Bar Bullion for Shipment.

22 carats	£3 17 9	
1 carat	0 3 6	
2 grains, ...	0 1 8	
		£4 2 11
Less charges—Duty	£0 2 6	
Loss in melting	0 1 6	
Freight and insurance, &c.	0 1 0	
		0 5 · 0
		£3 17 11

3. Would not the establishment of an Assay Office serve all the purpose?—An assay determines only the quality; it does not determine the price. In the absence of a Mint, or an agreement by the Government with some institution to purchase all gold at a fixed standard value, the price of gold would fluctuate at the will of private buyers.

4. What is the price of bar bullion in England now?—The last quotations are, for unrefined, £3 17s. 11d. per ounce standard; and refined, £3 17s. 9d. per ounce standard.

5. What is your opinion in respect to the Mint becoming a purchaser of gold?—I am of opinion that the Mint should not be a purchaser of gold. It should confine its operations to coining for the public, unless there was a scarcity of coin for currency, and even then I am of opinion that the want would be supplied by private enterprise. If the Mint coined over and above what was wanted for circulation, the cost of the surplus coinage would be a loss to the country.

6. Would not the additional metallic currency displace the bank-note circulation?—No; these matters are regulated by circumstances, by requirements, by convenience, or by the whims of the community. The amount required for circulation, whether paper or coin, is that contained in the safes, the pockets, and tills of the people. All sums over and above these requirements are placed in the coffers of the banks. "And as money or gold is worthless unless it is used, and as it is not used till it is parted with," the banks, if they have more bullion than is required for the use of the Colony, would ship the surplus away to where it is wanted. The fact that the banks have large amounts of bullion in their coffers proves nothing but that a large amount of their capital is unemployed.

7. Is it in your opinion the duty of the State to establish Mints for coinage of gold?—Yes, I think it is. Gold is made a medium by which all exchanges in commerce are regulated. And as the price has been fixed by law, the state has very properly reserved to itself the monopoly of minting, and because it is the best guarantee to the public that the coin contains the exact quantity of the precious metal required by law.

APPENDIX.

No. 1.

C. Elouis, Esq., to C. O'Neill, Esq., M.H.R.

Sir,— Royal Mint, Sydney, 14th August, 1872.

I have had the honor to receive this day your telegram dated 31st July, 1872, requesting certain information for the Select Parliamentary Committee engaged in the inquiry as to the advisability of establishing a branch of the Royal Mint in New Zealand.

A memorandum with your queries and the answers thereto is enclosed, together with four papers relating to the constitution and business of this establishment. I trust that the information they afford may be useful to your Committee, to which I shall be happy to furnish further details should they be required.

I have, &c.,
C. Elouis,
Deputy Master.

C. O'Neill, Esq., M.P.,
Government Buildings, Wellington, New Zealand.

Enclosure No. 1.

Questions put to Mr. Elouis; with his Replies.

Cost of New South Wales Mint complete, including buildings and machinery?—The total expense incurred in bringing the Mint into active operation was £48,990, viz.:—Cost of buildings, £19,005; machinery and freight, £17,620; passages of officers and staff, £1,970; salaries, wages, and contingent expenses to day of opening, £10,395; total, £48,990. It is to be observed, however, that the cost of buildings included only the erection of workshops and buildings for the machinery at the back of an old building which was applied to the purposes of offices for the general conduct of the Mint business.

Yearly cost to the Colony?—About £12,000.

Will New South Wales Mint be self-supporting?—It has hitherto been self-supporting.

Cost of a suitable establishment in New Zealand?—The establishment of the Sydney Mint has lately been revised, with a view to the utmost economy compatible with efficiency. In the absence of information in regard to the relative value of labour, &c., it is difficult to form an estimate of the cost of a suitable establishment in New Zealand; but I think it could not be very much less than the cost of the Sydney establishment.