

## No. 11.

The CHIEF INSPECTOR of DISTILLERIES to the MANAGING DIRECTOR of the NEW ZEALAND DISTILLERY COMPANY.

SIR,—

Customs Department (Distilleries Branch), 18th August, 1873.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, in which, after remarking on the subject of a communication that was addressed to you from this department on the 31st ultimo, regarding the excise rate of duty on New Zealand distilled spirits, you say that you trust the Government may see fit to allow the rate of duty to remain as at present, as any alteration of duty for a considerable time to come would inevitably ruin a business in which you state you have invested over £55,000.

In reply, I have been directed by the Hon. the Commissioner of Customs to state that after the warnings that have been conveyed to you on various occasions, it is unnecessary for him now to reiterate those warnings or to further discuss the subject. He desires you to understand that the Government may, at an early date, find it to be necessary to propose to Parliament an increase of duty, and that no pledge can therefore be given on the subject, further than that the Government have decided not to propose any increase this Session.

I have, &amp;c.,

WILLIAM SEED,

Chief Inspector of Distilleries.

The Managing Director of the New Zealand  
Distillery Company, Dunedin.

## No. 12.

Mr. R. M. ROBERTSON to the Hon. W. H. REYNOLDS.

SIR,—

Dunedin, 26th January, 1874.

We have the honor to submit the following particulars in connection with our business, to which we solicit the favourable consideration of yourself and the Government.

The subject of an alteration in the duty on colonial manufactured spirits having been repeatedly brought forward in the House of Representatives without eliciting any definite information on the part of the Government as to its intentions in the matter, has been very prejudicial to the credit and stability of our business. We are therefore most anxious, if such alteration is contemplated, that we may be advised at as early a date as possible what proposals the Government intend to bring before the House on the subject, as the settlement of the question on some permanent basis is of the most vital importance to this Company.

The large amount (nearly £60,000) we have expended, and the great difficulties and prejudices we have had to contend with in endeavouring to establish the business, as well as the very inadequate return we have as yet had for such outlay and trouble, may not be unknown to yourself and other members of the Government, at whose hands we would therefore crave as favourable a consideration of our present and future position as may seem to them fair and reasonable under all the circumstances of the case.

The carrying on a business requiring such a great and increasing outlay of capital is, we find, too heavy for a few private individuals to undertake successfully, and we have therefore been desirous of forming it into a larger company; but in attempting this we have found an insuperable obstacle in the insecurity of the protection under which we at present exist, and any immediate alteration of which would be at once disastrous to the concern; the high price of barley last year, for a considerable portion of which we paid as high as 8s. per bushel, and of which we used over 60,000 bushels, having left us no return whatever for our year's operations.

May we, therefore, respectfully solicit that you will bring the subject under the consideration of Government, and favour us with a reply.

We have, &amp;c.,

R. M. ROBERTSON, Director,

The New Zealand Distillery Company.

The Hon. W. H. Reynolds,  
Commissioner of Customs, Wellington.

## No. 13.

Mr. R. M. ROBERTSON to the Hon. W. H. REYNOLDS.

DEAR SIR,—

New Zealand Distillery, Dunedin, 16th March, 1874.

Will you kindly drop me a line or telegram, to say if we may expect an answer to our official communication to you of the 26th January; which, as you may remember, was sent by your permission.

I have, &amp;c.,

R. M. ROBERTSON.

The Hon. W. H. Reynolds, Wellington.

## No. 14.

The ACTING CHIEF INSPECTOR of DISTILLERIES to Mr. R. M. ROBERTSON.

(No. 226.)

SIR,—

Customs Department (Distilleries Branch), 20th March, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th of January last, and much regret that, through a misunderstanding, it should have remained so long unacknowledged, I am