

SESS. II.—1879.
NEW ZEALAND.

CONVEYANCE OF GOVERNMENT FREIGHT

(FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE RELATIVE TO).

(In continuation of E.-2, Sess. II., 1879. Presented, 7th August, 1879.)

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The GENERAL MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited), to the MINISTER for PUBLIC WORKS.

The New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited),

Christchurch, 18th September, 1879.

SIR,—

In further reference to the complaints of the Agent-General, on which I commented in my letters of the 7th April and 21st June, I have the honor to quote from our London manager's letter of the 1st August, written on the receipt by him of the extract from Sir Julius Vogel's despatch with which you favoured us:—

“Extract from Agent-General's letter to the Minister for Public Works received.—As a matter of fact, there was delay in getting the ‘Minister of Marine’ ready to load, but, from my letter of the 14th January (copy enclosed), you will see we expressed our readiness to take delivery of the railway iron as quickly as the contractor could deliver it. The last vessel, the ‘Angerona,’ taken up for account of the Government, was accepted by the Agent-General, not by way of affording any or the slightest relief to this Company, but that the cost to the Government shipping at Cardiff was reduced to the extent of 10s. per ton. The Company never asked to be relieved from any requirements upon the part of the Government, nor expressed any difficulty or inability to comply with them.

“When the ‘Angerona’ was loading it was found the Government could only supply 1,380 tons out of the 1,770 tons weight of iron the charterers had undertaken to provide: the result was, we had to go to another constituent for 390 tons to make up this ship's cargo, and so save the Government from payment of dead freights. There are no tenable grounds for these complaints: they simply arise from the Company's refusal to agree to the demands of the Agent-General to charter tonnage without the intervention of the Company.

“The last contract for railway iron is now being shipped in dribblets, notwithstanding our representations to the Agent-General that now is the favourable season for procuring tonnage; possibly at a later period of the year, when tonnage to load at Middlesboro' is difficult to procure, the heavy demands may be made.”

To what Mr. Strickland has written, I have only to add that it fully bears out the information we previously had, and on which I have already denied the accuracy of the statements made by the Agent-General as to our inability to meet any demands made on behalf of the Government under our contract.

I have, &c.,

H. SELWYN SMITH,
General Manager.

The Hon. the Minister for Public Works.

No. 2.

The GENERAL MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited), to the Hon. the MINISTER for IMMIGRATION.

The New Zealand Shipping Company, (Limited),

Christchurch, 29th October, 1879.

SIR,—

Referring to my letters of the 7th April and 21st June, I have now the honor to enclose you a copy of a letter just received from our London manager and agent, dated the 11th September, in which he comments on the complaints made by the Agent-General, in his letter to you of March last,

1—E. 5.