

The highest sugar percentage in Victorian-grown beet-roots up to that time has been 15·7 per cent., which, however, has during the 1893-94 season been surpassed in a most satisfactory manner, when the Agricultural Chemist ascertained the highest sugar percentage in the juice at no less than 22½ per cent. of roots produced by a private grower, while sixty-four samples from Government experimental patches have averaged as high as 18·1 per cent., ranging between 14·74 per cent. and 21·14 per cent. Such most satisfactory results have led the Agricultural Chemist to the conclusion that this industry is one of the most naturally suited to Victoria.

Mr. Richard Gird, in the annual address for 1894 before the State Board of Agriculture at Sacramento, in California, says, "As a nation we should encourage the production of those products that are now purchased from abroad—for the double effect of diversifying agricultural industries, making every other kind of crop more valuable; and also to save our money at home among our own people, the necessity for which is so apparent at the present time."

This sentence meets and fits the conditions of Victoria in the fullest sense; and here, like in California, applies thoroughly to the production of sugar, of which our population is consuming enormous quantities every year, every ounce having to be imported from elsewhere, while nature has placed at our disposal sources of wealth which will most undoubtedly enable us with incalculable advantages to grow and manufacture our own sugar upon our own land with our own labour.

It will no doubt interest honourable members if the sugar question of Victoria, as our statistical records for the year 1893 present it, is briefly placed before them. According to these records, it appears that during the preceding year in all 45,598·4 tons of sugar have been imported into this colony. As of this quantity 5,370·2 tons have again been exported, the total consumption was 40,228·2 tons, for whose purchase a sum approaching three-quarters of a million sterling has left this country. The following table will show whence our sugar supplies during the year 1893 have been drawn :—

Name of Countries.	Refined Sugar, in Tons.	Raw Sugar, in Tons.	Total, in Tons.
United Kingdom	1·10	...	1·10
New South Wales	7·80	6,798·85	6,766·65
Queensland	1,025·30	8,489·60	9,514·90
South Australia	79·35	243·45	322·80
Fiji	...	3,233·80	3,233·80
Natal	39·40	...	39·40
Hongkong	81·60	0·75	82·35
Java	...	23,552·40	23,552·40
Mauritius	186·25	1,898·75	2,085·00
Totals	1,420·80	44,177·60	45,598·40

A closer analysis of the above statistical records shows that Australian sugar imported in 1893 amounted to 16,272·2 tons, and foreign sugar imported in 1893 amounted to 29,326·2 tons, which indicates that out of every 100 lb. of sugar imported only 35·56 lb. were of Australian origin, while 64·32 lb. were foreign—principally from Java, viz., 51·65 lb. These figures are very instructive indeed. It is generally supposed that the sugar Victorians are consuming comes chiefly from our sister colony of Queensland, but the above statistics prove how erroneous such assumption is. The following tabular statement—compiled from official sources, and referring to general sugar supplies of the Australian Colonies, Tasmania, and New Zealand for the year 1893—will probably dispel some more erroneous notions generally held :—

Colony.	Produced—Tons.	Imported—Tons.	Exported—Tons.	Consumed—Tons.
Queensland	76,146·00	33·50	52,528·95	23,650·55
New South Wales	20,000·00	35,754·00	10,174·30	45,579·70
Victoria	...	45,598·40	5,370·20	40,228·20
South Australia	...	20,183·30	3,596·30	16,587·00
West Australia	...	4,000·00	..	4,000·00
Tasmania	...	7,218·90	3·00	7,215·90
New Zealand	...	21,340·00	282·00	21,058·00
Totals	96,146·00	134,128·10	71,954·35	158,319·35

The preceding table shows that the only two Australian sugar-growing and manufacturing colonies (sugar-cane)—viz., Queensland and New South Wales—have between them produced only 96,146 tons of sugar, whereas the total consumption in the seven colonies named has amounted to 158,319·35 tons; so that the shortage, which had to be imported from foreign countries, has amounted to 62,173 tons, of which quantity, as previously shown, Victoria alone took 29,326 tons, or 47·16 per cent. The table also shows that in Queensland and New South Wales combined the excess of sugar production over sugar consumption has left only 26,916 tons available for the remaining five colonies, whose consumption was 89,089 tons; so that the latter have been com-