latter £5 per ton. The other samples are £2 to £3 per ton higher than we should give for a parcel, as we were obliged to take them from different dealers, as importers would not break a parcel to give off sample bales.

(3.) The difference in price arises from the quality of the fibre and the purposes to which they are severally applied; in all cases, the freer from refuse the more valuable the fibre.

(4.) There is no doubt that the Manilla hemp has more resisting properties against the action of sea water than the New Zealand, and we think it is principally to be accounted for by the different nature of the fibre. Sundry experiments are now making, and so soon as we know the result we shall communicate it to you.

(5.) Very little New Zealand hemp has up to the present time been used for tarred rope purposes, and we cannot speak positively on this point. We will make further inquiries into this.

(6.) Both these samples are used for cordage, but the better quality is more eagerly competed for as it approaches nearer the appearance of Manilla hemp.

(7.) The price at which the low common quality would be largely available for making into paper will materially depend on the price of Esparto, a small sample of which is sent herewith; but at present price of the Esparto, £9 to £10 per ton, New Zealand should not exceed £11 to £12 per ton; but should Esparto fall to its average price, £5 10s. to £6 per ton, New Zealand would not alter in value to the same extent, but might fall 30s. to 40s. per ton.

(8.) We cannot answer this question very positively, but we believe a great point is the taking the New Zealand at a proper growth, and not allowing the fibre to become too woody and absorbent. We have seen samples prepared by the Maoris fully as strong as the Manilla hemp; this was taken from the young leaf about three feet long.

We believe, if attention is paid to the preparation of the New Zealand fibre, it will become a very important item in the commerce of the Colony; and anything we can do to foster this, we shall do, with much pleasure.

STATEMENT of Quarterly Average Price.

FIBRE.	1868.				1869.			
	March 1.	June 1.	Sept. 1.	Dec. 1.	March 1.	June 1.	Sept. 1.	Dec. 1.
Russian Hemp	39s.	36s. 3d.	36s.-37s.	39s.-40s.	40s.	36s.	34s. 6d.-35s.	34s.-34s. 6d.
Sisal Hemp	39s.-44s.	...	37s.-42s.	38s.-42s.	40s.-46s.	43s.-48s.	44s.-49s.	53s.-57s.
Manilla Hemp	44s.-49s.	43s.-53s.	43s.-51s.	42s.-51s.	45s.-51s. 6d.	43s.-51s.	47s.-54s.	53s. 6d.-64s.
Egyptian Flax	...	55s.-60s.	52s.-60s.	52s.-58s.	54s.-64s.	54s.-64s.	55s.-66s.	55s.-66s.
Riga FWPK Flax	56s.-58s.	56s.-57s.	58s.-60s.	60s.-61s.	65s.-66s.	61s.-64s.	52s.-54s.	51s.-53s.
Italian Hemp	36s. 6d.	...	36s. 9d.	...	41s. 6d.	41s.	42s.	...
Bombay Hemp	...	...	28s.	29s. 6d.	27s.	28s.	...	...

FIBRE.	1870.				1871.	
	March 1.	June 1.	September 1.	December 1.	March 1.	
Russian Hemp	34s. 6d.	31s. 6d.-34s.	34s.-34s. 6d.	35s. 6d.-36s.	33s.-33s. 6d.	...
Sisal Hemp	55s.-57s.	53s. 6d.-57s. 6d.	47s.-51s.	45s.-51s.	42s.-45s.	...
Manilla Hemp	54s. 6d.-62s.	50s. 6d.-55s. 6d.	51s. 6d.-56s. 6d.	51s.-56s.	51s.-53s.	...
Egyptian Flax	54s.-60s.	54s.-60s.	54s.-60s.	54s.-60s.	48s.-56s.	...
Riga FWPK Flax	48s.-50s.	48s.-50s.	48s.-50s.	48s.-50s.	...	...
Italian Hemp	39s. 6d.	39s. 6d.	...	40s. 6d.	37s.-44s.	...
Bombay Hemp	27s. 6d.	28s.	24s.	...	17s.-23s.	...

Aloe Fibre.—Prices not recorded. The range has been from 16s. to 31s., according to quality.

Mr. THORNE (Assignee for Steart's Patent) to Mr. MORRISON—21st February, 1871.

In December, 1867, I handed you some samples of fibre, extracted by a process in which I have an interest, from some rough leaves of dry *Phormium tenax* which you stated had been received from New Zealand. It may be interesting to you to learn that many of the difficulties experienced in the cleansing the gum from the New Zealand flax are overcome by the proper application of the process.

The principal objections raised by ropemakers against the use of the New Zealand flax were first —its tendency to rot when brought into contact with salt water, owing to the gum remaining in the fibre, thereby rendering it useless for sea-going purposes. Secondly, its tendency to chafe and cut, owing to the brittleness of the fibre; attributed to the same cause. New Zealand flax is now undoubtedly going into more general consumption, but it is only its cheapness, as compared with other fibres, that induces the demands, and importers are complaining bitterly of the heavy losses they are sustaining in their importations, and we now hear that several of the flax works in New Zealand have been closed in consequence.

I have been making various trials with the flax, with satisfactory results; viz., after dressing about half a ton of flax which was imported in a very roughly finished state, I sent it to Yarmouth, where it was made into rope, and this rope has since April last been in constant use on board fishing smacks.