

cultivation of high-class silky fibre of the *tihore* and other special high-grade flax-plants not known to general commerce of to-day, the fibres from which, when properly handled and understood, will reach £100 per ton. Nevertheless, the value of the flax industry for 1906 is given in the Official Year-book of 1907 as £776,106. It was only £20,000 in 1886.

SUGAR-BEET VALUES AND BENEFITS.

In advocating the sugar-beet-root industry for Waikato specially it must be understood that, although great importance should be attached to the extraordinary sugar values of Waikato-grown sugar-beets, nevertheless the actual sugar value is the least of all the values to the producer of the sugar-beet-roots and to the district as a whole where the sugar-beet-root industry becomes firmly established, as the sugar itself can only be reckoned upon at cost-price when refined, and therefore the refiner (that is, the capitalist) must be consulted, and his capital invested made as safe as practicable in the price demanded for the raw material and certainty of supply. All interests in the district, public and private, are therefore at stake in the success or non-success of their sugar-factory, for, independently of the sugar value itself, though great, the Waikato farmers' gain from the establishment of the sugar-beet-root industry in Waikato will be in their improved position in the dairy competitions of the world in their winter dairies, and to Waikato generally in their meat freezing and preserving works, especially in the early-lamb portion of that industry, in butter and cheese, ham and bacon, sawmills and sash and door factories, grain-mills, flax-mills, woollen-mills, furniture and cabinet making, coachbuilding, biscuit, brick and tile and pottery works, agricultural-implement factories, chaff-cutting, sugar-boiling and confectionery, tinware-factories, woodware and turnery, lime and cement works, rope and twine works, fruit-preserving works, jam-factories, chemical works, electric-power lighting works, shirtmaking and worsted factories, spouting and ridging works, hosiery-factories, steam launch and boat building; sauce, pickle, and vinegar factories, sail, tent, and oilskin factories; hat and cap factories, brush and broom factories, mattress factories, paper and paper bag factories, box factories, and other numerous small industries in which a few are joined together, also perfect water and transport services of a local character and communications. The sugar-beet-root and dairy-farming assuming the foremost position in this district, and the farmer, as he should do, farming the land scientifically and economically, it will become the base for stability and extension of the Dominion of New Zealand in the Pacific.

THE IDEAL SUGAR-BEET FIELD.

There are doubtless large areas of land in New Zealand suitable for sugar-beet-root cultivation, but for the pioneer factory for sugar-manufacture the central Waikato basin, from Huntly to Morrinsville, Cambridge, Te Awamutu, Alexandra, Whatawhata, Ngaruawahia, and Taupiri is the ideal sugar-beet field in the Dominion of New Zealand. Its fresh-water rivers, Waikato and Waipa, navigable to Cambridge and Alexandra respectively, and their waters having been analysed for the special purposes of sugar-manufacture, and certified to be suitable, with its district lime-works at Te Kuiti, producing lime by analysis 96 per cent. carbonate of lime; its coal-mines at Huntly, very suitable for the purpose, connected by rail and river-steamer, and with soils that have now been placed by careful official tests and practical proofs beyond question or doubt as to their being suitable for producing sugar-beets of very high value in sugar up to 21 tons per acre, and with a home market for all the sugar she can produce, without competing with the only cane-sugar company at present in existence in the Dominion, and which is in a most flourishing condition—the Waikato central basin must be admitted by all to be the most fitting locality for the pioneer beet-sugar factory in New Zealand.

THE PROSPECTS OF THE INDUSTRY

The fruit and poultry industries will reap great advantages from the sugar-beet-root industry, and these industries will become of ever-increasing value to the Dominion. But the great consideration in favour of establishing the sugar-beet industry is the fact that sooner or later New Zealand must import largely, as Great Britain has had to do to maintain her commerce with the world and her population at home—for that New Zealand will become a great manufacturing and maritime centre no one can doubt, but her area is so limited as compared with Australia and the great continents of America, South Africa, and Canada that she can never expect to rival these vast countries in quantity where land is so cheap and capable of fattening stock on natural grasses. Nevertheless, New Zealand is admitted to be exceptionally fertile and free from droughts, and is capable of producing the highest class of stock and agricultural products; therefore quality, not quantity, will be her motto. Her lands will become of such high values that they will have to be well farmed and liberally treated to enable them to pay interest on outlay and value. The sugar-beet-root culture, producing crops of from 15 to 20 tons per acre, containing by analysis 16 per cent. of sugar, with a factory established in the district to purchase at cash sugar values, the roots will provide the industrious farmer with ready money to pay for the labour and manure to make it possible for his homestead farm of 25 acres to pay and support his family in comfort, by producing a superior class of sheep, cattle, and horses for general, dairy, or stud purposes, available for the always increasing demand for such in Australia, South America, and South Africa. A visit to the Waikato District Experimental Farm at Ruakura to inspect the Shorthorn cows and the sheep and horses bred there will satisfy any one who may doubt these facts, and therefore every one who has a stake in the country should feel interested in establishing this sugar-beet industry in Waikato. In case of foreign complications and our communications and sugar-supply being interfered with for a time, what would New Zealand do for sugar? It would be of no avail then to blame any one or lament the lack of foresight. Now is the time to look this possibility in the