

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING LIGHT DUES

PAID BY VESSELS OF THE PANAMA, NEW ZEALAND, AND AUSTRALIAN ROYAL
MAIL STEAM COMPANY.

Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company,

Otago, 14th March, 1865.

SIR,

I have the honor to enclose a memorandum showing the heavy expenditure which the recently imposed light dues will cause this Company.

Upon the Inter-Colonial vessels passing so frequently to and fro, the rates press particularly heavy, and there is also, in the case of the Cook Strait boat, this inconsistency, that for the use of the *Harbor* light at Nelson, she pays as much as she does on calling at five ports subsequently.

In the Australian Colonies the practice is to charge for steam vessels the higher rate only periodically—*not each voyage*. A moderate charge for light dues, sufficient for the maintenance of the lights, and that only, cannot be objected to, but I believe these dues are very generally considered excessive.

I, therefore, venture to hope that a considerable reduction of the present rates will have the early and favorable consideration of the Government.

I have, &c.,

JOHN VINE HALL,

General Manager P.N.Z. and A.R.M. Company.

The Honorable the Post-master General of New Zealand,

&c.,

&c.,

&c.

General Post Office,

Wellington, 30th March, 1865.

SIR,—

I am instructed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, as per margin (14th March, 1865) on the subject of the heavy expenditure which the recently imposed Light Dues will cause to the Panama, New Zealand, and Australian R. M. Company.

In order to estimate whether this expenditure by the Company is out of proportion to the benefits derivable from the establishment of coastal lights, it is necessary that the Post-master General should be in possession of a statement exhibiting the value of the Company's vessels, and the gross receipts under the respective heads of subsidy, freight, passage money, &c.

If you will favour me with this necessary information, the subject of your communication will receive the earliest consideration.

I have, &c.,

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT,

Secretary.

Capt. J. Vine Hall,

General Manager,

P. N. Z. and A. R. M. Company,
Sydney.

MEMORANDUM OF PRESIDENT OF MARINE BOARD ON CAPTAIN VINE HALL'S LETTER.

THE first question to be considered is whether the expense of building and maintaining lighthouses is to be defrayed by means of a tax levied on shipping, for whose exclusive use they are placed, or from other sources of revenue? The present rate is only sufficient to pay interest on the outlay at 6 per cent. and the cost of stores, and salaries of establishments, without allowing anything for supervision.

The next point is, "That vessels from Sydney touching at Nelson pay as much for a Harbor Light as at the other five ports of call." It is usual to charge a higher rate on vessels arriving from without the colony; it matters not whether the ship's destination be Nelson, Auckland, or Otago, the tax is no heavier, as the smaller dues are paid at all subsequent ports of call.

If light dues be viewed as most other rates, "an assessment on the value of property," it