

No. 83.

Mr. WILLIAM PLANT to the Chairman and Members of the Royal Commission *re* Local Industries.
GENTLEMEN,—

Thames, 20th April, 1880.

In compliance with the request contained in your circular, I have the honor to suggest for your consideration that, with a view to the establishment of a permanent earthenware-factory, I am of opinion that the following steps should be taken:—

1. It should be a recommendation to the Government that an advance should be made to me, or other competent person, of the sum of £500, to go towards the purchase of a suitable site, buildings, machinery, &c.; the person so intrusted to give satisfactory proof of his ability and willingness to expend any further sum which may be required for the establishment of the industry, to the extent, if necessary, of an additional £1,000, the entire plant to be held by Government until the repayment of the £500 by the person undertaking the establishment of the industry.

2. The Government to grant to the person or company undertaking the venture the sole right to make and supply all insulators used by the New Zealand Telegraph Department for the term of five years, the article supplied being of course subject to the approval or rejection of that department.

3. The Customs tariff to be amended by the following articles being entirely relieved from duty—namely, carbonate of lead, borax, and plaster of Paris.

I have, &c.,

WM. PLANT.

No. 84.

Mr. GEORGE BOYD to Mr. Commissioner Tinne.

SIR,—

Newton, 16th April, 1880.

It is very little information that I can give to the Commission on Native Industry. All I could think of I gave some time ago; so that I can only repeat what I then requested Government to do—that is, to put a heavy duty on all kinds of common potteryware, on drain-pipes, also on all descriptions of firebrick and fireclay goods. All the above can be manufactured here. But I would recommend a lighter duty on all china, porcelain, or parian, as it will be a long time before we could manufacture goods of that description here so as to compete with the Home market. However, I would recommend that all paints, glazes, and clay or minerals required in the manufacture of pottery or glass be admitted free. The above is all I remember at present.

I have, &c.,

GEO. BOYD

(per A. H.).

No. 85.

Messrs. AUSTIN, KIRK, and Co. (Limited), W. NEIGHBOURS, and FORD and OGDEN, Manufacturers of Drain-pipes, &c., to the Christchurch City Council.

GENTLEMEN,—

Christchurch, 17th April, 1880.

In answer to your letter asking for information *re* local industries, we have much pleasure in laying before you our views.

We, the undersigned manufacturers of drain-pipes, firebricks, and potteryware, beg to suggest to you and the Royal Commission that, as makers of drain-pipes, we think it urgently needful that an import duty of 15 per cent. be placed on all drain-pipes brought into this colony. We also beg that a duty of £2 per thousand be put on all firebricks imported into New Zealand, and also a duty of 20 per cent. on imported brown earthenware. We would also recommend a reduction of a halfpenny per ton per mile on bricks, drain-pipes, clay, and native coal carried on the New Zealand Railways.

We find that large quantities of firebricks and drain-pipes are brought from Home as ballast, consequently at little or no freight; thereby interfering with legitimate manufacture here.

By carrying out our suggestions we are confident that it will be the means of employing at least 50 per cent. more labour in these industries.

We have, &c.,

AUSTIN, KIRK, AND Co. (Limited).

W. NEIGHBOURS.

FORD AND OGDEN.

No. 86.

Evidence of Mr. HENRY BLAND KIRK, of the firm of Messrs. Austin, Kirk, and Co., Farnley Brick, Tile, and Pottery Works, taken before Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns, Christchurch, 21st April, 1880.

My name is *Henry Bland Kirk*. I am a member of the firm of Messrs. Austin and Kirk. We have been ten years in partnership, and have been over five years in this particular spot. We have over 40 acres of freehold in this place, and half an acre in Colombo Street, Christchurch, and half an acre in Sydenham, used as a sandpit, and 310 acres freehold in the Malvern District, where we procure our fire-clay, and in which we have deposits of lignite of good quality. We employ seventy-one persons on our works (including three members of the company) on an average of nine hours a day. We pay wages varying from £4 to £2 2s. per week. The men who work in the sheds make full time, the men who work outside have broken time in wet weather. About half our men work outside all the year round. I should have stated that during the last twelve months we floated these works into a limited liability company, under the name of "Austin, Kirk, and Co." We sell about a thousand pounds' worth of manufactured goods of various kinds per month, principally in Christchurch and neighbourhood. We ship very little; occasionally we ship a few of our goods to Napier and Oamaru. Since becoming a limited liability company we have declared a dividend of 10 per cent. for the six months (5 per cent. has been paid, and 5 per cent. carried over to the reserve fund); but lately other firms in the same trade have considerably reduced their prices for goods, compelling us to do likewise, therefore we do not anticipate so large