

2. It will be seen that this Report, and the accompanying documents, contain a large mass of well-digested and interesting information respecting this valuable fibre-bearing plant, and its cultivation and manufacture.

3. The export of the *Phormium* fibre from New Zealand has rapidly increased during the last six years. From one of the Statistical Tables, at page 101 of the Enclosure, it will be perceived that in 1865 only 15 bales were exported, and that this number rose to 12,162 in 1869, and during last year to 32,820 bales, valued at £132,578. The number of flax-mills at work in New Zealand in 1870 was 161.

4. There is at present open in the Colonial Museum at Wellington a very interesting exhibition of numerous and well-arranged specimens of the *Phormium*. In my recent address* to the New Zealand Institute, I referred to this exhibition in the following terms :—“ The present collection will form a good basis for future reference; and it is to be hoped that it may prove the means of rendering permanent an industry, the importance of which to New Zealand can hardly be exaggerated, if only a satisfactory solution of the difficulties involved in the process of manufacture were discovered. The experience in this respect already acquired has been somewhat dearly purchased; but even a cursory inspection of the exhibition is sufficient to show that much progress has been made, and that a large amount of accurate information respecting this entire subject has been collected. All will admire the varied and beautiful specimens of the manner in which the Maoris have adapted this indigenous fibre to almost every purpose of domestic economy. Several of the articles of Native manufacture show at once thought in contrivance, taste in design, and skill in execution.” A catalogue of the articles exhibited will be found at pages 36–60 of the enclosed Report.

5. Considerable interest has already been expressed in England respecting the fibre of the *Phormium*, which is so useful in many manufactures; and I would request your Lordship to cause some copies of the Enclosure to be forwarded to the Board of Trade, for distribution in the manner best calculated to insure increased publicity.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Earl of Kimberley.

G. F. BOWEN.

No. 16.

COPY of a DESPATCH from Governor Sir G. F. BOWEN, G.C.M.G., to the Right Hon. the Earl of KIMBERLEY.

(No. 98.)

Government House, Wellington,

MY LORD,—

New Zealand, 22nd October, 1871.

I have the honor to report that your Lordship's Circular Despatch of the 13th March ultimo, respecting certain statistical inquiries concerning the state of crime and of prison discipline in the Colonies, was at once referred to the Colonial Ministers, who have caused letters to be addressed to the Judges and Provincial authorities throughout this Colony, requesting them to supply the information required. It appears that some further time must elapse before full replies can be received.

2. It will, of course, be recollected that the collection of Statistics generally of the kind now wanted, is a matter of much greater labour and difficulty in New Zealand than in the other Australasian Colonies; for here, the prisons are not, as elsewhere, under the control of the General Government, but of the several Provincial Governments; and the five Judges of the Supreme Court do not, as in the Australian Colonies, reside together at the capital; but are placed respectively at Auckland, Wellington, Nelson, Christchurch, and Dunedin; and meet only once a year at Wellington, for a short time, to form the Appeal Court.

3. Moreover, it will also be recollected that with my Despatch No. 74, of the 1st August, 1868, I transmitted copies of the “ Report of the Commission on the “ Prisons of New Zealand,” which had been appointed partly in consequence of a previous Circular Despatch from the Colonial Office. In the reply,† your Lord-

* See Governor of New Zealand to Secretary of State, No. 89, of 27th September, 1871.

† Earl Granville to Governor of New Zealand, No. 7, of 11th January, 1869.