

*Copper.*—Copper ore has recently been found in quantity on the Haast River. A sample of this ore is now in the hands of Dr. Hector for assay. As regards coal and copper we recommend that liberal assistance, in the shape of subsidizing local efforts, should be given.

*Marble.*—The marble-quarries at Caswell Sound are of great extent, and the quality of the stone is equal to any in the world, not excepting Carrara marble—as is proved by the fact that the Caswell marble, competing against Italy and other famed marble-producing countries, took the first prize at the Sydney Exhibition. In order to enable these quarries to be worked and opened out, and made available for commercial purposes, a large preliminary outlay is necessarily required; and we would strongly recommend that assistance should be given, either by way of pound for pound expended, or by a liberal bonus on the successful production of, say, the first 500 tons of stone from the quarries. We may remark that competent experts in London and other parts of the world have examined and tested this stone, and pronounced it to be of the highest possible class; and this fact warrants us in urging that large assistance be given in making the product available, and so adding a large source of wealth to New Zealand. In Italy, similar quarries have been worked for the last 2,000 years. At Carrara alone 1,200 men are constantly employed, besides many thousands more at Genoa, Corsica, and Sicily. The annual rental of the Carrara marble-quarries is £38,000, and the yearly exportation of the raw material exceeds £500,000 sterling. The larger blocks of this marble are worth from £2 to £3 per cubic foot, and the material can be shipped with the greatest facility from Caswell Sound.

*Lithographic Stone.*—The recommendations and remarks just made with regard to opening up the marble-quarries apply with equal force in the case of the lithographic-stone quarries at Abbey Rocks, excepting that in this case the bonus should be on the production of, say, the first 20 tons of stone. The fact of special importance to this colony in connection with these industries is this: that the working of the quarries would give constant and permanent employment to many hundreds of persons. The supplies of lithographic stone for the whole world are now drawn from Bavaria, and the industry there gives homes and living to thousands. The establishment of such works as these creates industries for all time, and leads to the permanent settlement of population in districts where no population exists. The lithographic-stone supply at Abbey Rocks is illimitable. Besides its use for lithographic purposes, it serves also for various other uses, such as tiles, lintels, door-steps, &c. A considerable sum of money (£5,000 on the lithographic-stone quarries alone) has been spent in ascertaining the value and extent of the stone at the quarries; but the large expenditure required for the first opening-out of the rocks has prevented their development, and a very great source of wealth to the colony is thereby completely lost.

*Leather.*—The manufacture of leather is successfully carried on in Hokitika, and an article is produced which has a high reputation in the trade. The establishment of boot and shoe factories would give work to a large number of young people now seeking employment. We recommend the granting of liberal bonuses, either on the hands employed, or on the production of stated quantities of boots and shoes.

*Concluding Remarks.*—The absence of railway-communication is the great drawback to the establishment of all and every industry on this Coast. Were the East and West Coast line constructed, an immense impetus would be given to trade and manufacture on both sides of the Island. On this side we have exhaustless water power and supply, coal, timber, and the best possible sites for factories; and, were railway transit practicable, we should be able to get the raw material, such as wool and hides, &c., delivered at a small cost. In the absence of the railway, almost insuperable obstacles to the establishment of industries of any kind present themselves; and we conclude by saying that the Government who will unite the East and West Coasts by rail will do more for the real welfare of the colony and for the young persons now growing up around us, by rendering the establishment of various industries practicable and valuable, than any Government has yet done for the welfare of these Islands.

McLEAN W. JACK,

Mayor.

H. D. RAE,

Hon. Sec. to the Committee.

#### BLASTING-POWDER.

No. 186.

Mr. J. RENSHAW to Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns.

SIR,—

Thames, 13th April, 1880.

Artisans' tools in many businesses are admitted duty-free. Our main industry is mining. Some time ago I applied for a remission of duty on miners' shovels (at present 16½ per cent.), considering that shovels ought fairly to come under this head; but the remission was not granted. I think this relief should be accorded.

Blasting-powder admitted free has heavy charges levied in connection with it, as magazine-rent and license to sell; but what I complain of is the charge for removal license. Every time powder is removed from the magazine to our premises a shilling license has to be obtained, and this authorizes the removal of 50 lb. only, or two kegs; so that for every two kegs, even though we remove twenty at once, there has to be a separate license taken out and 1s. paid. Payment of 1s. only for each removal would cover cost of keeping the record, and should be sufficient.

I have, &c.,

JAMES RENSHAW.

No. 187.

Evidence of Messrs. JAMES RENSHAW and JOHN H. SMITH before Mr. Commissioner A. J. Burns, at Grahamstown, 13th May, 1880.

We wish to have the restrictions removed on the issue of blasting-powder. We wish to have issued to us as many pounds of blasting-powder on one license as we may require in any one day. At