

1886.
NEW ZEALAND.

CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO THE INTRODUCTION OF
FISH OVA.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. the COMMISSIONER of TRADE and CUSTOMS to the AGENT-GENERAL for New Zealand,
London.

SIR,—

Wellington, 15th August, 1885.

I have the honour to bring under your notice the question of whether you would be able to forward, from time to time, shipments of various fish ova in an inexpensive manner.

Last year, as you are aware, a gentleman was sent Home by the Government and the acclimatization societies conjointly at a considerable expense. Application has been made to send the same gentleman Home again, but the cost seems unnecessary, if, as we are informed on good authority, it be the case that fish ova can now be so packed as to come out with complete safety in the freezing chambers of steamers. We have information that parcels of ova from Washington, after being sent the long and rough journey by rail to San Francisco, have been forwarded thence to New Zealand, and arrived in good condition, the whole cost of conveyance from Washington being, for a considerable parcel, not larger than £37. The establishment in Washington which packs the ova is, I believe, a Government one.

It occurs to the Government that you may be able to procure ova at a comparatively small expense properly packed, and forward them by the direct steamers of either lines. It might be arranged, if you thought it necessary, besides freight, to promise some reasonable gratuity to the men who would have particular charge of the boxes during the voyage.

The ova which it would be desirable to send are those of the salmon, herring, lobster, and the crab. As regards the treatment of salmon ova, there is a considerable amount of knowledge and experience in the colony, but I doubt whether the same can be said with respect to the ova of the herring, lobster, or crab, and we should be much obliged if you can with such ova, or in anticipation of its arrival, send advice and suggestions as to the mode of treatment. I am informed that there is a professor in Edinburgh who has made the herring the subject of his special attention. I forget his name for the moment, but believe he has had some correspondence with your office.

If I am right in supposing that you will at comparatively small expense be able to send by different steamers shipments of ova, it would be well to arrange to let us know in advance of their arrival, either by previous mail or by cablegram. In anticipation of the latter, I attach some special code words.

I may observe that I have spoken to Captain Hallet, of the "Rimutaka," and that gentleman assured me he would be happy to bring out some fish ova, and give them special attention during the voyage.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 2.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 30th October, 1885.

I received in due course your letter of the 15th August last, informing me of the method the Government now wished to be adopted in further shipments of ova.

In doing what I can to carry out these instructions, I ought to confess that I feel in some difficulty. I had taken the greatest pains all through 1883 and 1884 to interest many people in this country, eminent for skill and experience in pisciculture, about sending ova to the colony, on the supposition that the spasmodic experiments which had been going on for so many years were to be superseded at last by a systematic and persistent action on the part of the Government itself, extending over some seasons at any rate. The first experiment of sending out ova in a "moist-air chamber" and at a regulated temperature was made in the steamship "Ionic" in January, 1884; and it is hardly open to doubt that this method was not only in itself a right one, but in fact, as was said by the Hon. Colonial Secretary in his letter of the 25th April, 1884, the best that had till then been devised. Further experience, however, had shown that the first expense of that method would not have to be repeated. A shipment of trout ova privately made by Sir James Maitland had brought out most valuable information, showing how cheaply as well as safely ova could be got out under certain conditions; and when the reports came Home of our shipment by the "Ionic" Sir