SESS. II.—1897.
NEW ZEALAND.

SAN FRANCISCO AND VANCOUVER MAIL-SERVICES.

(STATEMENT SHOWING COST FOR CONVEYANCE OF MAILS DURING 1896 BY ALL OCEAN-MAIL ROUTES, AND THE ESTIMATED PAYMENTS UNDER THE NEW PROPOSALS.)

Laid upon the Table by the Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, with the Leave of the House.

THE proposals submitted in connection with the San Francisco and Vancouver mail-services provide for both services terminating on the 31st March, 1899.

The subsidy of £28,000 a year granted by the United States to the San Francisco service expires in June, 1898.

The contract providing for a payment of £10,000 a year by the New South Wales Government to the Vancouver service ends in May, 1899, and the Canadian Government's contract (£25,000 per annum) in 1903.

The fast Atlantic service to connect with the Vancouver line does not commence until about May, 1899.

By contracting for the services up to March, 1899, the House will have an opportunity next session to reconsider the whole question of ocean-mail communication, after learning the future intentions of the New South Wales and United States Governments in respect of the Pacific services.

It has been assumed that nearly the whole of the correspondence from New Zealand for Great Britain, &c., will be forwarded by the fortnightly Pacific routes, and will be fairly divided. The estimated annual amount payable to each of the companies on the following basis would be £7,180:—

Letters at 10s. 5d. per pound	£4,973
Books, &c., at 1s. "	634
Newspapers at 6d. "	1,573
	£7,180