

In consequence of the successful starting of the machinery, the neighbouring farmers and others have applied to the Board of Land of Works for leases of the reserves for flax-culture. Applications have been made for 2,000 acres, in allotments of twenty acres each. Independently of these applications, there is a very general intention among the neighbouring farmers to put a considerable breadth of land under flax this season; Mr. McAndrew himself intends to sow forty acres. He will shortly be in a position to claim the reward for the production of one ton of flax.

No specimens of silk have been sent in; and the Board are decidedly of opinion that it will be desirable, in future, to reduce the quantity, and multiply the number, of premiums for silk, a production for which the soil and climate of Victoria are peculiarly adapted. Olive oil is equally unrepresented, which is to be regretted, as the olive grows very freely in the Colony, and the produce is valuable. Cotton can probably only be grown profitably in the Riverina region, requiring heat, and no considerable quantity can be expected for some time to come; but it is very evident that flax-growing is beginning to take root. In the various localities indications of enterprise in this direction are apparent; and it appears to the Board that while no further reward is required for the growth of the flax plant, encouragement should be held out for new applications of the fibre, for the production of linseed oil, which commands an immediate sale, and the difference of freight, insurance, and leakage, will probably be a sufficient natural protection to make it a self-supporting industry. The Board are pleased to find that in one locality at least—on the farm of Mr. Martelli above referred to—hemp of an excellent quality is being grown. The returns of the rope factories established at Melbourne and Geelong show that the only drawback to the establishment of rope manufacture in the Colony is the price of hemp. That of Manilla is at present, and is likely to continue, extremely high, having risen from £28 in the past year to £45 in the present. The Melbourne market is notoriously uncertain, as Calcutta lines have recently sold at £36; but the average rise is undoubted. The volcanic soils, as well as the alluvial, are pre-eminently adapted for growing hemp. It is probable that no crop will be more remunerative, and it is therefore satisfactory to find that, in this direction at least, a satisfactory commencement has been made. It is known that hop-growing is, in various localities, progressing successfully in the Colony (it has been prosperous at New Norfolk, in Tasmania); and is to be regretted that no specimens have been forwarded for inspection on this occasion. This most valuable industry is apparently at a stand-still. The Board are inclined, in this instance likewise, to be of opinion that the chief obstacle lies in the quantity required by the Regulations—namely, one ton—and would recommend, prospectively, a considerable reduction. Several articles not specially mentioned appear to the Board to be worthy of particular encouragement. To mention one, bees-wax. Australia being a country particularly adapted for the cultivation of honey-flowers, a very large and increasing quantity of wax may be expected to be annually exported. As the present European price ranges from £7 to £9 per cwt., the profit upon this export must be considerable, and, since it can be easily raised by any small proprietor, the Board would recommend it for future encouragement.

(2.) With respect to manufactures, properly so called, the number of samples sent in has been satisfactory, showing a decided, and, in most cases, a judiciously directed industrial movement; and in two instances (*i.e.*, for the manufacture of paper and woollens) the extent of the operations is considerable. In both these cases, however, as has been before stated, the stringent conditions of the 2nd and 3rd clauses of the Regulations have precluded the Board from granting any pecuniary reward until an actual result has been produced.

In the manufacture of pottery much progress appears to have been made, although none of the specimens submitted to the Board come under the definition of "china, porcelain, or the finer classes of earthenware." The manufacture of drain-pipes, flower-pots, and brown ware was long ago carried on in the colony; but the samples submitted by the Chesterfield Company, Mr. Steiling, and Mr. Cornwell, combined novelty with excellence, and they have accordingly been awarded premiums under the 4th clause. Mr. Rhodes submitted a variety of samples which, although possessing no merit as articles of utility, were of interest as being the result of experiments on various kinds of clay, and he also had a small premium awarded him.

In the finer classes of leather, very excellent samples of calf, kid, and kangaroo, dressed, coloured, and grained, for bookbinding, upholstery work, &c., were exhibited by Mr. Farrell and by Messrs. A. Douglass and Co., for which premiums have been awarded. From what has come under the observation of the Board, there can be little doubt but that the importation of the finer classes of leather will be to a large extent rendered unnecessary.

The application of Mr. Fincham, for organ building, was entertained under the 4th clause, on his showing that some of the materials used by him were of colonial produce, the metal pipes being his own manufacture.

The stearine candles for which the Melbourne Stearine Company made a claim, and have been awarded a premium, were superior to any description of candles previously made in the Colony; but a still further improvement must be made before the imported article can be driven out of the market.

A great variety of chemical products were exhibited by Messrs. Clark and Co. Those upon which they principally rested their claim, and for which a premium was awarded, were the white oxide and red and yellow sulphuret of antimony, and the sulphates of copper and iron. The products of the antimony were in the form of paints.

The manufacture of gold leaf, of excellent quality, by Mr. Evett, was deemed by the Board well deserving a premium.

The use of imported cartridges has been already nearly superseded by those of Mr. Miller's manufacture, and a premium has accordingly been awarded him.

Among the minor industries which the Board considered worthy of reward are—carriage trimmings (Mrs. Beddison); the use of muskwood in making pianofortes (Mr. Blazey); preserving fish in oil and fruits in canisters (Mr. Fordham); crystallized fruits (Messrs. Lecroissette and Bates); glue of very excellent quality, equal to the best imported (Messrs. Honnens, Vockler, and Co.), and which would have merited a higher reward if the manufacture had been commercially established; blasting compound (Mr. Martin), of the excellence of which very satisfactory testimonials were produced, and of the merits of which, in at least one respect, that of safety, there can be no doubt.