

to the extent one might have thought it would, considering what we have been passing through; and that, while there has been some small reduction in the total consumption of sugar per head here, he thought that such reduction has been only in the quantity used for brewing, and not in that used for food. Even now the consumption per head in Australasia is very largely above that of any other country, notwithstanding the enormous import of confectionery, &c., from England, which is all included in the British consumption, and although the people here are supplied with other articles of diet in infinitely larger quantity and of better quality than any other community can obtain."

Such most significant facts are borne out by the following figures, quoted from a lecture by Dr. O. J. Broch before the Statistical Society of Paris, according to which authority the consumption of sugar in the under-mentioned countries has been as follows per head of population:—

	Lb.		Lb.		Lb.
South Australia	... 102·10	United States	... 43·00	Norway	... 11·37
Western Australia	... 93·51	Denmark	... 29·69	Finland	... 11·22
Victoria	... 90·75	Holland	... 28·37	Portugal	... 9·56
Tasmania	... 90·49	Switzerland	... 22·81	Roumania	... 7·71
New Zealand	... 87·18	France	... 22·56	Russia	... 7·69
United Kingdom	... 68·99	Sweden	... 17·51	Spain	... 5·11
Queensland	... 62·93	Belgium	... 15·74	Servia	... 4·41
New South Wales	... 60·93	Germany	... 15·01	Italy	... 3·20
Argentine Republic	... 50·04	Austria	... 13·23		

Although, as per above table, our colonies occupy the foremost place, there are ample evidences that our sugar consumption is still on the increase, and there is no telling at what figure the maximum is likely to be estimated. It may be mentioned that the Victorian Statist places the colonial figures somewhat higher all round than those of Dr. Broch as above; but, adhering to the latter gentleman's data, and assuming that our seven colonies would all be consuming at the same rate as South Australia—viz., 102·1 lb. per head per annum—then, on the basis of the 1891 population census of the respective colonies, the total annual increase in the sugar consumption would amount to no less than 37,055 tons, which quantity, if not produced within the colonies, would, of course, have to be imported from foreign countries at a cost considerably exceeding half a million sterling.

Looking at the just-quoted table in a general way, we cannot fail to arrive at the conviction that undoubtedly there is an enormous field and most brilliant prospects for the sugar industry generally in the world's market. Statistics demonstrate that the consumption of sugar is increasing very rapidly, and evidently no nation has reached the maximum yet—most of them are, indeed, very much behind, although recently their demands for sugar have been growing up in leaps and bounds. In the face of such facts, Mr. C. Czarnickow's announcement, dated London, 4th October, 1894, that in beet-sugar, "barring the unforeseen, a minimum excess of 800,000 tons over last year's production may be looked for" during the 1894-95 season on the Continent of Europe, needs not to cause much alarm, although the market may thereby be temporarily depressed.

Having thus in a general way demonstrated the success of beet-sugar in its competition with the cane, it will be necessary before leaving the consideration of our sugar-supplies, as already indicated, to deal with the probable expansion of the cane industry in our sister colonies. To do this aspect of the question full justice would require entering elaborately into the various factors at work or at influence in connection with the Australian cane industry. This would open a very wide field, which is altogether beyond the scope of this paper—at least, as far as an elaborate treatise is concerned, at which no systematic attempt will be made.

The two sugar-producing colonies so far are Queensland and New South Wales, where cane is more or less extensively cultivated, especially in the first-named colony. In New South Wales the area suitable for cane-growing is naturally limited, and there is not much room for expansion in that colony, while matters are entirely different in Queensland. In both cases the difficulty of the day seems to be the absence or insufficiency of suitable mills to get the cane already grown crushed. As far as New South Wales is concerned, only on the 20th October, 1894, a deputation of cane growers appealed to the Premier to take steps to aid the sugar-growers. It was stated that a large area was under cane cultivation, but, on account of the absence of suitable mills, there was no scope for the development of the industry, nor any prospect to get the cane-crops crushed. In the northern colony of Queensland the same difficulties are manifesting themselves, although they have been foreseen to some extent by the Legislature, and greatly alleviated by "The Sugar Works Guarantee Act, 1893" (Queensland, No. 18, assented to 18th October, 1893), whose objects are to stimulate the cane industry by guaranteeing, under certain conditions, both capital and interest of debentures issued by a company erecting a sugar-mill. The difficulties which have arisen are due to the fact that in past years a great number of small primitively-furnished mills have been erected and working, which, under the prevailing high sugar prices, have proved fairly remunerative in spite of their perfectly-inadequate methods and scandalous wastes. Receding market prices and keener competition of mills more modernly furnished for large scale work have placed small concerns entirely *hors de combat*, the consequence being that the State rightly stepped in and lent its aid to the greatly-imperilled industry. To remodel the latter so as to correspond with modern requirements will require the reinvestment of enormous sums of money, which circumstance undoubtedly must at least temporarily check the progress of that industry, as the major portion of it must be diverted into entirely new channels. The final effect hereof possibly will be that whole districts will have to give up cane-growing altogether, while, on the other hand, new districts undoubtedly will be opened up for it; obviously, however, such changes will not be established without at least a temporary check.