

Enclosures in 269.

MY DEAR SIR,—

16, Mark Lane, London, E.C.,
1st April, 1872.

With regard to the sample I sent Mr. Forbes 'from your bale of New Zealand flax, ex 'Halcione,' he states:—"The sample of New Zealand fibre last sent is very good, but I would not value it at nearly so high a price for textile fabrics as will be received for it for rope, on account of its being still far from soft enough for spinning."

He also refers to the fabrics he is getting made as follows:—"Your cloths are pushing on, and I am promised all in good time for the Exhibition."

I have shown your flax (ex 'Halcione') to Mr. Frost, the well-known rope-maker, who thinks it is particularly good, and superior to any he has seen, with the exception of Native-dressed.

Dr. Featherston,
Agent-General for New Zealand,
7, Westminster Chambers.

(Signed) C. THORNE.

MY DEAR SIR,—

16, Mark Lane, London, E.C.,
17th April, 1872.

I have heard from Mr. Forbes this morning. His letter is dated yesterday. The following extract will show you the progress made.

Dr. Featherston,
7, Westminster Chambers.

Yours faithfully,
(Signed) C. THORNE.

[Extract from Mr. A. K. FORBES's letter, dated Hatton Mill, 16th April.]

"I do not mind trying experiments myself, but it is the getting of the yarns weaved that worries me. I would require your head to go about pushing the manufacturers on. I must confess to being a bad hand at this sort of thing. I enclose a letter from one of the manufacturers, which will, no doubt, be satisfactory so far. The other manufacturer who promised to weave the cloth for the mail-bags is full of difficulties and obstacles—I believe none of them well founded. I regret all this more than I can tell you."

[Copy of a letter from EDWARD and Co. to Mr. A. K. FORBES.]

"DEAR SIR,—

"Friskheim, 15th April, 1872.

"We have got the bed-serge sheeting ready to come out of the loom. Seeing that we won't get all finished by the time, we purpose making a variety of different kinds. The next thing we will make will be the coarse serge; then a piece of sacking."

MY DEAR SIR,—

16, Mark Lane, E.C.,
22nd April, 1872.

The following extract from Mr. Forbes's letter to me will, perhaps, prove interesting to you. His letter is dated Arbroath, 20th April:—

"I have got thirty-three yards of broad sheeting for Dr. Featherston. As it had to be starched before weaving, I have had it washed and laid on the grass at my cottage. I expect to have it ready for calendering on Monday, and hope to get it sent off to him* about Wednesday or Thursday. It looks very well indeed, and I hope will give satisfaction. He has still to get towelling and linen. * * * By this post I send you sample of your cloth made from your flax and finest tows—Nos. 1A and 1B. You will perceive this yarn has run very much to small hemp. This was a marked feature in the tows, and made it very difficult to spin. The cloth has not been cropped. I shall get the web about Tuesday, and will have it cropped before washing out the starch. This cloth would, I think, do well for coarse sacks and towels. A sample of the coal-bags (cloth) I am to get about the end of next week, and will forward to you as soon as I can."

This will show you that Mr. Forbes has not slackened his efforts to accomplish his promise to you.

Dr. Featherston,
New Zealand Government Agency.

(Signed) C. THORNE.

REPORT BY W. L. BULLER, Sc.D., F.L.S., ON THE NEW ZEALAND PHORMIUM, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ENGLISH MARKET.

Having written semi-officially to Dr. Hector by every mail since my arrival in England, seven months ago, and communicated full information on several matters relating to the preparation and use of the New Zealand *Phormium*, I do not consider it necessary to refer to these points again, except in a very formal way.

The object of the present report is rather to furnish, in a connected form, some account of what has been done and of what is being done here in the way of developing this article—both as to the preparation of the raw fibre and its conversion into textile fabrics, &c. My main purpose, therefore, is to exhibit, at one view, the progress that the trade in this fibre has lately made, its present estimation in the English market, and its future prospects as a staple article of commerce in the opinion of those most competent to form a judgment.

In preparing this paper I have endeavoured to bring together as much information as possible of that particular kind which, as Dr. Hector informs me, is most needed by persons in the Colony engaged

* Sample roll sent by Suez, now in Colonial Museum.