

No. 82.

Mr. GRAY to SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 21st December, 1874.

I have been directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th November last, addressed to Mr. Russell, and to thank you for the enclosures which it contained.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

I have, &c.,
W. GRAY.

No. 83.

Hon. SAUL SAMUEL to Mr. RUSSELL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 21st November, 1874.

I enclose herewith, for your information, a copy of further correspondence which has taken place between this department and the Australasian Steam Navigation Company and Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co., having reference to the continuance of the temporary mail service *via* San Francisco; and I shall be glad if you will kindly undertake to forward the same for record by the Postmaster-General of New Zealand, as this department is only furnishing yourself with a copy of the correspondence at present.

Thomas Russell, Esq., &c., Auckland.

I have &c.,
SAUL SAMUEL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 83.

The MANAGER, A.S.N. Co. to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

Australasian Steam Navigation Company, Sydney,
14th November, 1874.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of yesterday's date, I beg leave to say that I omitted to state, if the "Mikado" be one of the boats employed in the service, the sum which the company would require for that vessel would be the same as that which the Government are paying us for the present voyage—viz., £4,000 per trip, each way to and from San Francisco.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Sydney.

I have, &c.,
FRED. A. PHILLIPS, Secretary,
(*pro* Manager).

Enclosure 2 in No. 83.

Mr. LAMBTON to the MANAGER, A.S.N. Co.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 16th November, 1874.

I am directed to inform you, in reply to your letters of the 13th and 14th instant, that the boats belonging to your company, which you name as the vessels proposed to be employed in the performance of the San Francisco mail service, are not considered by this Government suitable for the purpose. Moreover, as the New Zealand Government is associated with the Government of this colony in carrying out the service, the Postmaster-General could not, without their concurrence, consent to the employment of steamers of less capacity and power than those arranged for at present.

Mr. Samuel, however, is prepared, on behalf of the Governments of New Zealand and this colony, to enter into an engagement with your Board on the terms which they offer—viz., £3,750 per trip hence to San Francisco, and a like sum for the return trip to Sydney, for the period of six months from the termination of the existing agreement, for the steamers "Mikado," "Macgregor," and "Cyphrenes," with the further understanding that £250 extra, per trip, shall be paid for the "Mikado," provided the amount now required for the charter of that vessel to your Company is not reduced.

Of course it will be understood that if the three steamers named should prove insufficient for the service, or any of them become disabled, the Company are to provide other suitable boats, to be approved by the Postmaster-General.

The time-table will be fixed by this department, arranging for a stoppage at San Francisco not exceeding twelve days; detention beyond that period to be paid for at a rate per diem to be agreed upon.

Mr. Samuel is also of opinion that premiums and penalties should be provided for in the contract.

I am to add that it will be necessary that no time be lost in definitely stating that you have secured the steamers in question, and are in a position to conclude the matter.

The Manager, A.S.N. Co., Sydney.

I have, &c.,
S. H. LAMBTON,
Secretary.

Enclosure 3 in No. 83.

The MANAGER, A.S.N. Co., to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

Australasian Steam Navigation Company, Sydney,
18th November, 1874.

SIR,—

In reply to your Secretary's letter of the 16th instant, which I have had the honor to receive, I am directed to say—

1. That my Board are quite unable to concur with your Government in considering that the