

hundred mills are engaged in flax and tow spinning in Lille and the surrounding district. The linen trade is, and always has been, profitable when in a normal state; but there is now depression in all industries, and it has been severely felt by the linen manufacturer. The value of the annual consumption of linen in France is over 500,000,000 francs.

I presume the information respecting flax is asked for by the Government of New Zealand with a view to the cultivation and preparation of the plant in the colony for the European markets. Upon this supposition perhaps I may be pardoned for mentioning that a good deal of the foregoing information has been given to me by a gentleman who for upwards of twenty-five years has been engaged in the various operations connected with the manufacture of flax in the north of France, and who has studied the different processes in vogue in most of the northern countries of Europe. This gentleman, a member of an old-established firm, informs me that he could procure a set of steady, qualified workers, quite sufficient to begin the cultivation of flax, from the preparing of the seed, soil, weeding, bolting, steeping, scutching, drying and bleaching, and, finally, preparing the fibre for European markets, and using up the coarse tow and codillas for the manufacture of bagging for colonial use; and he desires me to add that in the event of the New Zealand Government desiring a man who practically understands the different processes, he would be a candidate for the post.

EDWARD TAYLOR,
Vice-Consul.

Dunkirk, 24th February, 1879.

MONSIEUR,—

Havre, le 14 Janvier, 1879.

J'ai bien reçu honorée lettre d'hier, et m'empresse de vous donner ci-dessous les renseignements relatifs aux questions 3, 4, 6, et 7.

3. Le lin doit être emballé sous nattes, et légèrement pressé.

4. Les prix des lins varient suivant qualité de 80 à 150 francs les 100 kilos.

6. Il y a dans la Seine Inférieure quatre filatures, ayant ensemble de 25 à 26 broches, consommant annuellement environ 4,000 à 5,000 tonnes de lin et de chanvre.

7. On trouverait l'écoulement des lins de la Nouvelle Zélande si la qualité et le prix le permettaient; déjà depuis longtemps on reçoit *viâ* Angleterre des chanvres provenant de ce pays.

Tels sont, Monsieur, les renseignements que je puis vous donner. Puissent ils vous être de quelque utilité.

Agréé, &c.,

Monsieur le Consul de S.M. Britannique au Havre.

A. CARON CAMPART.

[TRANSLATION.]

SIR,—

Havre, 14th January, 1879.

I have received your honoured letter of yesterday's date, and hasten to give you below the information in reply to questions 3, 4, 6, and 7.

3. The flax should be packed in matting, and pressed lightly.

4. The price of flax varies according to quality from 80 to 150 francs per 100 kilogrammes.

6. There are in the department of Seine Inférieure four spinning factories, having together from 25 to 26 spindles, consuming each year about 4,000 to 5,000 tons of flax and hemp.

7. A sale would be found for flax from New Zealand if the quality and price permitted it; for sometime now we have received *viâ* England hemp coming from that country.

This is all the information I can afford you, and I trust it may be of some use.

I have, &c.,

To H.B.M. Consul at Havre.

A. CARON CAMPART.

SIR,—

Flax Supply Association, 10, Donegal Square, W., Belfast, 28th December, 1878.

I beg to acknowledge receipt of your favour, addressed to Mr. John Mulholland, M.P., president of this association, accompanied by an extract from a letter to you from Mr. Thomas Kirk, of Wellington, New Zealand, requesting information regarding the culture of flax and its preparation.

I now forward you, by post, copy of a pamphlet on this special subject which contains reliable information.

With regard to the transport of the dried straw from New Zealand to this country, it would require to be packed in compressed bales; but an important item must not be forgotten—namely, that the dried straw, before being retted, &c., will produce at the utmost only 15 per cent. of fibre, so that you would have to pay freight upon 85 per cent. of refuse. This, in my opinion, would make it impossible to convey the straw such a distance with any prospect of a profit, or even cost being made; besides, to dry flax-straw properly requires considerable skill.

Mr. Kirk is wrong in saying that at present there is any lack of supply in Great Britain. There is ample supply to meet all demands, more especially during the depression in trade which now exists.

To prosecute flax culture in New Zealand the several operations would require to be done on the spot, and the produce forwarded to this country in fibre. This, of course, would require the necessary skill and the requisite machinery for scutching, &c.

I state my opinion freely, as I would be reluctant to encourage any one to enter upon an enterprise unless I was pretty well convinced it would be attended with success.

I accompany the pamphlet with the annual report of this association for 1877, and shall be happy to render you further information, if in my power.

I have, &c.,

MICHAEL ANDREWS,
Secretary.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

P.S.—If you would wish for a number of the Flax Instructions, I shall be happy to send you a supply.