

We have also forwarded one of our patent dressed tarpaulins, of same material as we have supplied the New Zealand Railways, and beg to say that, if the Railway Department, in calling for tenders for them, did so at the commencement of the dull season, which is about August, and gave ample time for making them, they would be able to be done cheaper and considerably better than if they were imported ready-made. Whenever tenders have been called for for making them here, the time given has been too short to turn out a first-class article.

We have, &c.,

B. HALE AND CO.

No. 202.

NOTES of an Interview between the Journeymen Hatters and the Committee.

A DEPUTATION of hat-manufacturers waited on the Commission, the speaker stating:—

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,—We shall not detain you long, as we know you have other business on to-day; therefore we shall be as brief as possible. You are probably aware that the hatting trade here is one that has a good deal of demand, as far as goods are concerned; but, as regards encouragement to manufacturers, that is almost *nil*. I may tell you as a fact that we, as journeymen, are not getting nearly sufficient, or even half of what we ought to get; they are much better in the Old Country than what we are here at the present time. I may further state that the depressed state of our trade is not caused through a want of demand for hats, but is simply because there has been no encouragement of our local industries, and consequently a number of the tradesmen are idle. Two are working at Weka Pass, and others looking for employment. Our trade, as far as journeymen are concerned, is in a deplorable condition. We are at a great disadvantage to compete with the importer. Wages here in the trade are about the same as those in the Old Country; but at the present time we have no machinery, and to bring out machinery to this country would mean an extra 50 per cent. The manufacturer would have to bear a difference of something like 200 per cent. on coal, 100 per cent. on rent, and something like 100 per cent. in building to that of the Old Country; and goods such as trimmings, shellac, gum, spirits, and the like, are subject to a duty which necessitates a percentage of about 50 per cent.: so that altogether it costs something like 400 per cent. to our disadvantage, and the only advantage we get is material such as wool, by which we save something like 300 per cent. We are not protectionists in principle, or free-traders; but, seeing it acknowledged here that there is a certain amount of protection given to certain trades—some as far as 35 per cent. and 40 per cent.—we wish to point out that on hats there is only about 10 per cent. In such as coal, rent, and machinery, there is a vast difference with Home manufacturers; but the cost of labour is about the same. We think our interests as journeymen ought to be considered. We know that if a protective duty was placed upon it, something like 100 per cent. upon all soft hats, and cubic measurement upon all hard hats, this would enable us as journeymen to live as well as our employers; and we are aware it would add very little to the cost at which the goods would be sold. It would not add one penny a hat to the cost, and would enable us to set machinery in motion, and employ a large number of hands, both male and female, also to utilize products of the country. At the present time local manufacturers are at a great disadvantage.

No. 203.

MEMORANDUM on the CARRIAGE TRADE from W. MOOR and SONS, Coach and Carriage Builders, to the Exhibition Commissioners, Christchurch.

GENTLEMEN,—

Christchurch, 20th July, 1880.

Agreeably with your request, we beg to inform you that the articles manufactured at our works consist principally of English carriages and American buggies, in which manufacture we at present employ thirty hands.

Now that the duty is taken off many of the materials used in making carriages and buggies, we are able to produce them at prices which will, we believe, render their importation unprofitable and unnecessary.

In the matter of design, workmanship, and quality of material employed, we are in a position to challenge competition with any English or American manufacturers.

We may add, as an evidence of the stimulus the increased duty on imported carriages has given our trade, that we have this week made an offer to the Tramway Company to build cars at the same price as the imported cost, delivered in Christchurch.

We have, &c.,

W. MOOR AND SONS
(per R. F. C.).

No. 204.

MEMORANDUM on the CARRIAGE TRADE from A. G. HOWLAND, Coach and Carriage Builder, Christchurch, to E. Wakefield, Esq., Chairman of the Royal Commission on Local Industries.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 21st July, 1880.

I have been requested to give you the following information in regard to coach and carriage manufacturing. In January, 1879, there were 212 persons employed in the above industry in Christchurch, doing a business annually of £35,300. Sixty per cent. of that amount—£21,180—paid for wages, being an average of £1 18s. 5d. per week for each person employed.

I have, &c.,

A. G. HOWLAND,
Representing the Coach and Carriage Manufacturing of Christchurch.