

## NEW ZEALAND MEAT CONTRACTS FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.

Arrangements have been made through the High Commissioner's office that New Zealand meat should be specified in the tender-forms issued for the supply of this commodity to several of the public institutions. The Produce Commissioner reports that he has frequently been requested to inspect the meat-supply at infirmaries and other institutions, and has always complied with the request, as it has enabled him to find openings for the sale of New Zealand meat that had not previously been available.

SAN FRANCISCO MAIL-SERVICE *via* TAHITI, AND TRADE WITH COOK AND SOCIETY ISLANDS.

In January of this year a contract was entered into with the Union Steamship Company (Limited) for the maintenance of a steam service every thirty-six days between Wellington, the Cook Group, and the Society Islands; the contract to run for one year only.

For this service the Government granted a subsidy of £7,000 in connection with the carriage of mails between New Zealand and San Francisco, the mails to be transhipped into Messrs. Spreckels's line of steamers at Papeete, the capital and the principal port of the Society Islands.

So far as the Cook Group of Islands is concerned the great bulk of its trade is done with New Zealand; but that is not the case regarding Tahiti, the principal portion of its trade being with the United States.

It is hoped that the inauguration of this mail-service will result in a larger proportion of the trade of the Society Islands coming through New Zealand channels, more especially as the means of communication between this group of islands and New Zealand is now more frequent than with the United States.

In addition to the special mail-service referred to above, with Wellington as its port of arrival and departure, a twenty-eight-days service is also maintained between Papeete and Auckland by steamers of the Union line.

## TRADE WITH THE EAST.

The desirability of endeavouring to secure a share of the trade with the East is worthy of further consideration. Efforts towards that end have been made in the past by sending a trade representative to the East to inquire into the possibilities of opening up an export market for New Zealand produce, and the whole matter was carefully investigated.

It was, however, shown that, in the absence of a direct service from New Zealand to the countries concerned, the extra freight to Australia, and transshipment and incidental expenses in Australian ports, were too severe a handicap to allow of our products competing with those of Australia in this market.

The subsidy required for the initiation of a direct steam service suitable for the trade was considered to be too heavy to warrant the expenditure under the conditions then prevailing. In view, however, of the rapid developments now going on in this direction, and more particularly the rise of Japan as a wool-consuming country, the whole question is one well worthy of further consideration. New Zealand's trade with Japan, and more especially our export trade, is insignificant, viz.,—

Imports into New Zealand from Japan, 1908 .. .. .	£ 88,211
Exports to Japan from New Zealand, 1908 .. .. .	148

In comparison with these figures the statistics of Australia's trade with Japan given below are significant, more especially when we note that the export of wool alone jumped up £371,142 in value during 1907, and the total trade has increased from £455,240 in 1903 to £1,261,265 in 1907.

The interchange of trade between Australia and Japan is as follows :—

Year.	Imports into Japan.			Exports from Japan.			Total Trade.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
1903 .. .. .	119,993	10	0	335,246	10	0	455,240	0	0
1904 .. .. .	439,908	10	0	443,858	18	0	883,767	0	0
1905 .. .. .	600,119	12	0	407,293	12	0	1,007,413	4	0
1906 .. .. .	412,805	2	0	422,566	4	0	835,371	6	0
1907 .. .. .	781,875	0	0	479,390	0	0	1,261,265	0	0

It will be seen by these figures that the increase of imports of Australian produce into Japan reaches the large sum of £662,882, while the exports to Australia have increased by £56,000.

The principal Australian exports during 1907 consisted of—

£			£			£		
Wool .. .. .	571,646		Bacon .. .. .	42		Hides and skins .. .. .	8,979	
Leather .. .. .	892		Fruit .. .. .	333		Timber .. .. .	8,210	
Flour .. .. .	4,255		Tinned meat, &c. .. .. .	3,560		Lead .. .. .	1,063	
Wheat .. .. .	55,016		Horses .. .. .	10,365		Mutton .. .. .	573	
Butter .. .. .	5,603		Tallow .. .. .	22,898				
Cheese .. .. .	15		Bones, &c. .. .. .	8,434				

All of which are produced in New Zealand.

Other Eastern countries, such as China and the Straits Settlements, seem to offer opening for New Zealand produce. The exports from Australia to the Straits Settlements in 1907 were valued at £792,283, and to China £126,417.