

New Zealanders Eager For More Trade With Canada

BY A. C. CUMMINGS.

Auckland, New Zealand, Dec. 22.—Wherever I went during the course of my 1,500 mile tour of New Zealand I found suggestions of closer trade with Canada sympathetically received. I interviewed the Canadian trade commissioner at Auckland, W. A. Goddes, and he pointed out various ways in which the two dominions could still further expand their mutual commerce. As it was he showed me, the existing trade on the whole was showing a satisfactory tendency, but was still far from what it ought to be.

"In 1914," said the trade commissioner, "New Zealand imported from Canada about \$2,500,000 worth of goods, and exported about \$2,970,000. At present, that volume of trade has increased to roughly about eight million dollars. But we could suggest it much further. New Zealand wants lumber, wire and motor cars. I have been trying for weeks to place an order for wire and can find no manufacturer who will undertake early delivery."

Asked as to the Canadian government's attitude and its influence on Canadian trade with New Zealand, Mr. Goddes hoped for great things from it in the future. If all perishable cargo were shipped direct to New Zealand, instead, as had happened, being sent to Sydney first, New Zealand importers would be more satisfied with it.

An American Monopoly.

Making inquiries elsewhere as to motor car imports I learned an astonishing thing in regard to the position of Canadian manufacturers. I found that most of the Canadian firms were actually unable to send any cars at all to New Zealand, and that the trade was monopolized by the Americans! Only the Ford Company of Canada was free to export Canadian-made cars to New Zealand.

The explanation, it appears, goes back to the inception of the industry in Ontario. When American firms wished to enter Canada they made arrangements with existing Canadian firms of carriage makers, offering them a liberal interest in the new concerns it was proposed to establish north of the border. The American firms, however, reserved themselves the right of controlling all export trade; and consequently today if a New Zealander wishes to buy any car in Canada, other than a Ford, he cannot do so! All that business must go to American firms.

And it is a very important and rapidly growing business at that. During three months recently New Zealand imported 1,900 Ford cars and 3,000 other makes, and from the bulk of this business Canada is altogether shut out by the action of her own business men!

Another obstacle to the development of trade I found to exist in the management of the mail steamship service. Sailings from Vancouver and San Francisco are expected to take place at regular intervals so as to provide a fortnightly service with the Southern Dominion. But this is what happens instead. Within forty-eight hours after my arrival in New Zealand one steamer from Vancouver and the other from San Francisco reached port. This meant, of course, that an entire month must elapse before the next Canadian mail would be received.

As regards the lumber industry, Canada has a tremendous field open to her, if only she would organize for it. As things are, New Zealanders sent to Seattle and Tacoma for their lumber because, as several of them told me, "we can never get quotations from Vancouver." I explained that British Columbia lumbermen just now were taken up with the domestic market and had failed to organize for export as they might have done. The expressed opinion given with emphasis in reply was that the British Columbia lumbermen were very shortsighted people because they did not seem to know that only by building up a sound export trade could they maintain the prosperity of an industry during time of slackened domestic markets.

Would Produce Own Lumber.

New Zealand obviously intends to depend for no great length of time on imports from the United States where she now gets the bulk of her lumber. She is embarking on an extensive reforestation policy and has already secured the services of a Canadian forestry expert, Captain L. Mackintosh Ellis, to carry out the work.

I interviewed Captain Ellis in his office at Wellington, and he told me many things about the scheme, which shows how Canadian influence in forestry matters has its effect in New Zealand.

Canadian trees, including the world-famous Douglas fir, are to be introduced into New Zealand. The country itself was well covered by native trees before the pakeha (white) man came, but a too enthusiastic process of land-clearing in order to make room for pasturage abolished them. Today in the country around Wellington, the stumps of what were once fine trees can be seen on the hillsides even as on the burnt-over areas of British Columbia or Ontario.

The new department of forestry will spend at first \$250,000 a year and more as the work expands. The formation of a school of forestry is also contemplated. Some planting has already been done by prison labor—but under the new scheme this will be greatly expanded and it is expected that within twenty-five years the dominion will be able to meet its domestic requirements from its own forests. All the good features of the British Columbia, the French, British and Indian forestry services will be incorporated in the New Zealand when it is fully organized.

It is no secret in New Zealand that the tariff will be revised next session of the House. It is possible that further advantages might be gained for Canada if Canada would only wake up and ask for them. New Zealand has already a preferential agreement with Canada and trade has done well under it. But it might do better.

Trade With South Africa

How valuable a preferential tariff may be in building up trade between countries is obvious from the success of that between South Africa and New Zealand. It has been in force only since 1907. In that year trade between the two dominions was negligible—today it is getting close to the half million dollar mark—not a great figure it is true, but

as an indication of steady growth not to be dispised.

Trade methods I discovered have an adverse influence on expansion between Canada and New Zealand. A leading business man whom I met in the Pacific Club in Auckland inquired from me when I learned what I represented, how it came that Canadians could not do business through their own banks but had to have it done instead through those of New York.

I asked for an explanation. "Well," he said, "it is this way. When I buy goods in Canada I am asked to pay for them through New York. Agents for Canadian firms here do business on the basis of making payments in American exchange. Now what I want to know is why should you Canadians be so dependent on a foreign country as not to be able to make settlements in your own currency. There is a difference of forty cents or so between the Canadian and American currencies, and what I want to know is this, where does that difference go? Does the Canadian exporter get the benefit of it and if not who does?"

I gave it up. But I undertook to put the matter before the Canadian public that they might see how it was certain certain methods of doing business in the respects gave offence in New Zealand.

Premier Massey's Warning.

There are those naturally who see a setback to all this prosperity. Mr. Massey, the Premier, in Parliament, just lately envisaged a possible decline in the natural courses of things, wool prices must come down, the butter and cheese market will be better supplied from Europe, and the frozen meat trade reach its normal level. Then, he said, the prices of dairy lands must fall also and he warned those who speculated in them now to be careful lest they meet disaster in the future.

So perturbed are some of the more conservative people in New Zealand at the present tendency to speculate that a tax on each transfer of agricultural land with the view of stopping "land gambling" was advocated by one member of the House during my visit. He pointed out how race meetings were controlled because of the gambling that went on—how much more ought there to be some control of land speculation which brought even greater evil in its train.

The Prime Minister pointed out that there was a heavy stamp duty on such transfers at present, and did not see what other impost could be levied. It is likely, however, that the "boom" will pass without doing much harm in New Zealand. The country economically is so sound, it has such prosperous basic industries in dairying and wool-raising and meat production and the best system of co-operation in the world that a depression such as it once before underwent in its history before the invention of cold storage is unthinkable. There may be a temporary depression when the readjustment period comes and the world's markets get back to normal. But the best opinion available holds that that will be all.

GENERAL BRUTINEL

Despite Brilliant Record He Had to Be Examined With His Class—Served With Canadians.

Paris, February, 7.—During this month in France boys of the class of 1921 are called up for medical examination for the army, and so also are those men who have not passed revision test out of the army. That business is done thoroughly as this story tells.

In Paris, the other day there appeared among the young recruits a man 85 years old. With the others, he had to strip and go through the complete examination. That was because he forgot to do so in 1902, when he should have come up with his class for revision. Of what had happened in the interval the French authorities took no account. Their red tape didn't allow for such incidents as wars and alliances, and it was not till after they had gone through the business in thorough style that it was discovered that the man who was still liable for military service as a private in the French army was a British general with half a dozen citations and a string of letters after his name, among them the Companionship of the Bath, and entitled to wear as well the French War Cross and the Rosette of an officer of the Legion of Honor.

The hero of this story, whose name is General Brutinel, was certainly born in France and as a youth had done military service there, but all his life except for that time he has spent in Canada. So it was when the war broke out that he enlisted in a Canadian regiment and came to France. Promotion and honors showered themselves on him, but they were promotions and honors in other than the French army. In his native country he was classed as a man who hadn't done his duty in war. His papers were not in order and even his record of gallantry could not face that most terrible of crimes in the eyes of the French authorities. In order to live in France in peace the general found he must still submit to medical inspection in the reserve class and strip with the others. From the ordeal he at last derived the satisfaction of being informed by the French doctor that, while still a general in the British army, he was sound enough in wind and limb to serve as a private under the French colors.

General Brutinel and the "independent force" over which he had command during the closing period of the war, figured prominently in the final route of the German armies. His force consisted of motor machine guns and armored cars which, while independent of any divisional organization, co-operated with the Canadian divisions wherever his services were required. It is worthy of note that a fleet of Brutinel's armored cars were amongst the first British detachments to enter Mons on Armistice Day. Some stirring stories have been told of the work of the motor machine guns. These were machine guns mounted on a platform attached to the side of a motor cycle, similar to the civilian side car. On many occasions, these vehicles dashed through the German lines and rained a regular fusillade of shots on the support troops, sometimes penetrating as much as a mile behind the lines. So great was the confusion caused that they were almost without exception able to make the dash into the enemy land and return without mishap. Although fired on, the aim of the enemy was destroyed by the daring of the action of the motor machine gunners.

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