

## No. 8.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

21st February, 1873.

I have the honor to invite your attention to the advertisement inserted in the *Times* newspaper and the *Shipping Gazette*, and also had placarded at Lloyds, the Jerusalem and Lombard Street Coffee Houses, inviting public tenders for a ship to convey 1,200 tons iron rails from Hartlepool or Sunderland to Port Lyttelton, New Zealand. In answer to it the tenders submitted were only two,—one from Messrs. Fletcher, Parr, and Co., offering, but not naming a ship, to take the plant at a freight of 70s. per ton, also stipulating that they reserved to themselves the right to make the shipment within seventy-five days,—and from Messrs. Bowden and Williams, whose offer was at the rate of 67s. 6d. per ton. Considering these indefinite proposals to be of a speculative character, and the rates higher than should be given, I declined both. Since then, at an interview I had with Messrs. Shaw, Saville, and Co., I requested them to submit an offer, which they have done, undertaking to have a first-class ship at Sunderland, on or before the 10th March next, to load the rails in question at the rate of 55s. per ton, and to sail from thence on the 31st proximo. As their proposal was lower by 15s. and 12s. 6d. per ton respectively than the public tenders, I had no hesitation in concluding the agreement with them.

The cargo will consist of the balance of the forty-pounds rails, viz. 350 tons, ordered under Public Works Memorandum 24, of the 23rd January, 1872, and a portion of the thirty-pounds rails ordered under Public Works Memorandum 78-72, of the 9th June, 1872, with a proportionate quantity of fastenings, if possible.

I have, &amp;c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,  
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

## No. 9.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

21st February, 1873.

Referring to Public Works Memorandum 131-72, of the 19th December, 1872, in which reference is made to the shipment of rails without a proportionate quantity of fastenings being sent with them, I have to state that the necessity of adopting this system has not escaped my attention. My practice has been, when ordering rails for shipment, to direct the Engineer to require that the necessary fastenings should accompany them. The observance of this rule, I regret to say, I have been unable to enforce owing to strikes among the workmen, and the manufacturers, on their part, absolutely refusing to tender under penalties of prompt delivery. Had I detained the rails until the fastenings were ready, it would have involved considerable difficulties with the makers, and would also have prevented me availing of such tonnage as offered. You may rest assured that every effort, as far as practicable, shall be made to comply with the wishes of the Government.

I have, &amp;c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,  
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

## No. 10.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

7, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W.,

SIR,—

21st February, 1873.

With reference to Public Works Memorandum 132-72, of the 19th December, 1872, relative to the shipment of the rolling stock for the Auckland and Mercer Railway, and the omission of drawings in reference to the rolling stock shipped by the "Christian McAusland" and the "Palmerston," I have to state that a large proportion of the rolling stock for the railway in question will be completed by the 16th proximo, and for the shipment of which I am now making the necessary arrangements.

With respect to the drawings, they were forwarded as soon as they were received from the Engineers by the P. and O. steamer "Poonah," on the 22nd October last, and I trust that they have ere this been duly received.

I have, &amp;c.,

I. E. FEATHERSTON,  
Agent-General.The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington,  
New Zealand.

## No. 11.

CABLEGRAM from the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

London, 28th February, 1873.

In answer to advertisements for conveyance twelve hundred ton rails for Canterbury, only two tenders; one seventy shillings ton, other sixty-seven shillings sixpence. Arranged subsequently fifty-five shillings. Auckland rolling stock be sent March. All orders in hands except plant to be ordered by Brogden. Trough promised in April.

FEATHERSTON.