

## MISCELLANEOUS.

## GLOVE MANUFACTURE.

No. 152.

Mr. W. DANIEL to the Chairman of the Commission on Local Industry.

SIR,—

Dipton, 5th April, 1880.

I am in receipt of your circular requesting me to send any suggestions I may possess regarding the adaptability of this district to manufacturing or other industries. I have much pleasure in complying with your request, inasmuch as it gives me an opportunity of venting an idea that I have long entertained regarding the establishment of an industry hitherto neglected, as far as I am aware, in all the Australasian Colonies. I refer to the glove-manufacture. This is an industry which I followed for many years in the Old Country, and that in one of the principal seats of the trade, I mean in the West of England. From a lengthened and varied experience in these colonies, I am bound to say that I have nowhere observed so many natural advantages and special facilities for the development of this industry as exist in the Dipton District. In the first place, there is the Spanish merino sheep, for the rearing of which the colony as a whole is peculiarly adapted. The skins of this animal are largely exported from Bilboa and the Spanish ports to the West of England glove factories, where an article is turned out that is gradually superseding the best French kid. One important feature of the pre-eminence of the West of England in glove-making is found in the lime of a peculiar quality which exists there, and is largely used in dressing the skins. A necessary operation is the construction of limestone vats, wherein the curing process is performed on the skins. In this respect we are equally fortunate in this district. Large beds of limestone, as is well known, exist at Castle Rock, in this neighbourhood, and from the observation of competent persons it has been decided to be of a quality identical with the famous Howhill stone of Somerset, referred to above. The Howhill stone of Somerset, besides being used in leather-dressing, is also the favourite building material throughout the West and South of England. In this connection I need hardly call the attention of your Commissioners to the fact that the Castle Rock freestone of this district gained the first prize for building-stone at the Sydney International Exhibition. It is also unnecessary to remind you that a good building-stone, easily quarried, and involving but little cost in transportation, is at present a great desideratum in Invercargill and other Otago towns. It is also almost certain that it would form an immediate commodity for export to Victoria, where there is also a scarcity of building material possessing the above qualities. These wants are all but met in the Castle Rock stone, the only drawback being the want of a road to the quarry. The situation of the latter has been repeatedly brought under the notice of the public; and, in conclusion, I beg to say that I will be most happy to supply your Commission with any additional information you may desire.

I have, &amp;c.,

WILLIAM DANIEL.

## CHROME ORE.

No. 153.

Mr. T. W. HACKET to Mr. Commissioner Burns.

SIR,—

Nelson, 6th April, 1880.

I had the honor of verbally pointing out to you the importance of the production of chrome ore as a native industry, which in the present advanced state of manufactures might become of very great importance. In respect to this I beg to give you the following particulars:—

Some twenty-three years ago large deposits of this ore were discovered on the property of the Dun Mountain Company, and under my direction some 130 tons of this ore were packed down and shipped to England. This ore realized £10 10s. per ton. So elated were the shareholders with the sale, that a tramway sixteen miles in length was constructed, by which some 5,000 tons of this mineral were brought down to the Port. At the same time some other mines were started which also produced several hundred tons. This unusually large quantity of chrome ore, in addition to the ordinary supply, greatly reduced the market value, especially as a change in the fashions as regards colours occurred about the same time, so that at last the proceeds of the ore would scarcely pay freight. The mines were therefore all abandoned.

At the present time the market is in a very different state; several new manufactories of the bichromate have been established, which have broken up the monopoly enjoyed by Messrs. J. and G. White, and at the same time fresh demands for it have arisen, so that its manufacture has assumed enormous dimensions. The price also of the bichromate (as shown in the price-currents) has risen during the last six months from 5d. to 7d. per pound, which of course represents a still greater rise in the value of our raw material. To the present no advantage has been taken of this advance, although we have in this vicinity immense deposits of the chrome ore.

The reason of its not being worked is the expense of transport, the reefs being all situate in a broken country away from ordinary roads. The average distance of the chrome reefs from the existing roads is five miles. These would be rather expensive, but, independently of the expense of the road to the enterprising miner, the road made by him would open up other reefs owned by other parties, who would make use of the road to his obvious loss, and otherwise compete with him without contributing to the expense.

As regards the price at which the ore could be shipped, this would entirely depend on the goodness of the road. The distance from the reef to the railway varies from ten to fifteen miles, and were good roads made, the ore, from its quantity and quality, could easily compete with that from any other country, even at the lowest state of the market.