

1874.
NEW ZEALAND.

SUEZ MAIL SERVICE,

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATIVE TO.)

In continuation of Papers presented 5th August, 1873.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. J. G. FRANCIS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.

Victoria,

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 30th September, 1873.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, conveying the acceptance by the Government of New Zealand of the proposal made in my letter of the 23rd ultimo, viz., to carry the mails of that colony between Melbourne and Galle, and *vice versâ*, for the postage—your Government to provide for their conveyance between Melbourne and New Zealand. Also, enclosing a memorandum from the Secretary to the Post Office, suggesting the adoption of a plan for taking the account of the letters, &c., similar to that adopted by the Imperial authorities with regard to the correspondence by the Panama Service.

F. 6A., 1873,
No. 3.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
J. G. FRANCIS.

No. 2.

The Hon. J. G. FRANCIS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.

Victoria,

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 5th November, 1873.

Referring to your letter of the 16th September last, I have now the honor to inform you that, in pursuance of the recommendation of the Minister in charge of the Post Office Department, this Government is prepared to adopt your suggestion, that the postal accounts between Victoria and the other colonies for the conveyance of their mails, shall be settled on the basis of the weight of the correspondence forwarded, charging 1s. 7d. per oz. for letters, 1s. 6d. per lb. for packets, and 6d. per lb. for newspapers, net weight.

F. 6A., 1873,
No. 3.

I have also the honor to inform you, that I have addressed a letter to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, urging that it would be a great convenience if the same course were followed in the settlement of the postage accounts for the transmission of correspondence under the mail contract for the service between Sydney and San Francisco.

My colleague states that, to carry the proposed system into effect, a monthly statement would be required from the General Post Office, Wellington, of correspondence despatched to Melbourne for transmission *viâ* Galle, together with a statement of the correspondence received by the inward mails. This would admit of quarterly settlements, subject to adjustment upon statements furnished by the Imperial Post Office.

This plan will come into operation at the commencement of the new service, 1st January, 1873.

I have, &c.,
J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

No. 3.

The Hon. D. POLLEN to the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY, Melbourne.

New Zealand,

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 18th May, 1874.

I have the honor to enclose a memorandum from my colleague, the Postmaster-General, upon the subject of the sailing of the Suez mail steamer of April, from Port Phillip, without the mail from New Zealand.

1—F. 3.

I rely with confidence on this subject receiving that consideration from the Government of Victoria which its importance appears to us to deserve; and trust that it may be found practicable to make arrangements to detain the steamers for twenty-four hours to await the arrival of the New Zealand mail on the rare occasions when accident may render such detention necessary.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

I have, &c.,

DANIEL POLLEN.

Enclosure in No. 3.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

THE Postmaster-General has to request that the attention of the Chief Secretary of Victoria be directed to the circumstance of the Galle steamer having been permitted to take her departure from Hobson's Bay, last month, without the New Zealand mails. The "Alhambra" arrived at Port Phillip Heads only eight hours late, and found that the "Baroda" had sailed without waiting for the New Zealand mails.

2. It is true that, through the exertions of Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., the mails brought by the "Alhambra" were transhipped to the "Baroda," at Glenelg, and the mail thus saved; but the Postmaster-General has to complain that no effort appears to have been made to detain the Galle steamer at Hobson's Bay for a few hours awaiting the arrival of the "Alhambra." This Government has entered into a contract for conveying the Suez English mails to and from Melbourne at a cost of £5,000 per annum, and has also agreed with the Victorian Government to contribute towards the main service between Melbourne and Galle to the extent of the amount represented by the gross postages on the total correspondence sent and received.

3. The Government have not adopted the course pursued in New South Wales of levying an additional postage on Suez correspondence. They have desired to have the Suez service fairly open to use. But the Postmaster-General is compelled to say, that unless the Victorian Government are inclined to show some consideration for the interests of New Zealand, the sooner the colony abandons the use of the Suez service the better. The Government of Victoria have not forwarded to New Zealand a copy of their contract, but it is to be presumed that it contains the ordinary clauses giving a power of detaining the steamers, and it seems to the Postmaster-General that the mail steamer should be detained at least twenty-four hours for the New Zealand mails. To do so would involve no inconvenience, except to the contractors, for there is an ample margin of time allowed to the contractors to make up twenty-four hours' delay.

JULIUS VOGEL.

General Post Office, Wellington, 14th May, 1874.

No. 4.

The Hon. J. G. FRANCIS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.

Victoria,

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 5th June, 1874.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th ultimo, No. 69, relative to the sailing of the Suez mail steamer, of April last, from Port Phillip without the mail from New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

J. G. FRANCIS.

No. 5.

The Hon. J. G. FRANCIS to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.

Victoria,

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 24th June, 1874.

SIR,—

Referring to your letter of the 18th ultimo, No. 69, and to mine of the 5th instant, I have the honor to transmit herewith a memorandum by my colleague, the Hon. the Postmaster-General, with reference to the sailing of the mail steamer *viâ* Suez from Hobson's Bay, in April last, without the mail from New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

J. G. FRANCIS.

Enclosure in No. 5.

MEMORANDUM by the Hon. E. LANGTON for the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY.

WITH reference to the accompanying letter from the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand, dated 18th ultimo, enclosing copy of a memorandum from the Postmaster-General of that Colony, complaining that the mail steamer which left Melbourne on the 21st April, was not detained for the New Zealand mails for Point de Galle, which arrived in the "Alhambra" only eight hours after the sailing of the "Baroda," and stating that, in Mr. Vogel's opinion, the mail steamer should be detained at least twenty-four hours for the New Zealand mails, I have the honor to state that there is every desire on my part that the Point de Galle service should afford all possible accommodation to the authorities in New Zealand, consistent with a due regard to the interests of Victoria and of the other colonies.

concerned, and had it appeared, on the occasion to which Mr. Vogel refers, that the New Zealand mails were likely to arrive within a reasonable time after the hour appointed for the sailing of the "Baroda," instructions would have been given for the detention of the mail steamer. The fact is, that the "Alhambra" was not reported from Wilson's Promontory, or from any other point of this coast, but entered the Port Phillip Heads during the night of the 21st April, after the "Baroda" had sailed.

No application was made by the agents of the New Zealand Government for the detention of the mail steamer, and it cannot be admitted that anything was left undone that should have been done by this department in the interests of New Zealand on the occasion under notice.

It is to be inferred from Mr. Vogel's letter that, unless this Government will consent to the detention of the mail steamer twenty-four hours for the New Zealand mails, the use of the Suez service will be abandoned by that colony.

However much I should regret that it should be thought necessary to take such a step, I cannot lose sight of the fact that no such demand (if made) has been complied with up to the present time, and that the conditions under which the New Zealand mails are now forwarded *via* Suez certainly supply no stronger reason why such a concession should be now made than has existed during the many years that New Zealand has contributed to the maintenance of the service.

I am quite willing that the contract steamers should occasionally be detained, but not for so many hours as would jeopardize the arrival of the mails at Galle in time for onward despatch.

Before issuing necessary instructions, it should however appear that the branch steamers will sail from New Zealand so as to leave a margin of time for their due arrival in Melbourne previous to the hour appointed for the departure of the Galle packets, and that suitable penalties will be enforced for the non-performance of the voyage from New Zealand to Melbourne within the stipulated time.

Upon being satisfied on these points, I see no objection to the power given to me under the contract being occasionally exercised to the extent of detaining the Galle steamers for twelve hours for the New Zealand mails, should the necessity to do so arise.

Before closing this memorandum, I wish to remark that a telegraphic report has only just come to hand, from which it appears that the "Pera," which left here, according to contract time, on the 19th ultimo, did not arrive at Galle until 7 a.m. of the 11th instant, or twenty-four hours after the time she was due at that port, the onward mail for Aden being appointed to leave Galle at 3 a.m. on the same day, viz., the 11th instant.

EDWARD LANGTON,
Postmaster-General.

No. 6.

The Hon. D. POLLEN to the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY, Victoria.

New Zealand,

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 18th July, 1874.

SIR,—

Adverting to your letter, No. 4,794, of the 24th June, I have now the honor to transmit herewith, for your information, a further memorandum by my colleague the Postmaster-General, with reference to the sailing of the mail steamer *via* Suez from Hobson's Bay, in April last, without the mails from New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

DANIEL POLLEN.

Enclosure in No. 6.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

WITH reference to the memorandum of the Postmaster-General of Victoria, on the subject of detaining the Suez steamer for the New Zealand mails, it appears to me the Victorian Government are not averse to meeting the requirements of the New Zealand Government. The Postmaster-General comments upon no application having been made to stop the steamer on the occasion when the "Alhambra" was late. This neglect to apply to the Victorian Government probably arose through the contractors, Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., having overlooked the fact of the altered position of the service. I am under the impression that formerly, by direct communication with the Company, Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. endeavoured to obtain the largest aid in the very rare case of the connecting steamer being late, and similarly the firm have sometimes obtained the mails at the Heads for transmission to New Zealand. I feel called on to say that, though Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. did not on this occasion apply to the Victorian Government, they were not unmindful of the interests of the New Zealand Government, since they put on the "Aldinga" to overtake the mail steamer. The information asked for by the Postmaster-General of Victoria is reasonable. A copy of the contract with Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. is attached. The time allowed from the Bluff is considerably over the time the ordinary passages occupy, as the Postmaster-General, by communication with Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., will be able to satisfy himself.

In sending a copy of the correspondence to Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., I will instruct them to offer the Postmaster-General of Victoria any information he desires.

If the Postmaster-General of Victoria recognizes that he owes consideration to the Government of New Zealand in the matter, I am quite willing to leave to him the precise time he may consider it prudent to delay the steamer. I think twelve hours as a maximum is a short time, but I recognize that the punctual transit of the Victorian mail must to him be of primary importance. Much must depend on the weather and the time of year, and something may be effected also by allowing the mail steamer to meet the New Zealand mail steamer at the Heads. I shall be quite content therefore, if, without

deciding upon an arbitrary limit, the Postmaster-General of Victoria will assure the Government of New Zealand, that he will, in the rare case of the New Zealand mails being late, authorize as large a detention as he considers safe, having a due regard to the proper performance of the main service.

I have the honor to suggest that the Postmaster-General of Victoria be invited to furnish to this Government a copy of the contract entered into with the P. and O. Company, unless there are reasons for not communicating it to other Governments than the one which entered into the contract.

General Post Office, Wellington, 11th July, 1874.

I am, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

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Price 3d.]