

1917.
NEW ZEALAND

INDUSTRIES COMMITTEE

(REPORTS OF THE).

(MR. WILKINSON, CHAIRMAN.)

Presented to the House of Representatives, and ordered to be printed.

ORDER OF REFERENCE.

Extract from the Journals of the House of Representatives.

FRIDAY, THE 20TH DAY OF JULY, 1917.

Ordered, "That a Select Committee be appointed, consisting of ten members, to inquire into and report upon matters tending to benefit and encourage the industries of the Dominion; with power to call for persons and papers; three to be a quorum: the Committee to consist of Mr. Craigie, Mr. Forbes, Mr. Hudson, Dr. A. K. Newman, Mr. Pearce, Mr. Poland, Mr. Sidey, Mr. Veitch, Mr. Wilkinson, and the mover."—(Right Hon. Mr. MASSEY.)

REPORTS.

UTILIZATION OF STEEL SCRAP AND WASTE BY ELECTRICAL PROCESS.

I HAVE the honour to report that your Committee has had under consideration a proposal, submitted by the Government, from Mr. Thomas Waddell, steelfounder, of Christchurch, who proposes to establish a plant for the smelting of scrap steel by an electrical process, thus using up waste steel scrap. The applicant urged that a bonus of £1 per ton be granted by the Government up to 5,000 tons. It was also suggested that a remission of duty be made on machinery imported for the establishment of such works.

Evidence was given by Mr. Waddell; Mr. Parry, Chief Electrician to the Public Works Department; Mr. P. Reed, Chief Inspector of Mines; Mr. A. Smellie, steelfounder, of Dunedin; and Mr. H. H. Jackson, Chief Mechanical Engineer to the New Zealand Railways Department.

The Committee does not recommend that a bonus be granted as suggested, but recommends to the favourable consideration of the Government the remission of Customs duty on machinery imported for the erection of the electric furnace necessary for the production of steel under the process above referred to.

Your Committee is of the opinion that the production of iron and steel in the Dominion is a matter which should receive the attention of the Government, and recommends that further inquiry be pursued in regard to this important question.

3rd October, 1917.

TAR PRODUCTS.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Committee has had under consideration an application for assistance in the matter of (1) reduced railway rates on the carriage of prepared tar for road-making purposes used exclusively by local bodies; (2) protection through the Customs of tar preparations manufactured in New Zealand.

After careful consideration of the question the Committee recommends—(a) That tar preparations manufactured in New Zealand shall, when required by local bodies exclusively for road-making purposes, be carried under the classification known as Class N; (b) that the Government be urged to favourably consider the advisability of assisting the tar-distilling industry by giving the resultant products a reasonable protection through the Customs.

Further, the Committee is strongly of opinion that the Government Departments should give a decided preference to goods manufactured in the Dominion from tar and the by-products thereof, provided the price and quality are satisfactory.

17th October, 1917.

TRADE WITH THE PACIFIC ISLANDS.

The Committee has inquired into the question of trade with the Pacific islands, particularly the Fijian, Samoan, and Cook Groups. The information available is limited and inclusive in character, but there are many indications that the resources of the islands are capable of considerable extension, especially in regard to the fruit and copra industries, the production of fruit in particular being capable of almost unlimited development, which would secure for the Dominion a plentiful and cheap supply. It was further shown that, owing to the shortage and irregularity of shipping and the high freights ruling, the import and export trade has been considerably restricted.

The Committee recommends to the favourable consideration of the Government :—

- (1.) That the Government should take measures to bring about an improved and regular steamer service between the various islands and the Dominion.
- (2.) That an exhaustive inquiry be made by a competent business man, who should be engaged to visit the principal islands and report generally upon the whole question of the present and future possibilities of trade.
- (3.) That investigations should be made regarding the possible existence of phosphates and guano deposits.

19th October, 1917.

JASPER AND ARGILLITE INDUSTRY.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Committee has been approached by the owners of the Jasper Quarry, Island Bay, for assistance in obtaining the necessary permit from the authorities to enable the shipment to Great Britain and America of samples of jasper and argillite for the purpose of exhibition.

After hearing evidence thereon the Committee recommends that the Government grant the necessary facilities to the Wellington Jasper and Argillite Quarries (Limited) for the shipment of a limited quantity of samples at the company's expense to the destinations indicated above.

Further, the Committee suggests that, where practicable, samples of these and other suitable stones or marbles shall be used in the construction and embellishment of the new Parliament Buildings, it being the opinion of the Committee that the decorative effect of the building would be enhanced, and the stone itself be of interest to the public as a specimen of New Zealand production.

27th October, 1917.

SPECIAL REPORT.

I HAVE the honour to report that the Industries Committee desires to place on record its hearty appreciation of the capable, painstaking, and courteous manner in which the Chairman, Mr. Wilkinson, has directed the business of the Committee during its proceedings.

27th October, 1917.

SPECIAL REPORT.

I AM directed to report that the Industries Committee desires to place on record its appreciation of the services of the Clerk (Mr. C. Hartridge), who has carried out his duties with promptitude, ability, and tact throughout the present session.

27th October, 1917.

FINAL REPORT.

I AM directed to report that the Industries Committee has had under consideration the general question of the industries of the Dominion, paying special attention to new or neglected enterprise, and in connection therewith considerable evidence has been taken.

Reports have been presented to the House on the following subjects: (1) The utilization of steel scrap; (2) tar products; (3) trade with the Pacific islands; and (4) jasper and argillite.

The Committee has held thirteen meetings, which have been well attended.

In response to a circular letter forwarded to fifty-five Chambers of Commerce and three industrial associations throughout the Dominion much valuable information has come to hand, which it is anticipated will prove of great assistance for future reference.

27th October, 1917.

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (650 copies), £1 10s.

By Authority: MARCUS F. MARKS, Government Printer, Wellington.—1917.

Price 3d.]