

1881.
NEW ZEALAND.

WELLINGTON INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION

(REPORT ON THE).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to Mr. WOODWARD.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 31st May, 1881.

Understanding from you that the Committee of the Wellington Athenæum are desirous that a report upon the Industrial Exhibition now being held in the Athenæum Hall should be made by a Commissioner appointed by the Governor, I have the honor to request that you will inform me whether you would yourself undertake the task. Having been intimately associated with the Exhibition from its inception, and being of necessity thoroughly acquainted with all the exhibits and their history, no one is in a better position to give an accurate description of the colonial productions there collected than yourself if you will undertake to do it.

Jonas Woodward, Esq.,

President of Industrial Exhibition, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS DICK.

No. 2.

Mr. WOODWARD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Wellington, 8th June, 1881.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of the 31st ultimo, and, in compliance with the request contained therein, I now beg leave to wait upon you with a report of the Wellington Industrial Exhibition. Permit me to add that, as I never even read a similar report, I have had to trust entirely to what I supposed was required, and hope that this may be accepted as an excuse for all shortcomings.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary

I have, &c.,

J WOODWARD.

Enclosure in No. 2.

REPORT.

THE Wellington Industrial Exhibition must be regarded rather as showing what some manufacturers and producers are doing than what is actually being done in the district. Several important manufactures that are known as being carried on are not represented at all; while of wool, which, above all other things, has been for many years the principal export, there is not a single sample. The absence of wool may be due to the time of year at which the Exhibition has been held, and manufacturers may have been unwilling to incur trouble and expense for a thing which was an untried experiment.

For the purpose of this report, the Exhibition may be broadly divided into two classes, the first consisting of articles made or produced in the Wellington District, and the second of articles made or produced elsewhere. The first class is again divisible into articles the materials of which, as well as the manufacture, are local, and those the materials of which have been imported in a more or less finished state. The second class is also to be divided into articles produced in other parts of this colony, and those imported from Great Britain or other places.

CLASS I.

Section 1. Local Manufactures the Materials for which were produced in the Wellington District.

This section included exhibits of soap, candles, leather, boots and shoes, biscuits, confectionery, basketwork, glue, cordage, drain-pipes, flower-pots and vases; with alimentary products, such as flour, meal, bacon, butter, cheese, lard, jams, pickles, sauces, and preserved meats.

The most important exhibit in this section was that of Messrs. Kitchen and Son, which included mottled, yellow, and fancy soaps; sperm, stearine, and tallow candles, both plain and ornamented; and some most remarkable products of tallow, among which were pure glycerine, and a peculiar black pitch (the latter being a discovery of the exhibitors), both of these being extracted from residuary substances left in the making of stearine, which previously had run to waste. Exhibits of this firm figured largely in the Melbourne Exhibition, where they obtained a gold medal, besides other distinctions.

Next to these in economic importance were the exhibits of leather and articles produced therefrom. The basils of Messrs. Harvey and Murray, and the kip and sole leather of Mr. A. Tyer, deserved special notice; as also the boots and shoes of Messrs. Lindsay and Watson, and the saddlery of Mr. J. E. Evans, only each of these were made to some extent of imported articles.

The biscuits and confectionery shown by the Wellington Biscuit, &c., Company attracted considerable notice; but in these also one of the materials—sugar—came from abroad.

This section also included a wedding-cake made by Mr. P. Laing; confectionery, sauces, aerated waters, cordials, &c., &c., by various manufacturers, all showing that home-production is being carried on with success. The preserved meat and butter in tins for export gave assurance of a profitable outlet for farm produce, while flour, bacon, cheese, &c., gave evidence that at least many of the necessaries of daily life are being produced in this district. Some experimental samples of starch, arrowroot, and similar articles were exhibited; while ornaments made out of paua shell evinced considerable taste and skill, and several models of yachts and other vessels attracted well-deserved attention.

Section 2. Articles made in Wellington, the Materials for which had been imported from other Parts of this Colony or elsewhere.

This section included clothing, hats and caps, furniture, plumbers' and coppersmiths' work, tinware, brushes and brooms, bookbinding, engraving, printing, lithography, die-sinking, &c., &c.

In this section the first place was taken by Messrs. Wilson and Richardson, with a large and varied display of clothing, shirts and underclothing, baby-linen, and similar articles, made of Mosgiel, Kaiapoi, Roslyn, and Kaikorai flannels and tweeds, besides linen, lawn, and cambric of British manufacture. The work in these goods, particularly the lacework and embroidery of the baby-linen, could scarcely be surpassed.

Mr. Hill exhibited a varied assortment of hats and caps made by him. This exhibit was made more interesting by its including specimens showing the various stages through which the materials pass before they take the shape of the finished hat.

Furniture was well represented in this section. The upholstery of Mr. James and Mr. Mackay was very good, as also were the spring-mattresses of Messrs. A. Vannoni and Co. A bedstead, chest of drawers, and cabinet made by Mr. James were admirable specimens of carving and inlaying-work, as were also a dinner-wagon by Mr. C. Bath and a bedstead by Mr. Manthel, while an inlaid table by Mr. Bernasconi was a marvel of patient and ingenious workmanship. It had been previously exhibited in Melbourne.

Rocking-horses, tricycles, and perambulators by Mr. Watson appealed strongly to the juvenile visitors, while their seniors were equally pleased to find how favourably the prices would compare with imported articles.

Splendid and diversified assortments of silversmiths' work and jewellery were exhibited by Mr. Hislop and Messrs. Kohn and Co., the workmanship being such as to add value to the jewels and precious metals.

Parts of a large turret-clock, in course of construction by Messrs. Littlejohn and Son, attracted general attention, as did also a beautiful chronometer-watch made by the same firm.

A small steam-engine made by Messrs. Smith Brothers was well finished and in every way a good specimen of colonial workmanship; while a pair of doors made by Messrs. Waddell, McLeod, and Weir were so good that it was not surprising that they had made a conspicuous figure in the Melbourne Exhibition. They were made of kauri, and, although plain in design, were so richly moulded, with raised panels of mottled kauri, that their appearance was truly elegant; and, as not a joint had given way, they proved that the kauri of New Zealand will bear exposure to a very high temperature, when properly seasoned.

Mr. Wakelin, of Greytown, exhibited very creditable specimens of wood-turning; and a patent churn, by Mr. T. Ellis, appeared to possess great advantages above those that are in common use.

Many other articles might be enumerated here, all of which were good of their kinds, such as the brushes and brooms made by Messrs. Trevethick Brothers; coppersmiths', plumbers', and brass-work, by Messrs. Danks and Son; plumbers' work, electrical bells, gas-fittings, &c., by Mr. J. E. Hayes; tin- and japanned-ware, by Mr. T. Garland; hair-work, by Mr. Hyde and Mr. Price; surgical belts, &c., by Mrs. Macdonald; bookbinding, by Messrs. Lyon and Blair and Mr. Burrett; printing, engraving, and lithography, by the two last-named and Mr. Hughes; printing, stereotyping, and electroplating, by Mr. Didsbury, of the Government Printing Office; and rubber-stamps, by Mr. J. W. Frost: but special mention must be made of rice and spices, dressed, ground, and otherwise prepared by Mr. E. H. Crease, many of the articles being put up in highly ornamental tin boxes, which also are constructed in Mr. Crease's factory.

CLASS II.

Section 1. Articles made or produced in other Parts of New Zealand.

The Kaiapoi Woollen Manufactory exhibited a large and admirable assortment of its productions, including yarn (coloured and white), hosiery, flannel, serge, tweeds, blankets, &c. This was the only woollen factory that exhibited, but articles produced by others were shown (as mentioned above) in goods made up by Messrs. Wilson and Richardson.

A plank of kauri timber 12 feet long by 6 feet wide was shown by Messrs. Stewart and Co. This was interesting not only as showing the large sizes of that timber that can be obtained, but also that there are mills capable of sawing such huge logs as the one from which that plank was cut.

Hydraulic cement, in no way distinguishable from Portland, made in Taranaki from stone found in the North of the Auckland District, was exhibited by Mr. J Chantrey Harris, who also showed specimens of the stone in the different stages of the manufacture, and of articles produced from the cement, proving its valuable qualities and especially its freedom from shrinkage.

Section 2. Articles imported from Great Britain or other Places beyond the Sea.

The Wellington Gas Company exhibited a varied assortment of gas stoves, and Messrs. Danks and Son, Mr. Hayes, and Mr. Petford, many beautiful specimens of gaseliers, porcelain basins, and other kinds of hardware.

Two pianos made by Messrs. J Brinsmead and Sons, exhibited by Mr. Reichardt, were in every way worthy of the firm by which they were manufactured.

FINE ARTS AND OTHER EXHIBITS.

There were three classes of exhibits which cannot be included among manufactures, yet which call for special notice.

1. *Fine Arts.*

This section included paintings in oil and water-colours, drawings in crayon and pencil, paintings on silk and porcelain, sketches in black and white, and mechanical drawings. Some of these, principally among the water-colours, were of a high class, but there were two crayon drawings whose excellence caused them to be generally overlooked as they were commonly taken for superior engravings. An oil-painting of a New Zealand pigeon, and another of New Zealand flowers by the same artist, were unusually good; while the photographs of Messrs. Wrigglesworth and Binns, Messrs. Clark and Hamilton, and Mr. W B. Gibbs, would bear comparison with the works of the most distinguished artists. A fine specimen of ornamental engraving was shown by Mr. C. H. Williams; while three c reens covered with pictures were pleasing proofs of the taste and patience of their producers.

2. *Ladies' Work.*

The number and variety of articles in this section precludes more than the most general notice of them. They ranged from productions in crewels, Berlin wool, lace, and crochet, which almost took rank among the fine arts, to such more homely though useful articles as knitted shawls and gloves, crochet and patchwork counterpanes, with a profusion of other things for domestic use or ornament. A committee of ladies divided these into seven classes of work, and a small prize was given for the best specimen in each class, to which an extra prize was added for raised flower-work, of which there was only a single example.

3. *Maps and Writing by Pupils in the Public Schools.*

Three prizes (afterwards increased to four) were offered by private liberality for the best specimens of writing and composition, and of writing only. A very large number of pupils of both sexes competed for these prizes, the two for writing and composition being taken by pupils of the Mount Cook Girls' School. The writing prizes were adjudged, the 1st to a pupil of the Thorndon School, and the 2nd to one at the Willis Street School (who had been transferred to that school from the Mount Cook Boys' School a short time previously). The number of specimens and the general excellence of the writing were highly gratifying, as showing the work that is being done in the Board schools of Wellington.

Several very creditable specimens of maps and drawings were sent in, but the time had not been sufficient to allow of their being specially prepared for exhibition; yet this made them in one sense more valuable, as they were simply the common work of the schols.

In conclusion, it may be added that the Exhibition was got up rather hurriedly, and with all the misgivings that invariably attend a first attempt. The result, however, on the whole has been satisfactory, and it may be hoped will lead to better things in the future. His Excellency the Governor was good enough to open the Exhibition, and for a fortnight it was a source of general attraction, the rooms being constantly thronged by interested visitors.

Wellington, 8th June, 1881.

J WOODWARD,
Commissioner.

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