

studying the American supply, the factories would have an idea of what the English demand is likely to be in the following winter.

One of the partners in a large importing firm, who has lived in New Zealand and who knows the produce trade at both ends, was very emphatic and outspoken in his remarks. The west-coast steamer service he declared to be "absolutely rotten," and calculated to "kill the dairy-produce business altogether." The real way to increase the trade was—(1) have regular and more frequent steamers, and (2) adopt the consignment system. Wholesale purchasers of New Zealand butter last season lost about £250,000, and the factories would not get so high a price again. They would be better with a steady moderate price, rather than high prices one year and then a "slump." From the point of view of the butter trade, there ought to be a service of steamers arriving every third week, from December to May. Then, for lambs, the steamers ought to arrive regularly from March to September. There should, therefore, be a better service all the year round. Behind all this is the wool trade, which should be the backbone of the service; in short, he held that the securing of the wool trade is the only thing that will make a continuance of the service possible. The result of substituting three-weekly for four-weekly steamers would be an increase of the trade by 25 per cent. It would mean four more steamers. He expressed the opinion that Manchester as a port is "no good" at present. He started business in Manchester, and all his sympathies were with the city where he was born and bred, but he had to give it up. It would take two generations to breed a race of merchants in Manchester who would understand business requirements. There is not a firm there with a proper organization for distributing goods. The only hope is for Liverpool merchants to open branches in Manchester, but they will not do that. Timber, wool, and cotton pay well to be delivered in Manchester, but that city has made very little progress in the meat and dairy-produce trades. Meat sent by rail from Liverpool to Manchester (because so few of the steamers go up the Ship Canal) suffers deterioration, and as high as 2d. per pound has been claimed on large quantities of it. The west-coast line of steamers had done one good thing—it had demonstrated that there is a large market in Liverpool for New Zealand produce. He believed that a subsidy of £20,000 a year for three years would provide a fortnightly west-coast service, and that would be a very small expenditure when compared with the advantage that would be gained. He complained that contracts made with colonial people are not fulfilled when the market goes up. They simply break their contracts when it suits them, and take refuge in their distance from England and the heavy expense of taking legal proceedings against them. As an example he mentioned that the output of a butter-factory—150 tons—was bought by contract. His firm bought some of that butter, but could not get it. The factory took to cheesemaking, and said, "We have not produced any butter, and therefore cannot deliver it." The long and short of the matter is, when we buy out at a high price we get delivery; when we buy on contract, and the market goes up, we cannot get delivery. The whole system of dealing in butter in New Zealand he looked upon as highly immoral.

V. MANCHESTER.

TRADE AND PORT FACILITIES.

Manchester, the largest inland city in the British Isles, has now a population of close on 600,000. Salford, which, though possessing a separate municipal organization, is practically part of Manchester, has some 270,000 inhabitants. The official estimate of the population of the two municipalities on the 30th June, 1906, was 871,202. To this total may properly be added another half-million of persons living in the immediate suburbs of Eccles, Stretford, Gorton, Hyde, Dukinfield, Droylsden, Ashton, Stalybridge, Failsworth, and Middleton, all within six miles of Manchester. Thus in the collection of municipal and suburban districts popularly known as "Manchester" there is a population of 1,370,000 persons.

By the opening of the Ship Canal in 1894 Manchester was converted into a seaport. Viewing the city in the light of the figures quoted, it is the second in importance in the British Empire. Even so, the figures stated give but an imperfect idea of the population served by the Port of Manchester. Within the cartage area from the Manchester docks there are located over 2,372,000 people. I give the actual figures of the census returns for thirty towns or suburban districts, including Manchester and Salford, for the years 1901 and 1891:—

Distance from Manchester.	1901.	1891.	Increase.
Manchester and Salford	764,925	703,482	61,443
4 miles	1,166,879	1,016,501	150,178
6 "	1,350,279	1,182,184	168,095
7 "	1,555,522	1,373,907	181,615
9 "	1,957,408	1,744,552	212,856
10 "	2,030,185	1,814,741	215,444
11 "	2,272,194	2,031,982	240,212
14 "	2,312,659	2,071,935	240,724
15 "	2,372,858	2,127,008	245,850

The increase of nearly a quarter of a million shown in the five-yearly period has been largely brought about owing to the existence of the Manchester Ship Canal and the industrial and commercial facilities conferred by that undertaking. This seems to be demonstrated by the fact that Salford, Eccles, and Stretford, all of which abut on the principal docks of the Ship Canal, had an average increase of population of over 15 per cent., or four times the average of twenty other surrounding industrial districts that have not the advantage of close proximity to the docks.

Advantages of the Ship Canal.—Convincing evidence of the benefits conferred by the Ship Canal is afforded by the striking development of the Trafford Park Estate, 1,100 acres in extent,