

REPORT.

THE SELECT COMMITTEE of the House of Representatives, appointed May 9th, 1856, to consider the most efficient mode of maintaining a rapid and frequent communication between all the Provinces of the Colony, report as follows :—

The Committee appointed on the subject of steam communication between the different Settlements have taken the evidence of the following persons, viz., Messrs. Mailler, Milton, and Deck.

Their own enquiries, added to the information thus obtained by them, have strongly impressed the Committee with the necessity that increased efforts should be made by the Government to render the communication by steam between the several Provinces more efficient both as to speed and regularity.

They are further of opinion that the present is a very favourable opportunity for carrying the above object into effect; in support of which opinion they particularly desire to draw the attention of the House to the evidence of Captain Mailler, the whole of whose statements indeed appear to the Committee worthy of particular attention.

The Committee definitely recommend that the Government should immediately advertise in the neighbouring Colonies for two steamers, of power, respectively, equal to that of the S.S. "William Denny," and offer a united bonus of £8000 for their services in maintaining a communication between the Provinces, including Otago, in accordance with the route-arrangements suggested in the evidence of Captain Mailler appended hereto.

WILLIAM FITZHERBERT, *Chairman.*