

No. 10.

Mr. W. BISHOP to the Hon. J. VOGEL.

MODIFICATION of Proposal for a Mail Service, made to the Postmaster-General of New Zealand by Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., dated Melbourne, May, 1873.

THE inward mail to arrive at Wellington on the eighth instead of ninth day from arrival of Suez Mail in Hobson's Bay, *via* Hokitika and Nelson. Two pounds sterling per hour to be deducted off the subsidy if the time exceeds eight days from the hour of the mail being put on board, provided it be on board in time for steamer to clear Port Philip Heads same evening, otherwise the eight days to commence from daylight next day.

The inward steamer to arrive at Lyttelton on the second day, and at Port Chalmers on the third day after arrival at Wellington, and at the Bluff as soon as possible.

The outward mail steamer, calling at Bluff, to leave Port Chalmers on Friday, being the twelfth day before departure of P. and O. boat, to leave Lyttelton on Saturday the eleventh day, and Wellington on Monday the ninth day (in time to catch the morning tide at Nelson), calling also at Nelson and Hokitika.

A supplementary mail could be forwarded overland from Christchurch to Hokitika, and *vice versa*. All English mails sent coastwise to be free—that is, to be covered by the subsidy.

WM. BISHOP,
Agent.

Wellington, 20th June, 1873.

No. 11.

Mr. W. BISHOP to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Wellington, 30th June, 1873.

I have the honor to refer to the conversation which I had with you this morning, in which you offered to make an agreement for one year certain for the service as proposed by Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., in their letter of May last, and as modified by the concessions under it, which I made as their agent, for the sum of £450 for each four-weekly service.

After further consideration, I believe that Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. will not consent to a reduction of the amount of subsidy named in their letter for a service which considerably increases their engagements, and at the same time reduces the term proposed for the agreement from three years to one year.

It is also to be remembered that besides the fine of £2 per hour for any excess over eight days in the arrival of the mail, a penalty will be expected for failure in delivering the outward mail in time.

I am very anxious to see an agreement made which shall be satisfactory, but I am equally averse to make an agreement which shall not be approved by the Melbourne firm.

Should an agreement be made prior to the departure of the "Tararua," the mail steamer could be despatched from Melbourne *via* the Bluff, so as to take up the service at Dunedin on Friday, 1st August.

I have, &c.,
WM. BISHOP.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

P.S.—The concessions alluded to above are as follows:—A reduction in the time of the arrival of mail at Wellington to eight days, with a fine of two pounds (£2) for each hour over that time. Also a reduction of half a day for the outward mail. The giving fixed days of departure from Port Chalmers and Lyttelton, and limiting the days of arrival at those ports. All supplementary English mails to be free.

No. 12.

Mr. W. GRAY to Mr. W. BISHOP.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 4th July, 1873.

Adverting to previous correspondence, and to your interview with the Hon. the Postmaster-General, I am now directed to confirm the verbal agreement made on the 30th ultimo with you, acting on behalf of Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., for the performance of a four-weekly mail steam service between New Zealand and Hobson's Bay, based generally on your letter of the 20th ultimo, modifying the proposals made by your principals in their letter of the 8th May last; and I have to state briefly, the nature of the proposed arrangement:—That the agreement shall have effect for a period of six months. That Hokitika shall be the first port of arrival and last port of departure. That the inward service shall begin on the 29th instant from Hobson's Bay (or earlier should the English mails arrive prior to the due date)—the outward service to be taken up at Port Chalmers on the 1st proximo. That the inward mails shall be landed at Hokitika (weather permitting) and Nelson, and delivered in Wellington on the eighth day from the date of the arrival of the Suez mails in Hobson's Bay; and that a deduction, at the rate of £2 per hour to be made for any longer period than 192 hours occupied between Hobson's Bay and Wellington. That the mails shall be delivered at Lyttelton and Port Chalmers respectively on the tenth and eleventh days. That the outward mails shall be delivered in Hobson's Bay in twelve days from Port Chalmers, eleven days from Lyttelton, nine days from Wellington, eight days from Nelson, and six and a half days from Hokitika. That in the event of the English mails being conveyed from Hobson's Bay to the Bluff direct, no further charge to be made; and that all English mails are to be carried coastwise free of charge. That the subsidy to be paid on account of the foregoing service shall be £500 for the complete double service, payable monthly to your order at Wellington.

The foregoing, I think, correctly represents the basis of the verbal agreement made between the Hon. Mr. Vogel and yourself; but I am desired to submit to you the following additional conditions—