

	£	s.	d.
Brought forward ... ..	53	8	9
Delivery, &c. ... ..	0	9	6
Wharfage, marking package, &c. ... ..	1	15	7
Cartage, &c. ... ..	1	10	0
Bills of lading ... ..	0	1	6
Commission, 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cent. ... ..	0	11	0
Due cash ... ..	57	16	4

Mr. NOBLE to Mr MORRISON.—4th March, 1871.

In accordance with your instructions we have purchased and shipped per "Edinburgh Castle," for Wellington, nine bales of hemp and flax, and have now the pleasure to give our views on these different sample bales as bearing upon the fibre shipped from New Zealand as flax (which term we consider a misnomer), as this fibre can only come into competition, to any large extent, with roping hems. It will be seen at a glance by comparing the Egyptian flax, which will show the nature of all other flaxes grown from linseed, as clearly as if we had sent Russian, Dutch, or English flax.

We will now take Nos. 1, 2, and 3: these, it will be seen, are entirely a different fibre from that of the New Zealand, or *Phormium tenax*. Nos. 1 and 2 are occasionally used to supplement flax for linen, and largely for the heavier fabrics of same class, but No. 3 is only used for common cordage, and will always have considerable influence on the value of the lower qualities of New Zealand flax, these being adapted to the same purpose.

No. 6. Aloe Fibre.—This will come largely into competition with New Zealand, but from being badly cleaned it has hitherto not taken its proper position in the market.

Nos. 4 and 7.—Sisal and Manilla hemp are the most important to keep in view in preparing the New Zealand flax, and the nearer this fibre can be brought to the quality of these two hems the larger the consumption will become. You will please to call the attention of the Government to the great difference there is in the strength of the Sisal, and particularly the Manilla, as compared with the New Zealand flax.

Nos. 8 and 9.—We have sent these two bales of New Zealand flax to show the qualities most in demand. The low brown hard fibre is very unsaleable, and, unless it can be laid down at such a price as to become available for paper making, it will be better not to ship it. Any further information that we can give from time to time we shall be most happy in sending you.

Mr. MORRISON to Messrs. G. and J. A. NOBLE.—7th March, 1871.

I beg to thank you for your report of the 4th instant on the sample fibres shipped per "Edinburgh Castle," and I venture to avail myself of your kind offer to supply any further particulars. There are several points on which I am desirous of more detailed information, in order that I may transmit the same to the Flax Commissioners at Wellington; and I shall feel obliged if you will have the goodness to favour me at your convenience with such information as you can supply respecting the following:—

(1.) Are the samples you have selected of the first quality; if so, what would be the prices of inferior descriptions?

(2.) Are the present prices above or below the average English market value?

(3.) Is the difference in the prices between (1) Russian and Italian hemp, (2) Sisal and Manilla hemp, and (3) Bombay hemp and aloe fibre, caused by the quality of the "fibre," or by the way in which they are respectively dressed?

(4.) It is stated that Manilla hemp when made into rope resists the action of sea water better than a rope made of the New Zealand fibre. Can you offer any explanation as to the cause of this?

(5.) Can you ascertain from the trade what is the relative capacity of Russian hemp and the New Zealand fibre to absorb tar?

(6.) You send two samples of the New Zealand fibre "to show the qualities most in demand." For what purposes are they respectively used?

(7.) At what price should the "low brown hard fibre" be laid down so as to become available for paper making?

(8.) Can you make any suggestion as to the proper mode of dealing with the New Zealand flax so as to bring it as near as possible to the quality of Sisal and Manilla hemp?

Thanking you for the attention you have already bestowed on the matter, and apologizing for this further trouble.

Messrs. G. and J. A. NOBLE to Mr. MORRISON.—11th March, 1871.

In reply to the several inquiries in your favour of the 7th instant, we will take your numbers seriatim:—

(1.) The samples represent good average qualities, and such as are used in the largest quantities. There are finer qualities in Manilla, Italian hemp, and Egyptian flax, but we considered the quality of these samples best adapted for purpose required.

(2.) The prices are generally higher than the average, particularly the Manilla and Sisal hems, both of which have declined since these sample bales were purchased—the former £3 per ton, the