

No. 16.

Messrs. McMECKAN, BLACKWOOD, and Co. to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.
 Sir,— Melbourne, 19th March, 1878.

We were favoured with your communication of the 7th ultimo, 78/538, per Mr. H. Howard, and have now the honor to inform you that the salmon ova arrived by the "Chimborazo," on the night of the 11th instant, was transhipped to and forwarded by the s.s. "Alhambra," 13th, to the Bluff, under the personal supervision of Mr. Howard, who expressed himself as perfectly satisfied that the conditions made by your Agent-General had been faithfully fulfilled. The expenses incurred are as follow, viz. :—

Balance of freight per "Chimborazo"	£	s.	d.
Bonus to chief steward "Chimborazo"	50	0	0
Victoria Ice Company's account	10	0	0
Beecham and Co.'s account	5	16	0
	18	0	0
Commission on above disbursements	£83	16	0
Customs, bonds, entries, &c.	4	3	10
Freight per "Alhambra" to Bluff	0	10	6
Exchange and stamp duty	8	0	0
	0	11	8
Total	£97	2	0

—for which amount we have valued upon you through the Union Bank of Australia, on demand, and will thank you to protect.

Mr. Howard had a return ticket issued to him at Invercargill, payment for which we presume had been arranged for by our agent there.

Trusting this importation of ova may be a perfect success,

We have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

McMECKAN, BLACKWOOD, AND Co.

Vouchers for the first four items enclosed herewith.—McM., B., AND Co.

No. 17.

Mr. G. S. COOPER to Messrs. McMECKAN, BLACKWOOD, and Co.

GENTLEMEN,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 30th March, 1878.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, advising the transhipment of the salmon ova, which arrived at Melbourne by the "Chimborazo," into the s.s. "Alhambra."

The sum of £97 2s., being the amount of the expenses you incurred, and your charges on account of the ova, has been paid to the Union Bank, in accordance with your wishes; and I am directed to convey to you the thanks of the Government for the assistance you have rendered to them in this matter.

I have, &c.,

G. S. COOPER,

(For the Colonial Secretary.)

Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., Melbourne.

No. 18.

The Hon. Mr. MENZIES, M.L.C., to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Dun Alister, 15th April, 1878.

At a meeting of the Southland Salmon Commissioners on the 9th instant, your communication of the 21st February, signed in your absence by the Hon. Mr. Ballance, was considered. In it I was informed that, inasmuch as the salary of Mr. Howard, Curator of the Ponds, had not been provided for in the estimates, the Government was unable to pay it. The Commissioners request me to suggest that the salary can fairly be charged on the vote for the introduction of salmon, or, if that should be insufficient, upon the vote for unforeseen contingencies; and also to remind you that Mr. Howard has had no salary paid to him since the end of 1876, during which time he has been engaged in the care of the ponds, and in carrying out the instructions of the Government and the Commissioners.

The voucher, which I have the honor to enclose herewith for payment, will show that certain refunds are also due to Mr. Howard for amounts he has paid on behalf of the Government.

From a report of the Curator, it appeared that the shipment of salmon ova by the s.s. "Chimborazo" has been only a partial success. The ova packed by Mr. Youl looked bright and healthy, but only a portion was fecundated; they began to hatch on the 4th April, the eighty-third day after shipping; about 250 are already hatched, and the Curator does not, from present appearance, expect more than 2,000 fish from these boxes. The ova packed by Mr. Buckland were not in such good condition, the greatest portion being opaque: they began to hatch on the 5th April; about fifty are hatched, and 500 more are expected to hatch out.

The trout ova have come in better condition: they were taken on the 17th January, and began to hatch on the 6th instant, seventy-nine days after shipping. Mr. Howard hopes to get 1,000 trout from the 1,500 ova: about twenty or thirty have been already hatched. The Commissioners desire to place on record their regret that of the large number of ova shipped so few should have arrived in good condition, and to express their conviction that failure was by no means due to any