

THE PORK INDUSTRY. THE INTERMARINE SUPPLY COM- PANY.

INTERVIEW WITH MR VECHT.

Mr A. Vecht, the representative of the Intermarine Supply Company, which is about to commence operations in New Zealand, arrived in Christchurch last week, and a representative of the PRESS, in the course of an interview, obtained some items of information which will no doubt be of interest to the farming community. The industry the Company is promoting is that of preparing "mess" pork on a large scale for export. Mr Vecht has been for some little time in the North Island carrying out arrangements for starting work, and is now about to extend his operations to the South Island. Mr Vecht, it may be remarked, is a Jew by birth, a native of Holland, and not an American as many suppose. He is a man of considerable literary and scientific attainments, a good linguist, and for a time was editor of the *Jewish Standard* in London.

Mr Vecht points out that there is no country in the world where pigs can be raised so successfully as in New Zealand. In the North Island and Canterbury the temperature is so mild that pigs can be bred all the year round, but he is not yet informed as to whether that can be done in Otago. In the chief pig-raising countries in the world, such as Germany, Holland, Denmark, Ireland, America, &c., the breeding season lasts only from six to seven months. The difficulty hitherto in exporting from New Zealand was the sea voyage. At Home there is practically no demand for saltpetre cure bacon, and to export pork in brine was too expensive on account of freight to be paid on the brine itself, adding too much to the cost. Mr Vecht claims that the method of preparing mild cured "mess" pork adopted by his Company will overcome the difficulties against successful export. He has invented and patented an antiseptic, which he maintains will preserve the meat for any length of time. After the pigs are killed and dressed in the usual manner the carcasses are allowed to cool. They are then placed in ovens and subjected for a certain time to heat. This partially cures the outer surface and melts

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PRESS, VOLUME L, ISSUE 8590,
18 SEPTEMBER 1893, PAGE 5

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partially roasts the outer surface, and melts a portion of the fat beneath the skin. The carcasses are then plunged into cold water, and the melted fat becomes solid, so that the pig is, so to speak, hermetically sealed within itself. The patent antiseptic fluid is then by pressure injected into the carcase, which becomes wholly impregnated, and the curing is complete. With the antiseptic flavour, according to taste, may be added. The Company has a large market before it in the navies, shipping and armies of the world, and can take an unlimited supply of pigs. The price the company is prepared to pay the farmers in New Zealand is 3d per pound for pigs, and they will be taken all the year round. Mr Vecht argues that this price will pay well. The present high rates ruling for pigs is, he contends, due to pig breeding having been largely discontinued a few years ago owing to over production and no proper market, and without new markets being opened up the prices must again come down. His Company require seven or eight months old pigs, not too fat, and he cares not what the breed is, whether Berkshire or Yorkshire, or a cross between the two. As little as possible of the Chinese breed is wanted, but a dash of the Captain Cook strain would not be objectionable. The pigs, however, require to be hard fed for about a fortnight before killing so as to put some substance into the fat for preservative purposes. As the Company will take pigs all the year round Mr Vecht points out that large numbers could be reared in the summer upon green feed and finished off with a little beans or peas or seconds grain. A steady and certain market for pork would, he contends, tend to equalise the price of potatoes and second-class grain. The pork industry is all the more important to the colony at the present time on account of the starting of the dairy industry. Taranaki pigs are now being bred largely to be fed upon skim milk from the factories, and he advocated in the North Island, and would also impress upon the farmers in the South, the advisability of keeping one sow to each cow. The return he maintains would be £40 per annum from the sow as against £7 from the cow. For the small farmer the industry should, Mr Vecht considers, be especially beneficial, and

a man with 100 acres should be able to make money out of pigs. The quality of the pigs in New Zealand will always insure a demand for the pork, and when the time came that his Company would clash with similar supply Companies in America he had no doubt whatever that the quality of the pork would carry his company successfully through the competition. Mr Vecht hopes to have one factory at work in the North Island and another in Christchurch in full swing by the 1st of December next. He will remain for some time in New Zealand in order to supervise the initiatory steps and to instruct those in charge of the factories in the method of using his patent antiseptic. Mr Stokvis will have charge of the New Zealand branch of the company's business, and Mr Bryden will superintend the erection and fitting up of factories. Mr Vecht leaves for Dunedin by the express this morning.