

SIR,—

19th December, 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, and, in reply, to state that the High Commissioner has been instructed to pay the expenses incurred in connection with the shipment of live lobsters to your Board. When the vouchers reach the colony copies will be transmitted to you so that a refund may be made.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE ALLPORT, Secretary.

Geo. M. Thomson, Esq., Chairman Marine Fish-hatchery Board, Portobello.

SIR,—

Wellington, 19th December, 1905.

The Portobello Marine Fish-hatchery Board, Dunedin, is arranging with the manager of the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company, and with Dr. E. J. Allen, Director of the Marine Biological Association of the United Kingdom, in regard to the shipment of live lobsters to the colony, and as Dr. Allen may be put to some small expense in procuring the lobsters and sending them up to London, and the Hatchery Board has no agent in England who could defray the expenses incurred, I shall be glad if you will be so good as to do this out of your General Imprest Account, and the Board will refund the amount on receipt of the vouchers by the Treasury.

I have, &c.,

WM. HALL-JONES, for the Premier.

The High Commissioner for New Zealand, Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London, S.W.

SIR,—

Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Station,

Portobello, Dunedin, N.Z., 12th January, 1906.

I have the honour to report that the Marine Fish-hatchery Board met last Thursday to consider the question of proceeding with the introduction of desirable food-fishes from Britain. It was resolved to ask you to be good enough to communicate with the High Commissioner in London as to the introduction of one or more of the following kinds of fishes: Turbot, herring, cod, or haddock.

Before anything definite can be done in the way of making a shipment, information would have to be obtained on several points—*e.g.*, (1) whether the fish could be transported alive, and how far such an experiment could be intrusted to the engineers of the conveying steamers; (2) whether the ova of any of these could be brought out; (3) in the latter case, whether their hatching could be retarded sufficiently long to insure their arriving in the colony; (4) whether all these species of fish can be kept alive in sea-water when the temperature falls to 32° Fahr. These questions suggest themselves to the Board as the chief ones requiring solution before the actual experiment of obtaining the fish or their ova is undertaken.

I have already written to Dr. Fulton, Scientific Superintendent of the Scotch Fishery Board, on the subject of the retardation of fish-ova, and we would suggest that the High Commissioner communicate with him, with Dr. Allen, of the Marine Biological Laboratory, Plymouth (who is procuring the lobsters for the Board), and with Professor Herdman, of Liverpool University. Professor McIntosh, of St. Andrew's, is a leading authority on the subject in the Old Country, and Professor J. Cossar Ewart, of Edinburgh, is the gentleman who on a former occasion obtained herring-ova for New Zealand during the administration of Sir Julius Vogel and Sir Robert Stout.

In regard to the introduction of lobsters, it is thought probable that shipments may have to be repeated more than once before the experiment can be considered to be successful. The same will apply to the crab, which the Board propose to deal with as soon as possible.

The Board has been guided from the outset of its operations by the necessity of exercising caution in its work on account of the expense involved in the work contemplated, and has sought to acquire all possible information, both by inquiry and by experiment, before undertaking anything which necessitated much expenditure. It had a definite, but small, amount of funds to come and go upon, and it was desirous of keeping well within its means, so as not to break faith with the Government and come on them again for further liabilities.

The Board trusts that the move forward suggested by you may be eminently successful, and it will do all in its power to co-operate in making it so.

I have, &c.,

GEO. M. THOMSON,

Chairman, Marine Fish-hatchery Board.

The Hon. W. Hall-Jones, Minister of Marine, Wellington.

SIR,—

17th January, 1906.

I have the honour, by direction of the Minister of Marine, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th instant, with reference to the question of introducing desirable food-fishes from Great Britain, and I am to forward herewith, for your information, copy of a communication which has been addressed to the High Commissioner on the subject.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE ALLPORT, Secretary.

G. M. Thomson, Esq., Chairman, Marine Fish-hatchery and Biological Board, Dunedin.

SIR,—

Wellington, 15th January, 1906.

Adverting to my letter No. 705/149, of the 19th ultimo, on the subject of your paying expenses connected with a shipment of live lobsters for the Portobello Fish-hatchery Board, I have the honour to forward herewith copy of a communication which has been received from the Board in regard to the introduction into the colony of turbot, herring, cod, or haddock, and shall be glad if you will make inquiries on the points suggested therein. If, as a result of your inquiries, you are satisfied that it is