

At the Conference we were discussing every day and every hour vital matters that go to the heart of the industries on which depends the livelihood of every individual and the welfare of the State. To have these representatives with us was a source of great strength to our small delegation. The New Zealand delegation was small in number, both of Ministers and of officials, compared with delegations from other dominions. But we were able, I think, to make an effective contribution to the work of the Conference. I desire to pay a tribute to the splendid service rendered by our officials and by the advisers who accompanied us. No delegation could have had more competent and loyal help.

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#### THE FUTURE.

I have given reasons for believing that the results of the Ottawa Conference will be an important factor in providing a very substantial help in restoring equilibrium and prosperity. Already a marked improvement in confidence is evident, and apart from immediate benefits, the success of the Conference lays a foundation for the future. While, however, we note with satisfaction the success achieved, we recognize that tasks of real difficulty still lie ahead.

Foremost amongst our economic problems is that of marketing our products. I do not belittle the importance of giving constant attention to production when I say that to-day the emphasis has moved from production to the effective marketing of our produce.

New Zealand will long look to the United Kingdom to absorb the bulk of her exports—indeed, Great Britain's market is vital to our very economic existence—and for this reason we must be prepared to play our part in assisting her industries. At the same time it is incumbent upon our producers and manufacturers to search out and create new markets and new outlets for their products. Already useful assistance is being given by the Trade Commissioner service, and it is evident that in default of such service our exports will suffer. There are many activities in trade promotion which individual manufacturers and exporters cannot be expected to undertake—services which are essential in the general interest. This is a fact which is frequently overlooked when criticism is levelled against Government expenditure on Trade Commissioner services. It would be false economy to curtail these, particularly at a time when wider markets are our pressing need. It is now most urgent that our producers, manufacturers, and the Government should pool their efforts in establishing much-needed new outlets.

In the sphere of marketing, New Zealand primary producers are singularly fortunate in the fact that already their export interests are assisted by their own responsible Boards. The value of these bodies was clearly shown at the Ottawa Conference. Their representatives were able to speak with authority for the important primary industries; we were able to turn to them for information and consultation. No other part of the Empire was so fortunately placed as New Zealand in this respect, and it would be reasonable to say that the definite tendency is for other countries to work along somewhat the same lines as New Zealand in setting up producers' direct organizations. I cannot too strongly emphasize, in the light of the Ottawa Conference, the value of our primary producers' export Boards to farmers and to the Dominion as a whole.

One returns from the Conference impressed with the new importance now attached by the United Kingdom to her own farming industry. Its encouragement is accepted as a first object of State policy. Agriculture is not being left to take care of itself. It is being advanced by keen, competent officials and leaders, both in the farming industry and in political life. More than once in the course of this statement I have noted how directly the attitude of His Majesty's Government in the United Kingdom was influenced by the determination to assist the home agricultural producer. This changed outlook in the United Kingdom is of much concern to us in New Zealand.

In meeting competition and finding new markets the keynote to success for New Zealand producers will be attention to quality. At our instigation a sub-committee of the Conference was set up for the purpose of examining grading standards in