

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 15th January, 1886.

Since writing to you on the 29th December (No. 1,600) I have been engaged in making arrangements for sending you the salmon ova got from the Tay. I regret to say that I am very doubtful now whether any Rhine ova will come after all.

Having regard to the risk which undoubtedly exists of ova not living in the extreme cold of the steamers' refrigerators, and to the misfortune it would be, in that event, if all that has been done should be thrown away, I decided to send only a small portion in the freezing-chambers, and to place the bulk in an icehouse specially designed for the purpose, sending out a man in charge of it for insuring a supply of ice to the trays. Sir James Maitland will pack the ova, and they will go to the "Ionic" in a fortnight. I have accordingly sent you a telegram to that effect, using the ciphers in your despatch of the 15th of August. Sir James Maitland examined all the eggs carefully two days ago, and found their impregnation right. Allowing 10 per cent. for blind eggs and others injured by spawning together, there ought to be 160,000 eyed ova; and Sir James is confident that if they are not disturbed on the voyage, but allowed to remain in the boxes till they arrive at their destination, a good success is certain.

I have arranged with the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company that, if required, ice should be available on board the "Ionic," at Auckland, for the ova; but you will perhaps allow me to suggest that as soon as you get this letter a telegram should be sent to the refrigerating companies at all the ports, to make sure that there is plenty of ice at hand.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 14.

The Hon. the COMMISSIONER of TRADE and CUSTOMS to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Government Buildings, Wellington, 12th March, 1886.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 29th December and 15th January last, addressed to the Colonial Secretary, on the subject of fish ova, and I beg to express my thanks to you for the valuable and interesting information contained therein.

I have taken the best measures that I can for insuring the safe distribution of the salmon ova which you have forwarded by the "Ionic."

With reference to the question of introducing lobsters and crabs, I think that it would be advisable to await the result of the experiments proposed to be made in sending those crustacea to Tasmania before taking any steps to introduce them to New Zealand.

There are at present, so far as I can learn, no hatcheries that would be suitable for hatching out herring; but the necessary steps for establishing one will be taken as soon as Professor Ewart's instructions hereon have been received. I trust that these will be forwarded to the colony before the ova arrives.

On the 10th instant I received the following telegram from you: "Herring ova 'Ruapehu.' Professor Ewart strongly wishes send scientific assistant therewith. Instruct whether. Please reply immediately." To which I replied, "Herring ova: If expense reasonable, and you approve, send assistant."

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 15.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 27th January, 1886.

I am glad to inform you that I have shipped over 200,000 salmon ova in the steamer "Ionic." The ova were packed by Sir James Maitland himself at Howietoun yesterday, in boxes made for the purpose; and, as I informed you by the last mail, I have had a chamber put up adjoining the ship's refrigerator, in which eight of the boxes have been packed, leaving a ninth box separate. I have also placed two boxes of trout ova in the ship's refrigerator, in order to afford a test as to whether ova can survive the amount of cold there. If you will be good enough to have all the boxes reshipped to me the expense of them will be saved. I transmit herewith copy of the instructions given to the attendant whom I am sending in charge. Dr. Posnett, the newly-appointed Professor of Classics at Auckland University College, has very kindly consented to look after the filling of the ice-trays in the chamber, in order to insure that there shall be no tampering with the ova during the voyage.

After we had put the salmon ova on board the "Ionic" we inspected the box of ova which I had placed a month ago in the freezing-chamber at the Victoria Docks, and which had remained there ever since in a temperature of 18° Fahr. We found that, although most of the eggs had been killed, a large proportion were alive and apparently uninjured. We replaced the box in the refrigerator, and shall keep it there for another fortnight, which will allow of the ova being in that temperature for a time equal to the time occupied on a voyage to New Zealand. As to this I shall address you later on.

I am sending you a telegram to inform you of the number of ova in the "Ionic," in order that you may have as much time as possible to arrange for their distribution.