

illustration of this. The Public Works Department call for tenders for floor-matting, together with a number of other kinds of goods which a manufacturer of floor-matting does not deal in, but which a merchant can supply as easily as he can floor-matting. The manufacturer of floor-matting is thus debarred from tendering for the supply of that material, even though he may be in a position to supply it much more cheaply and of far better quality than the general merchant can. The same remarks apply to lime, the Public Works Department using large quantities of Portland cement, when the Mahurangi lime, which is equal to cement for concrete purposes, is to be had near at hand at a much less cost. The Commissioners think that, in all cases where locally-made articles or manufactures can be utilized by the Public Works or any other department, they should be, provided that they are equally good and suitable for the purpose, and are procurable at as low a cost. The Government should be the last to be influenced by any prejudice against "colonial-made goods," and they should not allow the crotchets of officials, whether the heads of departments or subordinates, to stand in the way of the fair encouragement of local industries.

PATENT LAWS.

From the various recommendations that are made on this subject, it appears that the patent laws are unsatisfactory, and that the cost, delay, and trouble of getting a patent are unreasonable: the Commission therefore recommend that the Government should cause an inquiry to be made into the state of the patent laws, with a view to a better system being adopted. They would particularly draw attention to the absence of any official facilities for affording practical information regarding patents, the Registrar of Patents being at present inaccessible to the public, owing to the stringency of regulations of which the public know nothing.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

Owing to want of time, the Commission have not entered upon this subject; which has been, nevertheless, brought prominently to their notice in the evidence. The Commission think that this is one of the subjects on which it is desirable there should be a careful inquiry, recognizing that it is of the highest importance that technical education should be developed and fostered in every respect in all the principal centres of population. The Commission would draw special attention to the prospectus of the School of Agriculture of the Canterbury College, which will be found among the papers attached to the report.

BONUSES.

The Commission have given considerable attention to the question of the best manner of offering bonuses for the encouragement of local industries, and have come to the conclusion that the manner most economical to the Government and at the same time affording the strongest inducement to enterprise is to guarantee interest up to 5 per cent. on the outlay for a period of four, five, or six years, according to the nature of the undertaking. They have reason to believe that by this means many important industries would be brought into existence and successfully established, which are now neglected solely from the fear of a dead loss of interest on capital during the first few years of uphill work. They think that the conditions which they propose are at the same time of a character to protect the Government against imposition and to deter adventurers from plunging into wild schemes at the public expense. The Commission therefore desire the expression "bonus," wherever it is used in their report, except with respect to the production of silk, to be understood to mean a guarantee of interest on capital invested up to 5 per cent. for a period of from four to six years.

WEIGHTS AND MEASURES.

It has been represented to the Commission that there should be a uniform standard of weights and measures for grain and flour fixed by law throughout the colony; and in this the Commissioners concur.