

1893.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE CO-OPERATIVE SYSTEM OF PUBLIC WORKS

(STATEMENT FORWARDED BY THE MINISTER FOR PUBLIC WORKS TO THE
PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA RELATIVE TO).*Return to an Order of the House of Representatives, dated 28th June, 1893.**Ordered, "That a return be laid before this House setting out a copy of the statement forwarded by the Minister for Public Works to the Premier of South Australia, explanatory of the co-operative system in connection with public works."—(Mr. G. HUTCHISON.)*

The Hon. the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS to the Hon. the PREMIER, South Australia.

SIR,—

Public Works Office, Wellington, 22nd March, 1893.

As promised by my colleague the Hon. the Postmaster-General, and by cablegram yesterday, I have much pleasure in sending you information in regard to the working of the co-operative system of carrying out railway construction and other works, introduced in this colony by the present Government.

Accordingly I have the honour to enclose a statement explanatory of the system; also the Public Works Statements presented to Parliament during the sessions of 1891 and 1892, with passages marked bearing on the subject; and I trust that from these and other data enclosed herewith you will be able to glean the information desired.

Should you wish for any further particulars in relation to the matter, I shall be glad to supply them.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON,

Minister for Public Works.

The Hon. the Premier, Adelaide.

LIST OF ENCLOSURES.

- A. Statement explaining the system.
- B. Public Works Statement for 1891.
- C. Public Works Statement for 1892.
- D. Standard specification and conditions of the Public Works Department.
- E. Standard specification and conditions of the Mines Department.
- F. Form of monthly return of men, wages earned, &c., filled in, as an example.

Enclosure A.

PUBLIC WORKS, NEW ZEALAND.—STATEMENT EXPLAINING THE CO-OPERATIVE SYSTEM, FOR THE
INFORMATION OF THE HON. THE PREMIER OF SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

AN account of the origin of the system, and how it was proposed to work it, was given by the Minister for Public Works in the Statement presented to Parliament by him in 1891. (See pages 5 and 6.)

The method of working has, however, been somewhat modified since the Statement was delivered, and it has been found better, and really necessary when the men were not well acquainted with one another's capabilities, to form them into smaller parties than originally intended.

The average strength of the parties now is not more than eight to ten men; and for these small parties we do not insist on trust deeds being drawn up and having trustees duly appointed, but simply direct each party of men to elect two of their number as "head men," who represent the party in dealings with the Government and engineer in charge of the work, and give acquittances on behalf of the party for payments made. The classifying of the men is also more easily arranged under the small-party system.

The co-operative system, as at present worked, may be shortly described as follows:—

When, say, a piece of railway is to be constructed, the number of men that can be advantageously employed on it is estimated. When the men are selected, they go on to the ground either