

1889.
NEW ZEALAND.

NEW ZEALAND HEMP (PHORMIUM TENAX)

(INFORMATION RESPECTING ITS RECENT ADVANCE IN PRICE, ETC.).

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

No. 1.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, N.Z., 21st March, 1889.

I commend to your notice the enclosed cutting from the *Lyttelton Times* of the 16th March, in which it is suggested that you should procure and furnish information as to the cause of the recent rise in the price of New Zealand hemp.

There is no doubt that the effect has been to induce numbers of our colonists to embark largely in the manufacture, and it would be well to ascertain if possible that the advance is likely to be continuous. I have therefore the honour to request that you will be good enough to make the necessary inquiries, and report as early as may be practicable.

Sir F. Dillon Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General.

I have, &c.,

H. A. ATKINSON.

No. 2.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 1st April, 1889.

I have the honour to inform you that two hundred copies of the second edition of the pamphlet "*Phormium Tenax as a Fibrous Plant*" will be forwarded to you by an early opportunity, for distribution in any manner you may think likely to promote interest and inquiry respecting the manufacture and supply of Phormium fibre. Three copies are forwarded to you by book-post per "Arawa."

You will observe that the preface contains an interesting statement by Sir James Hector respecting the present condition of the Phormium industry and its possible development; and in connection therewith, I have to ask that you will endeavour to ascertain to what use the fibre shipped from New Zealand is put, and also to what cause the increased demand of the last year or two is due, and consequently whether such demand is likely to be permanent or not.

I have, &c.,

(For the Colonial Secretary),

G. S. COOPER.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 3.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Paris, 1st May, 1889.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st March, directing my attention to an article in the *Lyttelton Times* respecting the recent rise in the price of New Zealand hemp.

There is evidently some trade secret in the matter. When the Hon. Dr. Grace arrived in England he made some inquiry into the cause of the sudden demand, which it was suspected had arisen from the discovery of some process by which the hemp could be worked up in silk fabrics. Mr. Kennaway has been engaged in making inquiries, which will be carried further, in accordance with your instructions; and I will do my best to get such particulars as may be of service to our settlers.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

No. 4.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Paris, 17th May, 1889.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st April (No. 40), relating to the *Phormium tenax*, and the recent advance in its price.

On receiving the Premier's previous instructions on the subject I made inquiries in the city from persons most likely to be able to furnish the information you desire, and I now enclose copies of letters from the following firms: Messrs. Weddel and Co., Messrs. Redfern, Alexander, and Co., Messrs. W. Binnie and Co., New Zealand Loan and Mercantile Agency Company, Messrs. Miles Brothers and Co., containing particulars which will be useful to growers in the colony.