

on the subject of mail communication with Europe *via* San Francisco, I have the honor, by desire of His Excellency Sir James Fergusson, to request you to be so good as to inform me on what terms your Government will consent to forward our mails by that route, as until you can definitely fix the amount of subsidy required for the improved service, this Government does not feel able to enter into any engagement with regard thereto.

I may mention that the rate paid by the non-contracting Colonies for the Panama service was twenty shillings per pound weight, including newspapers and parcels, inwards and outwards.

This Province would not object to a similar arrangement to secure the conveyance of our correspondence by an efficient service *via* California.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
WILLIAM MILNE.

### No. 101.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY, South Australia.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 2nd June, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd March last, on the subject of a contribution by South Australia to the mail service *via* San Francisco.

Since the receipt of your letter, this Government has received intimation of a definitive contract with Messrs. Webb and Holladay for a twenty-eight days' service between New Zealand and San Francisco, with provisions in the contract for extending the service, in consideration of a certain contribution, to the Australian Colonies. In my letter of the 24th April last, I forwarded a copy of this contract, and in my letter of the 13th ultimo I invited the expression of the views of your Government in common with the other Australian Governments, on the subject, in order to secure without delay some satisfactory agreement among the Colonies concerned for the extension of the service and the settlement of contributions.

The proposition contained in your letter, to pay at the rate of twenty shillings per pound weight, has been found, during the Panama service, a very unsatisfactory one, and cannot be entertained by this Colony. I trust that you will agree that the better course will be that the contributions to the San Francisco mail service by the Australian Colonies should be by fixed proportionate annual sums. In the meantime, until some arrangement is come to, mails for the Australian Colonies are carried, and a record of the weight of each mail is preserved.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, South Australia.

I have, &c.,  
W. GISBORNE.

### No. 102.

(CIRCULAR.)

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 13th May, 1871.

The Postmaster-General of New Zealand transmitted to you, on the 24th ultimo, a copy of the contract entered into by the Government of New Zealand with Messrs. Webb and Holladay, for the establishment of a postal service between New Zealand and England, by way of San Francisco. The contract has been framed with the view of admitting the Australian Colonies to a participation in the service, and the New Zealand Government are very desirous that satisfactory arrangements may be made as soon as practicable for that purpose.

This Government accordingly invite the co-operation of the Government of New South Wales in the attainment of that object, and will be glad to receive the expression of their views.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

I have, &c.,  
W. GISBORNE.

Letters of even date and tenor to Hon. Chief Secretary, Victoria; Hon. Colonial Secretary, Queensland; Hon. Colonial Secretary, South Australia; and Hon. Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

### No. 103.

MR. WILLIAM MILNE to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Adelaide, 14th June, 1871.

I have the honor, by desire of His Excellency Sir James Fergusson, to inform you, in reply to your letter of the 13th ultimo, which has received careful consideration, that this Government regret that they are compelled to decline contributing towards the subsidy for the mail service between New Zealand and England, *via* San Francisco, referred to.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
WILLIAM MILNE.

### No. 104.

MR. JOHN ROBERTSON to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

SIR,—

Sydney, 18th July, 1871.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th May last, in which you refer to a copy transmitted on the 24th of the preceding month by the Acting Postmaster-General of New Zealand to the Postmaster-General of this Colony, of the contract entered into by your Government with Messrs. Webb and Holladay, for the establishment of a postal service between New Zealand and England, by way of San Francisco, and invite the co-operation of this Government in the undertaking, and an expression of its views upon the subject.

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