

# REPORT

OF THE

## SELECT COMMITTEE ON STEAM POSTAL SERVICE.

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THE Select Committee appointed to enquire into and report upon the Steam Postal Service of the Colony, report as follows :—

### I. The Committee understand the outstanding Steam Contracts to be as follows—

1. The contract made between the Admiralty and Messrs. Pearson, Coleman and Co., on the 1st November, 1858, under which the Home Government now has to pay £13,000 a-year for the Inter-colonial Service, and the Colonial Government £9,000 a-year for the Inter-Provincial Service. This Contract, now carried on by the I.C.R.M. Company, commenced on the 1st November, 1858, and continues in force till the 31st October, 1868, but is terminable by twelve months' notice on the 31st October, 1865. The service done by this Contract includes one trip a month from Sydney to New Zealand, and one trip a month from Manukau to the Bluff, calling at intermediate ports.
2. A Contract between the Colonial Government and the I.C.R.M. Company for a service from Auckland to Port Chalmers by the East Coast, calling at all the intermediate ports, for £7,000 a-year, commencing 6th April, 1863, and terminating 6th April, 1864.
3. A Contract with the I.C.R.M. Company for a monthly trip between Sydney and Nelson for £6,000 a-year. This contract is terminable by notice on either side.
4. A Contract with Messrs. McMeekan and Blackwood for two boats to run monthly between Melbourne and Dunedin, calling at the Bluff, for £17,000 a-year. This Contract is terminable by six months' notice on the 10th November, 1864.
5. A Contract with the New Zealand Steam Navigation Company for a boat to run monthly from Wellington to Manukau, by Picton, Nelson, and Taranaki, for £2,400 a-year. This Contract ends December 31st, 1863.
6. A Contract with the same Company to run a boat between Wellington and Manukau, calling at Raglan, Taranaki, and Wanganui, for £200 per trip. This contract was made on the 18th July, 1863, for three months, and is now terminable at any time after one months' notice.
7. A Contract with the same Company for a monthly trip from Wellington to Auckland, by Napier, for £1,800 a-year. This Contract terminates on the 31st December, 1863. Of this sum the Hawke's Bay Government was to contribute £500 a-year and the Auckland Provincial Government £300, but the Provincial Council of the latter having rejected the vote, the liability falls on the General Government.
8. A Contract with the same Company for a bi-monthly service between Wellington and Port Chalmers, calling at Lyttelton, for £1,500. This terminates on the 31st March, 1864.

The Committee proceed to consider the questions of the Inter-colonial Service and the Inter-provincial Service separately.

With respect to the Inter-provincial Service, the Committee recommend that the whole service should be remodelled and all existing contracts brought to a conclusion by notice or by arrangement as soon as possible :—

That there should be a weekly communication between Southland and Otago ; a bi-weekly communication between Otago, Canterbury, and Wellington ; a weekly communication between Wellington, Napier, and Auckland ; and a weekly communication between Wellington, Picton, Nelson, Taranaki, and Manukau ; provided such a service can be performed for the sum of not more than £40,000.

The Committee deem it indispensable that the boats should be required to sail on stated days of the week from each port, and that regular intervals should intervene between the arrivals and the departures of the steamers at each port ; the time table allowing for delay in any one passage being made up within as short a time as possible so as to maintain the regularity of the service at stated intervals.

The Committee have appended a Time Table, indicating the manner in which they think this service can be performed, together with a Memorandum explanatory of the Table.