

No. 165.

Mr. E. WATERS to Mr. Commissioner Burns.

SIR,—

Auckland, 17th May, 1880.

To further exemplify the disadvantages under which I labour in competing with the English confections imported here, I may mention the practice of allowing to merchants a drawback of 2d. per pound on English lozenges, &c., exported to the Islands from New Zealand. A glaring instance has just occurred wherein an Auckland merchant obtained the above drawback on a large consignment. I really hope that you will see from these facts how heavily weighted the confectionery industry is, and that next session its interests will not be entirely forgotten in the recommendations of the Royal Commission.

I have, &amp;c.,

E. WATERS.

MARBLE.

No. 166.

Mr. JOSEPH BENNETT to the Chairman of the Local Industries Commission.

SIR,—

Auckland, 19th April, 1880.

Referring to a circular which I have had the honor of receiving from you regarding the local industries in the District of Kamo, Whangarei, and requesting suggestions that may occur to me for establishing new industries, I have much pleasure in informing you that there is at Kamo a very extensive quarry of merchantable marble, the proprietors of which are prepared to erect the necessary machinery for cutting and manufacturing it into slabs, &c., and to connect the quarry with the railway now in course of construction, if the Government will grant the proprietors a subsidy of £1,000. Samples and reports will be forwarded to you if you are likely to entertain the foregoing proposal.

I have, &amp;c.,

JOS. BENNETT.

TWINE FOR NETS AND TARPAULINS.

No. 167.

Mr. A. B. DONALD to Mr. Commissioner Tinne.

SIR,—

Auckland, 22nd April, 1880.

I have the honor to call your attention to two points in the existing tariff of a very anomalous nature: The first is the fact that fishing-nets manufactured are admitted free, while the netting twine used in their manufacture is subject to *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent. Fishermen, when the weather is too rough to admit of that occupation, endeavour to fill up the time by making fishing-nets (their families also usually occupy themselves in this way), and, as their occupation is a very precarious one, I think it would be an act of justice to them to remove the duty from the twine and put it on the nets. I may further say that the present arrangements allow Sydney to get the advantage, as I noticed in the manifest of one of the steamers latest from thence two or three bales of fishing-nets. The other point is exactly similar—namely, that tarpaulins are admitted free, while the twine used in the manufacture is subject to *ad valorem* duty of 15 per cent. I am sure that if the twine used by sailmakers—namely, seaming and roping twine—were admitted free, and the duty imposed on the tarpaulins, a large business could be done in this class of goods. All articles like this are peculiarly suitable for manufacture in the colonies. As no skilled labour is required, boys can be used for this sort of work. I may further say that if the course I have pointed out were followed, not a tarpaulin would be used but what was made in New Zealand, and the price would not be raised one iota. The articles I have recommended above to be admitted free of duty—namely, netting, seaming and roping twine—cannot at present be manufactured in the colonies, and are not likely to be for many years to come.

I have, &amp;c.,

A. B. DONALD.

No. 168.

Evidence of Mr. A. B. DONALD before Messrs. Commissioners Tinne and Burns, at Auckland, 1st May, 1880.

My name is *Alexander Bell Donald*. I am a ship-chandler in Queen Street, Auckland. I have no hesitation in saying that if the twine was admitted free, all the fishing-nets used in Auckland would be manufactured by fishermen at times when they cannot catch fish. At present the twine is charged duty on and the fishing-nets free, rendering it impossible for these men to compete with the imported article. It would be a further stimulant to the manufacture of nets if imported nets were charged duty on, and the price would not be raised to the consumer. Regarding tarpaulins, a firm in Auckland had a consignment of tarpaulins from Arbroath; I was asked to purchase these tarpaulins. After stating the price required I called their attention to my price, marked in plain figures, for the same class of goods, when it was found by comparison that my prices were lower than the price of the imported article. After finding this out, it became necessary to sacrifice the imported tarpaulins at prices very much lower, which it was stated would not pay the consignor; yet this firm still continues to receive consignments of these goods notwithstanding the losses incurred on former consignments. I offered to supply tarpaulins to one of our largest importers at prices below what could be realized from the imported article, yet my offer was refused. I am quite prepared to do this work now on equally good terms. If a duty was placed upon the imported article, in my opinion it would have the tendency to shift the trade from the importer to the manufacturer, without the consumer paying any more for the article in question. I will send a letter to the Commission regarding the Island trade, to be attached to this evidence.

A. B. DONALD.