

SESS. II.—1897.  
NEW ZEALAND.

# DIRECT SERVICE BETWEEN NEW ZEALAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

## COMPARATIVE STATEMENT OF FREIGHTS BETWEEN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND AND EUROPE.

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

SIR,—

Dunedin, 3rd September, 1896.

We venture to address you on the subject of a direct monthly steam service from New Zealand to Fremantle, Western Australia, which it is our intention to establish if we can get sufficient encouragement. At present there is going forward from Dunedin and the Bluff every ten days from seven thousand to ten thousand sacks of oats for transshipment at Melbourne, and the rate of freight at present charged by the Union Company, who monopolize the business, is £1 9s.\* per ton of 2,240 lb. This we consider is excessive, and could be reduced at least 25 per cent. by a direct service. Besides giving the producer in New Zealand the benefit of this reduction, a direct service would be the means of finding a market for a great many other articles of our produce that the other colonies at present supply.

Another serious objection to the present position is that orders from Western Australia are only available to New Zealand shippers through Melbourne brokers and middlemen, who are getting the cream of the profit. A direct service would be the means of getting past these people.

The Union Company, although they know the trade warrants a direct service, will not entertain the business because they are doing very well at present by carrying all goods from New Zealand bound to Western Australia to Melbourne at 13s. per ton freight, and they are anxious to maintain amicable relations with the other Australian steamship companies, whom they fear, and whom they favour with a share of the cargo in their hands for transshipment to Western Australia.

Apart from the necessity of a direct service, any action of the Government in supporting to establish a line would be exceedingly popular, and would at once advance the values of a number of our products.

The only remunerative outlet for New Zealand oats at present is Western Australia, and this line would immediately advance in value to correspond with the reduction in freight; and the same may be said of oatmeal, butter, cheese, bacon and hams, and, though not to the same extent, flour, potatoes, hay, chaff, and timber.

Our intention is to establish a service from Sydney, calling at Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, Bluff, and thence to Fremantle. This would give an opportunity to Auckland people to ship kauri timber, for which there is a large market in Fremantle, at present supplied from Puget Sound and the Baltic. The alternative route is Melbourne to Greymouth or Westport to coal, thence Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, Bluff, and Fremantle. This would give the West Coast an opportunity to ship timber to Fremantle.

If your Government could see your way to subsidise a monthly service for six months, until the service is established and can stand on its own bottom, we feel sure it will be of great benefit to the colony generally and be a very popular measure.

The steamers we propose to employ are large carriers, with a capacity of at least 2,500 tons, will steam twelve knots, fitted with electric light and ample passenger accommodation.

Commending this matter to your careful attention, and any further information required will be promptly placed at your disposal,

Yours, &c.,

pp. J. H. STANLEY AND Co.,  
G. S. MUNRO.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

A FEW years ago the enterprise of Otago merchants in securing business in new fields could always be counted upon. What a market is being neglected in Western Australia is thus referred to by Mr. John Cormack in a letter from him to the *Tuapeka Times*: "What I wish to call your attention specially to is that you farmers should bestir yourselves to secure your fair share of the great golden harvest now being gathered, and from which you seem almost entirely shut out. Almost all the oats you send to Melbourne come to Western Australia, but the heavy freights and the transshipment charges give you very unfair returns. I understand the Union Steamship Company

\* Owing to the block at Fremantle freights have now advanced to £2 4s. per ton.