

up to 51 lb., and barley up to 55 lb. A sample of mummy wheat, the bearded grain of ancient Egypt, grown at Ashburton from seed taken out of a mummy case, and probably 3,000 years old, was exhibited as a curiosity. In appearance it is a very strong milling-wheat, but I was informed that it has defects which make it unsaleable, except at a nominal price. I have induced some of the best farmers in this district to sow some of it for experimental purposes, however, for I cannot help thinking that the children of Israel knew what they were about when they speculated so largely in this cereal. "There is corn in Egypt" is one of the oldest proverbs on record. I was pleased to see a very good collection of farm and garden seeds, grown near Ashburton, with a view to supplying the market on a large scale. This ought to be a much more extensive branch of agriculture than it is at present; and it is sure to become so as soon as the export trade in meat necessitates high farming. Fine samples of flour, oatmeal, and pearl barley from Christchurch and Timaru were shown. A very interesting diagram was displayed in this department, exhibiting in coloured lines running across tabulated columns the fluctuations in the price of wheat, oats, and barley for the last ten years. I was informed that this valuable compilation had been lithographed, and I have reason to think it will be found useful by farmers and all who are concerned in the grain trade. There were four exhibits of potato products, namely, two of starch, and one each of potato-flour and perfumed toilet-powder. The starch was of fine quality, and showed that this useful material can be successfully produced. These samples were made by hand, one at Christchurch and the other at Ashburton, merely as experiments. There seems to be no doubt, however, that by the aid of machinery this industry might be profitably established on an extensive scale.

I gave particular attention to an interesting exhibit of five samples of sugar-beet grown at Ashburton, with the saccharine matter in two stages of preparation and the pressed pulp. Some of the roots shown were stated by the exhibitor to be of inferior quality for the production of sugar, but one sample was said to be of the right sort. I could not form any opinion as to the possibility of the manufacture of beet-sugar being profitably pursued, but I gathered from my inquiries that the yield of roots at Ashburton would be very great, something like forty tons to the acre; and the exhibitor, who is experienced in the beet-sugar industry in Germany, assured me that the percentage of saccharine matter in the expressed liquor is 15 per cent. from Ashburton-grown roots, whilst in Germany 12 per cent. is considered satisfactory. The samples included one of the juice merely pressed from the roots, and one of the same juice reduced to the condition of molasses. The next stage towards the production of sugar would have required the aid of machinery and chemicals that are not at present available. A specimen of German beet-sugar was shown with the other articles; and the whole exhibit was a highly instructive one.

Chicory grown, roasted, and prepared for sale at Ashburton was exhibited in all its stages, from the roots to the marketable article in canisters. Tobacco was shown growing vigorously in pots, and also in various stages of preparation, up to finished cakes and cigars, made at Ashburton. Several fine samples of linseed were exhibited from Ashburton and other parts of Canterbury, and its application to several useful purposes was well displayed. A good assortment of cordage was shown in native flax and Italian and Russian hemp, and also a large variety of twines of native flax, locally-grown linseed, and other materials. A manufacturer of twine for binding corn and of cordage stated that he preferred New Zealand-grown linseed to imported hemp, and that he would be glad to take large quantities of it, but that at present it was not to be got. I may say that I have communicated with several farmers on this subject, and that I believe next year a considerable quantity of linseed will be grown, and will be found a very profitable crop.

The exhibits of leather goods were few in number, but good in quality. They included well-tanned basils and blacksmiths' aprons from Tinwald, near Ashburton; splendid dyed wool-mats for carriages, and hearthrugs, from Christchurch; harvesters' and gardeners' gloves, driving gloves and gaiters, very well made and very cheap, from Christchurch; and parchment from Nelson. Woollens and woollen goods from Kaiapoi, Roslyn, and Mosgiel, including flannels, tweeds, broadcloths, hosiery, blankets, shawls, plaids, rugs, &c., were shown in endless variety and of unexceptionable quality.

Hats of all kinds, including a large assortment made from New Zealand rabbit-fur, were shown by a Dunedin maker.

Boots and shoes, machine- and hand-made, from Christchurch and Ashburton, were shown in great variety.

Confectionery and bread and biscuits from Ashburton and Christchurch formed a varied and pleasing exhibit, notably bread made at Ashburton in French and German forms.

Brushware, by an Auckland maker, was displayed in great variety and of excellent quality.

Soap and candles from several places were shown, the wax and paraffine candles from Rakaia appearing to great advantage.

Hops from Nelson were shown side by side with samples from Tasmania and California, and malt, beers, wines from Wanganui, vinegar from Ashburton, honey and beeswax, sauces, and inks from Nelson, and a host of minor productions, all helped to make up an interesting and useful display.

Electrotypy was exhibited and explained by a number of specimens of work done in Christchurch, including medallions, medals, plate, &c., from casts in gold, silver, copper, and nickel, spoons and forks plated, a galvanic battery with plated fittings, and silvered carriage fittings.

Silversmiths' work of fine quality from Christchurch, Ashburton, and Timaru, including a case of ornaments of pawa-shell set in silver, formed an attractive exhibit, and a still more interesting one was a number of handsome clocks made at Ashburton.

A useful industry was represented in the manufacture of a great number of small articles from bone and wood, the workshop of the exhibitor being a constant centre of attraction to visitors, especially the younger ones, to whom he duly expatiated on the advantages of turning their hand to profitable occupations. He informed me that, with a small outlay for tools, boys could easily earn a living at this trade in their leisure time.

Printing in all its branches was exemplified by excellent specimens of workmanship from Christchurch, Ashburton, and Timaru.