

stone is worked to a greater depth, no doubt a better quality will be procured. I should like to bring before the Commission the urgent necessity that exists for improved means of communication between Tauranga and the Lake District, both as regards cheapness and speed. There are several very weighty reasons for desiring improvement in this direction. Not only does the passage of tourists through Tauranga greatly conduce to the prosperity of the district, but if better communication were available, such as a single line of railway—say by the route already indicated by the Government Engineer—the resources of the interior of the North Island would derive a very beneficial impetus. Approaching and on the western side of Lake Taupo, there exist large forests of well-grown totara timber: it would be a great advantage if this timber could be obtained for use in the surrounding district. There are large areas of land in the hands of Natives between Tauranga and Lake Taupo, and surrounding the lake, with which I understand the Natives are more willing to deal than they have been hitherto. These lands are very suitable for sheep-runs, as they grow good native grasses. There is one run in that district (Grace's) from which the fleece of upwards of 4,000 sheep has been sent during this last season through Tauranga for shipment to England; and, in spite of the enormous charges incurred for carriage, this route was preferred to any other for the cheapness with which the wool could be delivered on board ship at Auckland. I was informed by one of the shareholders in this run that next year they will have the fleece of 16,000 sheep to forward through Tauranga. There can be no doubt that, if the improved means of transit which I am advocating were in existence, many would be induced to take up runs in the Taupo District, which would conduce not only to a great increase in the exportable produce of the colony, but also tend greatly to a satisfactory solution of the Native difficulty. This would very much accord with the ideas of the late Rev. T. S. Grace, the missionary of the interior, as it would enable the Natives to receive the benefits of civilization, and afford them a revenue from their land to support them in their decline as a race, thus relieving the Native Office of the burdens it now bears in pensions and unnecessary employments

B. S. CORLETT,  
Architect.

#### LIGHT-DUES AND PORT-CHARGES.

##### No. 179.

Mr. W. R. WILLIAMS to the Commissioners on Local Industries.

GENTLEMEN,—

Wellington, 25th March, 1880.

The remarks I would like to call your attention to are, light-dues and port-charges that the coasting steamers and sailing vessels are subject to in this colony—namely, paying the same in every port they enter, which tends to cripple rather than foster our local trade. I would therefore suggest that we should be put on the same basis as in Victoria and New South Wales—namely, paying both the above every six months. More especially I would call the attention of the Commissioners to the very heavy port-charges and light-dues that all vessels are subject to at present trading from this port to Westport and Greymouth; and, unless steps are taken to reduce the same, the trade that we now have will soon be driven away.

I have, &c.,  
W. R. WILLIAMS.

##### No. 180.

Mr. J. REES GEORGE to Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns.

SIR,—

Wellington, 31st March, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular on the subject of local industries. I presume information on the subject of gas-manufacture will not much assist the Commission; but should you desire particulars I shall be happy to supply any that may be required.

*Shipbuilding.*—About two years ago the Wellington Patent Slip Company built a schooner of 80 tons register now sailing under the name of the "Poneke." She is in all respects a first-class vessel; but the result of the experiment was a serious loss to the Company, and while the present depression exists there is no inducement to proceed further with this industry.

*Ship-repairs.*—The Wellington Patent Slip Company can carry out repairs of all kinds to wooden vessels, but as yet the work available is not sufficient to induce the Company to erect a foundry and fitting-shop for the repairs of steamers and iron vessels, and only blacksmiths' work is undertaken.

I have, &c.,  
J. REES GEORGE.

##### No. 181.

The CHAIRMAN, Mongonui County Council, to the Chairman of the Local Industries Commission.

SIR,—

Mongonui, 2nd April, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your circular of 17th ultimo in reference to local industries. I cannot speak particularly about the local industries in the whole District of Auckland, as we are so far removed from that centre of civilization that this district is almost a *terra incognita*; nor yet am I able to give much information about the local industries of the county, for, so far as I know, there are none. If the Government would spend some money in opening up this district, it would add considerably more to the benefit of this district in particular, and to the colony as a whole, than by spending money here on local industries. As long as this fine district remains as it is, perfectly inaccessible, it would be worse than useless for the Government to spend money here on local industries. It may add to the benefit of the district by having Government money spent in it; but, as far as this district is concerned, I should protest against what I should consider a wasteful expenditure as long as the district remains in such a wretched and miserable state through want of roads. I have not the least doubt that several industries would be started if it was at all possible to