

character, or value in a commercial sense. I tried to induce other Agents-General to join me, so that we might together make a representative exhibit of the wools of all the Australasian Group; but their Governments did not think it worth while. The objection seemed to be that the Palace Company had only resorted to their scheme as a money speculation and device to attract crowds; but I urged that, whatever might be the Company's object, it must, at any rate, be the object of the wool-growing colonies to extend a knowledge of their great export beyond the precincts of sale-rooms and manufactories, and to popularize a raw material worth twenty millions a year in such a place as the Crystal Palace, whose other attractions would be sure to draw numbers to the Wool Exhibition as well. I did not succeed in the attempt to interest the Australian Governments in the matter, but it will be a satisfaction to your own Government to know that you have supplied the best means of telling the numbers who surround the machinery at work in the Palace every day what the raw material really is for whose sake all the wonderful inventions they see have been called into existence.

In regard to the machinery itself, the Exhibition is certainly a great success. It would be hard to surpass in interest the examples it gives of every kind of labour-saving appliance used in the woollen manufacture. Each process is clearly shown, from the time the wool leaves the bales to the moment when it comes out as finished goods for the market. All the latest improvements in machinery are displayed. The visitor moves from one marvel of design to another, and sees the fleece scoured, dried, combed, carded, teased, spun, and woven, till it is turned out a piece of stuff; thus uniting in one impression ideas which he would otherwise have had to gather in many separate ways and at many times and places. Naturally, as his interest grows with the sight of so many curious processes, it extends to the raw material they were all invented for, as he turns from a fleece shown as it was packed in a shed on the other side of the world, to the beautiful fabrics into which it will soon be converted by the various machines he has just seen. Thus it will happen that, if the Exhibition is to be any good as a means of popular instruction, your decision to show the raw material will have been no slight help to its usefulness. Nor is the Exhibition wanting in other objects of interest besides machinery. A great variety is shown of the innumerable fabrics into which wool enters either wholly or partly; of the soaps that have been found most valuable; of the chemicals and dyes used in the manufacture: in a word, of whatever can instruct and amuse the inquirer about the wool-trade and its allied industries. At first it did not seem to me that much notice was going to be taken of the Exhibition by the general public; but, as people came to know what a number of interesting things there were to see, the visitors increased, and I think the Exhibition would do very well if it had not been heralded by too many flourishes not to cause some disappointment.

I need hardly say that I have done my best to show to advantage the wool of the few private exhibitors from New Zealand, as well as the Government's. The gallery appropriated to us is the one to which the public naturally goes first, after seeing the machinery at work, and our cases are placed so as to meet the eye at once. The space occupied by the New Zealand exhibits is so large that I have had to put one of the Corps of Commissionaires in charge of them, as much damage might otherwise have been done on days when great crowds came down to the Palace. I am now having a catalogue prepared of the exhibits, which I will send you in due course, with any further details which may be necessary of what has been done to carry out your commands. As to the cost, the only ultimate expense of any consequence will be the glass cases, because, although the first advance for the purchase of so many bales has, of course, been large, some of the money has already come back by resales, and the rest will come in when I sell the bulk of the wool at the September series. I shall be glad if you would instruct me whether I am to sell the cases, or send them out for the Museum. I had them made rather handsomely, because I found they would be much more saleable afterwards than a common sort; and for permanently showing valuable objects in the Museum at Wellington, they would be well worth sending out.

I shall offer the thanks of the Government to all the firms who have co-operated with me in this business. I give their names at foot: but I ought to make special mention of Messrs. H. P. Hughes and Sons, who at the busiest time of the current sales let me have the services of Mr. Burgess, one of their principal valuers. It is, indeed, owing to the skill and good taste of this gentleman that your exhibits have been made what they are, and I should be very glad if you would cause an official letter of thanks to be sent to him direct. Mr. F. Betz, of Messrs. Dalgety, Du Croz, and Co., who was a juror at the Melbourne Exhibition, also gave me valuable suggestions; and Mr. Kennaway, secretary to this department, has been indefatigable in his efforts to make our exhibit a success.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Messrs. Charles Balme and Co.; Edenborough and Co.; Henry P. Hughes and Sons; Jacomb, Son, and Co.; Willans, Overbury, and Co.; Buxton, Davidson, and Lees; John Thomas Simes and Co.; Schwartz, Helmuth, and Co. [The two last-named firms did not purchase any wool.]

No. 12.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 9th September, 1881.

Referring to your letter No. 541, of the 28th June last, addressed to the Premier, stating what you had done to carry out the instructions respecting the Wool Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, I have the honor to acknowledge, with thanks, your services in this matter. The cases had better be sent out here; but if possible some arrangement should be made whereby they will not come out empty. I enclose herewith an official letter of thanks to Mr. Burgess, in accordance with your request, and shall feel obliged if you will kindly forward it to that gentleman.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS DICK.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.