

This document provides a scanned copy of the leaflet **“Canterbury – the Industrial Centre of New Zealand”**, which was published by the Canterbury Progress League for the 1924 British Empire Exhibition. The fold-out leaflet set out to give people in Great Britain, who were visiting the New Zealand Pavilion at the Exhibition, information about the manufacturing industries of the South Island province of Canterbury. It provides a good introduction, with illustrations, to the different agricultural and engineering-based activities, and to the living and working conditions (including wage rates) for people in Christchurch and the other main settlements. Part of its aim was to encourage suitable workers (and investors) to emigrate to this part of “the Dominion”, and help boost its production further.



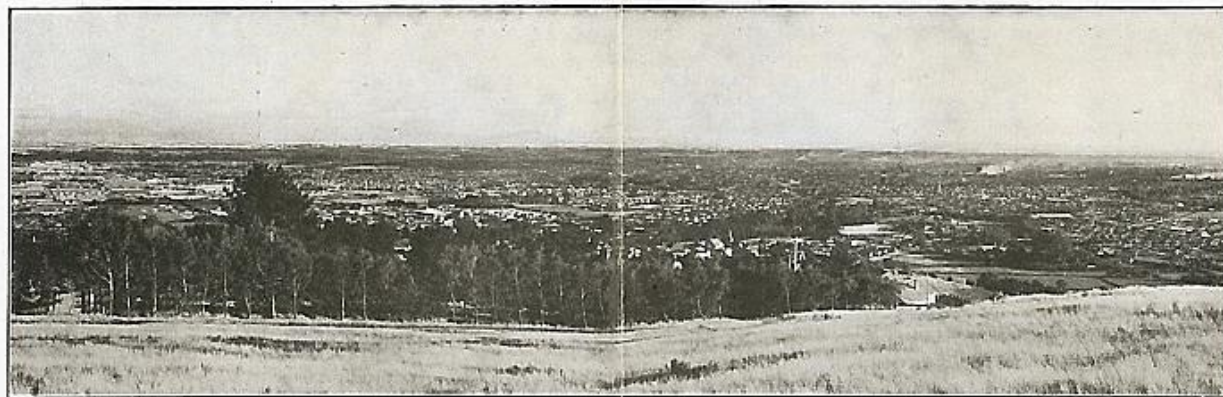
< A 1924 postcard showing the New Zealand Pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition.

The British Empire Exhibition was held at Wembley, in North-West London, and brought together 56 countries and territories across the world, which ‘owed allegiance to the British flag’, to get to know each other better, and to improve trade between them. To celebrate the Exhibition’s 40th anniversary, Wembley History Society set out to collect material from the Exhibition as a permanent record of the event. Hundreds of items were donated in 1964, and you can see the Society’s stamp and accession number for this leaflet on its cover. Wembley is now part of the London Borough of Brent. The collection was donated to Brent Archives in 2010, so that it could be preserved, catalogued and made more widely available. This leaflet has been catalogued by Brent Archives as part of the Wembley History Society Collection, with the reference number WHS / 0 / 1 / 12 / 41.



WHS/01/12/32

Canterbury - the Industrial Centre of New Zealand



Panorama of Christchurch from Port Hills.



NOT content with being a large supplier of agricultural and pastoral products, New Zealand steadily is making progress as a manufacturing country. These pages give a "close-up" of Canterbury, the industrial province of the Dominion. Geographical situation is a basic factor for success in manufacturing. As geography answers the question "where?" so the manufacturer wants to know *where* he is to find fuel, raw materials, labour, and a market for his products. Because Canterbury has abundant fuel, hydro-electric power, raw materials, honest labour and easy transport by rail and water, it has become the greatest manufacturing province.

Hideous chimneys and smoke-grimed factories hardly exist in Christchurch, the industrial heart of Canterbury and a city without slums. King Coal has an important but a limited kingdom—hydro-electric power is the Samson which gave the original impetus to, and now turns most of the industrial gear.

This machinery revolves in a great many industries related to the rural products of the fertile plains of Canterbury, which cover an area 200 miles from North to South, and forty miles wide.

They are wonderful plains, sloping gently to the wide Pacific, and intersected by wide rivers. They know no rigorous cold, nor yet the enervating heat of the tropics. The climate is equable and health-giving. Little wonder that when the founders of the province first gazed upon these smiling lands they were filled with a spirit of confidence in Canterbury as a place of destiny. That spirit is marching on. Some 70 years have passed

(1)

since the early settlers came, and their dreams are coming true. The rich farm lands are yielding generously of their natural wealth, and whirring machinery is converting much of it to the needs of man. The industrial side was, of course, a thing of later growth, but its progress has been remarkable. The sterling value of manufactures in Canterbury from 1911 to 1923 has increased by 90.92 per cent., the province providing a substantial contribution to the latest annual Dominion total for manufactures of £73,604,971.

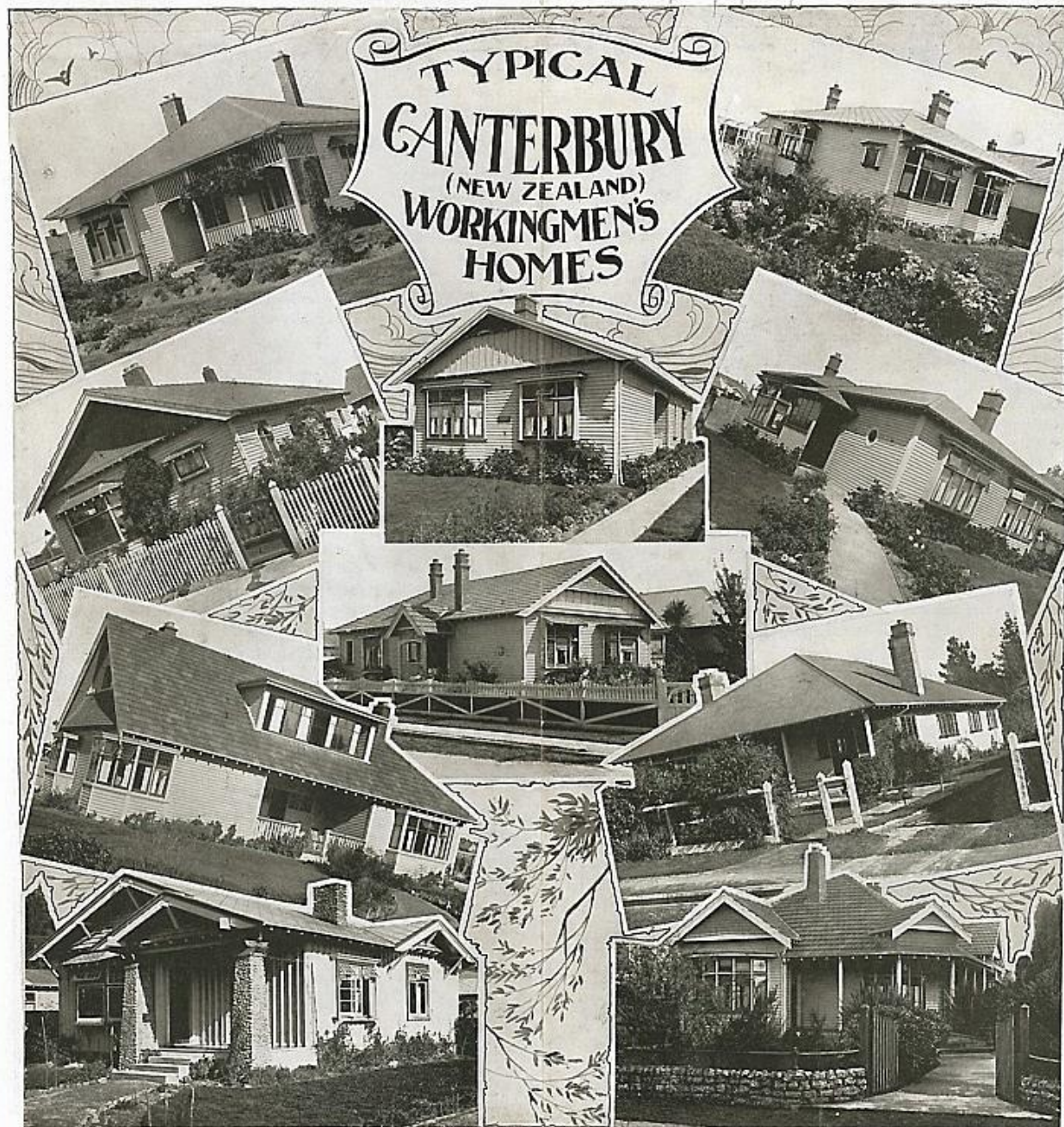
One of the greatest sources of industrial wealth in the province is the manufacture of woollens. There are large mills in Kaiapoi, Ashburton and Timaru, and also in Woolston, a suburb of Christchurch. These mills are unable to cope with the demand from all parts of the country for their high-grade textiles, and not long ago it was necessary to especially recruit further operatives in Scotland, and bring them to Kaiapoi.

There are many clothing factories in Christchurch, engaged in making up fabrics from the mills, and the latest annual figures show an output from them of approximately £500,000, this industry having increased fourfold in the past few decades.

Leather which will more than stand comparison with that produced in any part of the world is manufactured in Woolston. Enterprise does not stop at the manufacture of leather, and many footwear factories, employing large numbers of hands, are established in and around Christchurch. Besides huge meat-freezing and canning works, soaps, candles, chemicals, glue and gelatines, suggesting a clever manipulation of the by-products of the meat works, are produced in huge quantities. Tanning, fellmongering and wool-scouring are important industries. Flour and oatmeal mills grist their products ceaselessly, and besides are kindred industries where all sorts of cereal foods are prepared. Biscuits and confectionery are produced on a big scale.

(2)

WHS/0/112/414



Canterbury - the Industrial Centre of New Zealand

In 1911 the value of manufactures of agricultural implements and dairying machinery was £141,897. In the past few years, the annual value has exceeded £500,000. But this is only one aspect of engineering, the industry itself employing thousands of workers. Iron, steel and brass founding, boiler making and electrical engineering are growing industries. The motor-cycle engineering industry manufactured products in 1923 valued at £215,224.

Still another branch of engineering is in the hands of the Government. It is the production of locomotives, carriages and wagons for the railways, which are State-owned. Huge works are located at Addington, where most of the engines manufactured are the AB 72 tons express class, and also the X 90 tons class. Many hundreds of men are employed at these works, turning out engines and rolling-stock for all parts of New Zealand.

An industry which sprang into existence a few years back, but which rapidly is expanding, is that of motor body building. Canterbury, with its hundreds of miles of fine level roads, has become the motoring centre of the Dominion, and the value of motor and coach bodies manufactured within the province now approximates £150,000 annually. The workmanship and design of these bodies are very fine, and the Canterbury-made article may be seen on the roads in all parts of New Zealand. This industry enjoys especial advantages in being located in Canterbury, and many beautiful native woods are used therein. Such types of woods impart a real distinction to the valuable furniture turned out within the province. A large number of such factories are situated in and around Christchurch, the annual output in recent years being valued at about £250,000.

Paints, varnishes, brushware, boot polishes, bags and sacks, oilskins, tents, sails, cardboard boxes, bricks, pipes and tiles, insulators, wirework, stoves and ranges, billiard tables, rope and twine, wickerwork, leadlights, bicycles, perambulators, and a host of other products are manufactured in the province. Some of the industries producing them are of recent growth, but they are sturdy and are expanding in size. They are giving to the district an importance in which its manufacturers have reason for a legitimate pride. Wood working in all its branches, from saw-

milling to the manufacture of the finest furniture and cabinet work, is a staple industry, and the printing trade is one of the most important in the Dominion, employing many thousands of persons.

An Industrial Nursery.

Canterbury may be likened to an industrial nursery, its sturdy and rapidly-growing plants basking in the sunshine behind hedges of protective import duties. Whatever may be the legitimate arguments for and against tariff protection in some of the older countries, there is no question of its benefit to New Zealand. Trading within the Empire is, of course, encouraged. There are preferential duties where British countries are concerned; the great object of the tariff wall is to prevent unfair competition and the dumping of goods in the Dominion made by foreign and sweated labour. Through the far-sighted and deliberate planning of its industrialists the economic strength is sound, the financial stability of Canterbury being emphasised by the manner in which it withstood the depression which was an aftermath of the great war. While its industries but lightly tap its resources, its markets are hungry and are capable of absorbing a vastly-increased volume of its manufactures.

The standard of personal comfort in Canterbury and in all parts of New Zealand, is very high. The community is prosperous and free-spending. That makes for free trading. As yet the Dominion imports heavily. Principally, importations comprise clothing and textiles, metals and machinery, sugar, tea, alcoholic liquors, tobacco, paper, and motor vehicles, the inflow of the last having increased with marvellous rapidity. Canterbury produces many of the classes of manufactures contained in some of these groups, and does so successfully, turning out a high standard of goods. So the prospects of the steady industrial growth being maintained are bright and thoroughly justified.

With its rapid progress has come an increase in population. Canterbury comprises 216,500 inhabitants, Christchurch, with a population of over 117,000, occupying second place among the cities of the Dominion.

Wealth of Hydro-Electrical Power.

Hydro-electric power is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, asset. And fortunate indeed is the province to have a



Confectionery Makers, Christchurch.

(3)



Brushware Factory, Christchurch.

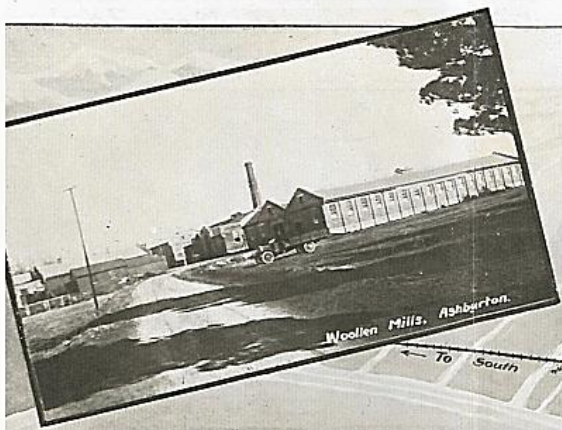
(4)

THE SOURCE OF CANTERBURY'S HYDRO- ELECTRIC POWER

LAKE COLERIDGE

OTIRA TUNNEL

PROPOSED
2ND POWER
STATION



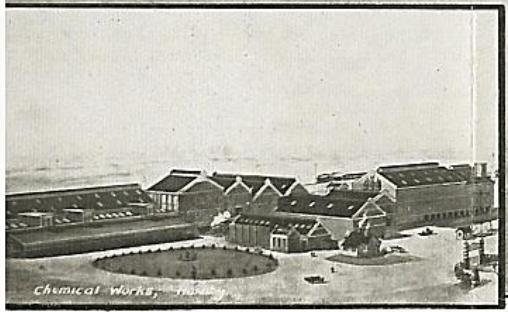
Woolen Mills, Ashburton.



Woolen Mills, Kaiapoi.



Furniture Manufacturing, Christchurch.



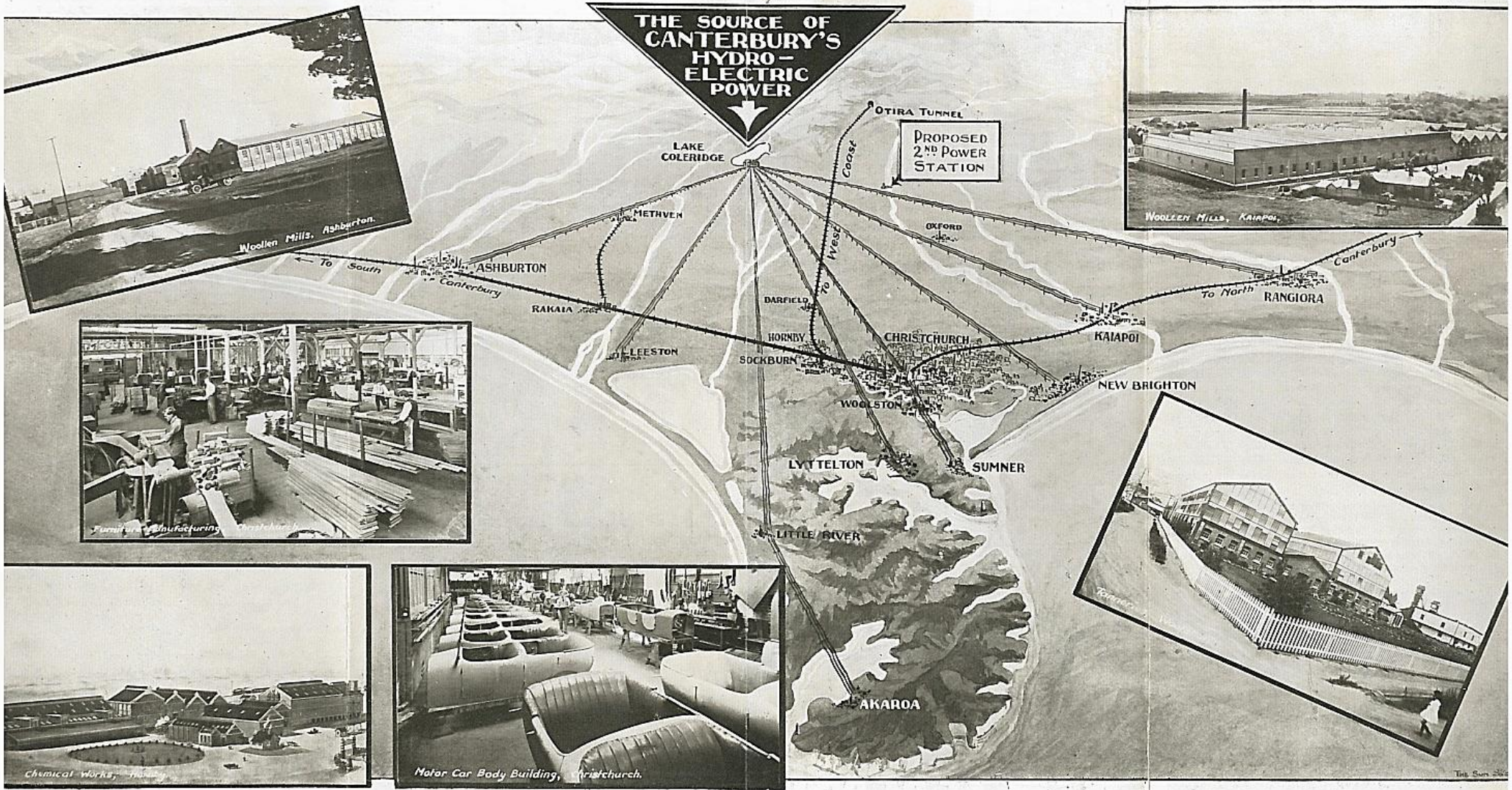
Chemical Works, Timaru.



Motor Car Body Building, Christchurch.



The Sun 2/2/24



Canterbury - the Industrial Centre of New Zealand

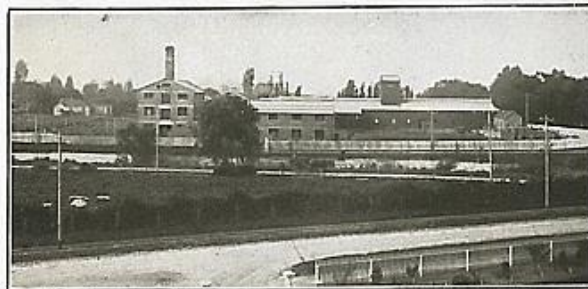
vast potential and unrivalled wealth in this respect. According to an official estimation, the broad and unharnessed rivers of Canterbury could be made to produce "white coal" capable of yielding 949,000 h.p. This total is enormous, but the demand for current seems insatiable. Current is used on the farms, as well as for turning the machines in the factories, and it is even used for furnace heat in foundries. It is distributed by the Government at low rates from Lake Coleridge, a huge natural reservoir 65 miles away from Christchurch. Transmission lines run over many parts of North Canterbury, and to Timaru, the principal town of South Canterbury. (See diagram.)

The output of current from the Lake Coleridge Power House has been increased from 9040 h.p. in 1917 to 16,000 h.p., and operations are in progress to bring the output up to 36,000 h.p. Not content with this provision, the municipality in Christchurch has under consideration a scheme for obtaining further power from the nearby Waimakariri river.

Joined to Canterbury by a tunnel through the Southern Alps is Westland, a province of enormous wealth in minerals and timbers. Until recently it suffered from semi-isolation, for its harbours are poor, and at present are not capable of admitting large vessels. But this isolation has disappeared, for in August of 1923, a tunnel, 5½ miles in length, and the longest in the British Empire, was opened through the Alps, and railroad communication was established with Canterbury. Immediately, timber and coal—for Westland is a huge coalfield boasting a product that is one of the best in the world—hailed through the tunnel by engines electrically driven, poured into Canterbury. The stimulus to trade was at once marked. Canterbury is the natural customer for Westland's wealth of raw materials, and Westland in turn requires its manufactured goods. It is impossible to estimate how great an asset Westland has become to Canterbury.

Christchurch the Garden City of the Dominion.

And now of Christchurch, the city of the plains, its well-laid and wide streets stretching out for many, many miles: There is land in plenty in which it can expand. It is a city of parks and gardens, and through it winds the beautiful Avon river. In



Glue and Gelatine Factory, Woolston.

(5)

this city the tradesman, the artisan or factory operative enjoys living conditions that he seldom encounters elsewhere. In the suburbs, where many of the factories are located, the residences, most of which are the bungalow type, comprising five or six rooms, have ample garden space. And so the great number of the occupants grow the bulk of their own vegetables, and they also take a pride in the cultivation of their flower gardens. Indeed, Christchurch is known as the garden city of the Dominion. Its building regulations prevent overcrowding, and there are few workers content to live without such conveniences in their homes as a hot and cold water service, gas and electric light. Moreover, parts of Christchurch are on the sea front, lined by open and inviting beaches. But Christchurch is not alone in its attractions. Timaru is a beautiful town on the sea front, offering attractions to the rich man or the worker. Ashburton, the chief town of mid-Canterbury, is an inland centre, well laid out and designed.

Lyttelton, seven miles from the city, is the port of Christchurch, and the main port of the province. Almost land-locked, shut in by hills, vessels can lie therein in the roughest weather with perfect safety. There is no safer harbour in New Zealand, a country of deep, natural harbours. The largest overseas vessels can tie up at its wharves, where the handling facilities for cargoes are thoroughly modern, there being a number of large electric cranes of the latest design and construction. Communication with Christchurch is by rail, passing through a tunnel. So far, haulage is by steam, but it is proposed to substitute electric traction. There is a graving dock at Lyttelton capable of docking a vessel 462 feet by 54 feet beam, and 18 feet draught.

Ranking next to Lyttelton as a port comes Timaru, with a safe anchorage within the shelter of an artificial breakwater. The growth of this port in recent years is outstanding. It has rail communication, being on the main route to Otago. The railway system in Canterbury is very complete—indeed, the most complete in the Dominion—the lines being operated by



Boot Factory, Christchurch.

W42/01/12/32 (6)

Canterbury - the Industrial Centre of New Zealand

the Government, the freight charges being designed merely to meet running costs, interest and depreciation.

While railway costs are not high, the same applies to coastal steamer freights. There are regular services of steamers trading up and down the coasts. Rates in the war period were considered as the cheapest in the world for the service. Between Wellington, at the extreme south of the North Island, and Lyttelton, there is a regular daily passenger ferry service, which is considered the finest of its kind in the world, the fast steamers engaged therein carrying the mails.

Splendid Labour Conditions.

While industries are stimulated and able to expand under laws which are progressive, far-seeing and equitable, these laws are democratic in trend, so that employees enjoy advantages which are unique in some respects. Industrial workers in Canterbury enjoy good wages and splendid conditions of labour imposed by legislation the administration of which is in the hands of a Labour Department, which appoints officials who keep closely in touch with conditions in the trades or factories. The working week comprises from 42 to 48 hours, according to the character of the industry. There is a weekly half-holiday. The Industrial Conciliation and Arbitration Act authorises the formation of industrial unions, and facilitates the settlement of industrial disputes by conciliation and arbitration. There are Councils of Conciliation, and an Arbitration Court, upon which are workers' and employers' representatives respectively. The Court fixes minimum rates of wages, and working conditions for set periods in various industries, after a hearing at which employers and employees put forward their claims. Often the Court has merely to confirm an agreement made by the parties before a Conciliation Council. Generally, it is recognised by employers and employees alike that the system pursued promotes industrial harmony and stability, and is thoroughly equitable.

The wages paid to Canterbury workers rank high, as the figures relating to the year 1923 will show. These amounts represent a fair average of the weekly wages paid to the various classes of workers after making full allowance for broken time where any occurred:—Linotype operators (newspapers), £6/10/-; linotype operators (jobbing), £5/12/-; compositors, £5; letterpress printers, etc., £5; bookbinders (male), £5; adult female workers, printing trades, £2/14/-; bricklayers, £5/5/-; carpenters and joiners, £4/18/-; plasterers, £5/3/-; plumbers, £4/18/-; metal workers' assistants, £3/18/-; motor mechanics, £4/15/-; electrical workers, £4/15/-; coachworkers, £4/15/-; fitters and turners, £4/15/-; curriers, £5/3/-; journeymen tailors (shops), £4/15/-; journeymen tailors (shops), £2/10/-; journeymen tailors (factory), £4/5/-; journeymen tailors (factory), £2/5/-; boot operatives (male), £4/6/3; boot operatives (female), £2/7/6; woollen mill spinners, £4/6/3; general woollen mill hands (male), £3/16/-; general woollen mill hands (female), £2/2/-; storemen, £3/18/-.

Other advantages which workers in Canterbury enjoy include the opportunity to borrow money from the Government at cheap

rates of interest and easy terms of repayment in order to build or purchase homes. A very great proportion of married workers own their own homes. There is no tenement system.

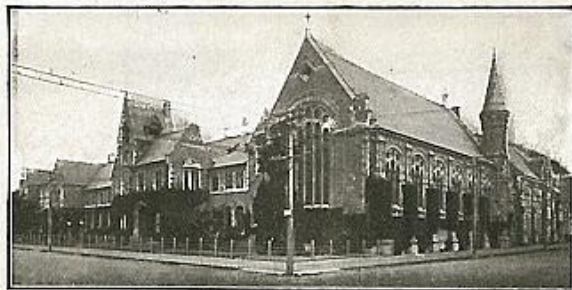
Educational Advantages.

Those who laid the foundations of Canterbury were far-seeing builders, who knew that knowledge is the key to progress. And so they made provision for education in all its branches, creating high schools, colleges and a university with such generous financial endowments that attendance would not be the privilege of a favoured few. So the door to education is open to all. Primary school education is free and compulsory. The State schools are secular, and the syllabus at these makes provision for manual instruction, and embraces woodwork, ironwork and domestic hygiene. The physical side receives great attention. There are some fine secondary schools, 90 per cent. of the children attending those controlled by the Government receiving free education. They are given free places for two years, with an extension to three. After that attendance depends upon their progress. Even those high schools and colleges which are not actually controlled by the Government are managed on liberal principles, there being provision by scholarships for free tuition. Free education extends to the technical schools, one of such establishments in Christchurch covering a particularly wide range of instruction. The technical tuition of apprentices in trades is not neglected, in some trades the employers allowing apprentices to attend schools in certain working hours. Canterbury University College, situated in Christchurch, has a big income from its endowments, and so it is able to present opportunities which are within the grasp of the humblest. One of the special features of the College is a well-equipped School of Engineering. Both sexes share in the benefits offering in education.

The adult worker may also turn the key to knowledge. The University in Christchurch gives generous assistance to the Workers' Educational Association, at whose classes members of the staffs of the colleges or other scholastic establishments act as tutors. Workers thus may study under the best conditions



Agricultural Implement Makers, Christchurch.



Canterbury University College.

such subjects as economics, psychology, industrial or other history, English literature, electricity or hygiene. The attendances at the classes held by the association throughout the province are evidence enough of the popularity of the courses.

Canterbury is a place of opportunity, both to the man with capital to invest or the worker. Where markets are assured and industries steadily expanding to meet the demand for their products, depression and unemployment are avoided. Manufacturing and business generally is well organised. There is a Chamber of Commerce and an Industrial Association, both vigorous bodies with liberal ideas. Last year the Industrial Association promoted an extremely successful industrial exhibition in Christchurch, at which the greatest display of Dominion manufactures ever gathered together was exhibited. In this far-flung corner of the Empire patriotism beats strongly. It is a patriotism founded and nourished on a belief in the future greatness of the country and by the desire to contribute thereto. It is something of that spirit which created, and which is behind the efforts of the Canterbury Progress League, which is responsible for this necessarily brief summary of conditions in the industrial province of New Zealand.

Those who have found something to interest them in the above short account of the manufacturing activities of Canterbury, and who would like to know about the great agricultural and pastoral industries of the province, will find these described in the folder, "Productive Canterbury, N.Z.," while a broad view of the social and economic life of the people will be found in the booklet, "Canterbury, N.Z." Inquiries addressed to the

Canterbury Progress League, Christchurch N.Z.
will be answered promptly and with pleasure.



Technical College, Christchurch.

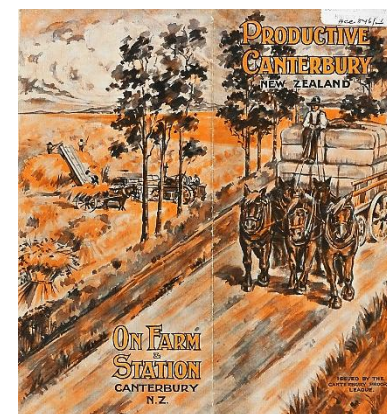
(9)

PRINTED BY THE SUN, CHRISTCHURCH, NEW ZEALAND

This pdf document version of "**Canterbury – the Industrial Centre of New Zealand**" has been compiled by Wembley History Society member, Philip Grant, who gratefully acknowledges the help of staff at Brent Archives.

You can visit the Archives website at: www.brent.gov.uk/archives . By clicking on the "**local history articles**" link from the home page, you will find several illustrated articles about the British Empire Exhibition. If you follow the home page link to the "**online catalogue**", you can search for other documents or images and photographs in the collections about the BEE, or other subjects that may be of interest to you.

This leaflet is the companion to "**Productive Canterbury – New Zealand**", which is also available as a pdf document.



Two other booklets, which visitors to the New Zealand Pavilion at Wembley in 1924 could obtain, are also (or will soon be) available in pdf format:-

