

New Zealand, often for special parts of the carcase, and wholesale prices in England for the whole carcase. Any observable differences in the English and New Zealand markets for these commodities, other than those existing at times when supply or demand is subject to sudden changes, are fully accounted for by the costs of transport from the Dominion Home.

8. The opening of British and other markets abroad to New Zealand produce must have disturbed the relative amounts of production in the Dominion. For example, "Wheat, once a predominant commodity in our list of exports, is now grown in quantities little more than sufficient for our own requirements. Of late years we have hovered on the verge of a wheat panic due to local scarcity. A few figures will make the position clearer. From 1880 to 1890 the annual average amount of wheat produced in New Zealand was 8,000,000 bushels; for the nineties the annual average fell to 7,300,000 bushels; and during the first seven years of this century the average has been only 6,700,000 bushels.

Changes in
relative pro-
duction.

As indicating that it is the lower-grade lands that have been abandoned to pastoral purposes, it is almost sufficient to note that during this century the wheat-yield has been the highest on record—viz., 31·6 bushels per acre, against an average of 23·8 for the preceding century."*

The following table shows the variations in regard to New Zealand's wheat crop for the last twenty years, and the average prices and their index numbers, as worked out by Dr. J. W. McIlraith in his "Course of Prices in New Zealand":—

TABLE 51.—NEW ZEALAND WHEAT CROP, YEARS 1892–1912.

Season.	Area under Crop.	Total Yield.	Yield per Acre.	Per Head of European Population, 31st December.	Price per Bushel.	Index Number (3/5 = 100).
	Acres.	Bushels.	Bushels.	Bushels.	s. d.	
1892–93	381,245	8,378,217	21·98	12·88	2 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	81
1893–94	242,737	4,891,695	20·15	7·28	2 5 $\frac{3}{4}$	73
1894–95	148,575	3,613,037	24·32	5·27	2 11 $\frac{1}{4}$	86
1895–96	245,441	6,843,768	27·88	9·79	3 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	106
1896–97	258,608	5,926,523	22·92	8·30	4 3 $\frac{1}{4}$	125
1897–98	315,801	5,670,017	17·95	7·78	4 2 $\frac{3}{4}$	124
1898–99	399,034	13,073,416	32·76	17·58	2 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	75
1899–1900	269,749	8,581,898	31·81	11·34	2 4 $\frac{3}{4}$	70
1900–1901	206,465	6,527,154	31·61	8·50	2 5 $\frac{1}{8}$	71
1901–02	163,462	4,046,589	24·76	5·14	3 6	103
1902–03	194,355	7,457,915	38·37	9·23	4 2	122
1903–04	230,346	7,891,654	34·26	9·48	3 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	92
1904–05	258,015	9,123,673	35·36	10·64	3 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	92
1905–06	222,183	6,798,934	30·60	7·70	3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	94
1906–07	206,185	5,005,252	27·18	5·51	3 9	110
1907–08	193,031	5,567,139	28·84	5·99	4 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	135
1908–09	252,391	8,772,790	34·75	9·13	4 1	120
1909–10	311,000	8,661,100	28·00	8·81	3 8	107
1910–11	322,167	8,290,221	25·73	8·27	..	..
1911–12†	215,528	7,261,138	33·69	7·08	..	..

There is no doubt, however, that, if wheat continues to rise in price and if suitable labour can be obtained, more land will be devoted to its production, and the profits derived from the various uses to which land can be put will always tend to equality.

9. To sum up: There is no doubt that, if there were no outside market for New Zealand produce, the supply would greatly exceed the demand, and that prices would fall to an unremunerative level, with the result that the spending-powers of the rural population would be so seriously reduced that the reduction would have a disastrous effect on both the town and the country population alike, and that nothing could avert financial trouble from the whole community, as the products would not be of sufficient value to meet our liabilities.

General con-
clusion.

* McIlraith, Course of Prices in New Zealand, p. 48.

† Estimated—and probably too low.