a selling-booth for articles in everyday use, a post-office (equipped with a telephone), shower-baths, and a parlour-car for common use. This latter car, because of its suitability for general social gatherings, proved to be one of the most useful of the many amenities provided. Opportunity was taken on the tour to study the resources of the province. Progress in agriculture, afforestation, hydro-electricity, State-farm experimentation, manufacturing industries, flax-cultivation, land-settlement, harbour and transport facilities, were all noted. The chief advantage of the tour, however, was the privilege it afforded of the country dwellers meeting the business men of Auckland. Many friendships were formed, and at the various lunches, dinners, and evening socials tendered to the party opportunity was taken to discuss problems of local and provincial importance, and the interchange of views was felt to be mutually advantageous and educative. The tour has been described in detail in a special issue of the journal published by the Auckland Chamber of Commerce. Those who participated in the tour are unanimous in saying that it proved to be a signal success—so successful, in fact, that during this coming spring another tour of the province on somewhat similar lines is being organized.

MANUFACTURERS' ASSOCIATIONS.

Close co-operation with the manufacturers' associations in each of the four chief centres has been maintained during the past year. The district officers of the Department act in an advisory capacity