

the "Vasco de Gama" *via* Auckland with the November mails on the 20th of the present month, instead of *via* Kandavau.

The Postmaster-General,
Sydney.

I have, &c.,
H. H. HALL,
General Agent, Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

Enclosure 16 in No. 52.

Mr. LAMBTON to Mr. HALL, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 13th November, 1875.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you, in reply to your letter of the 13th instant, requesting, as Agent of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, that you may be permitted to send the "Vasco de Gama" *via* Auckland with the November mails on the 20th of the present month, instead of *via* Kandavau, that the Government cannot sanction any departure from the contract.

H. H. Hall, Esq., Sydney.

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

Enclosure 17 in No. 52.

Mr. HALL to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, New South Wales.

SIR,—

Sydney, 13th November, 1875.

I have the honor to inform you of the arrival here on the 12th instant of the s.s. "Vasco de Gama," to enter on the mail contract commencing on the 15th instant.

The ship will be ready to proceed to sea on the date fixed by the time table, 19th instant, and will, if required by the Government of New South Wales, proceed *via* Kandavau in conformity with the contract; but I must respectfully ask that the Government consent for this trip that the ship may, without prejudice to the contract, call at Auckland.

You are aware that the contract was made subject to ratification by the Parliaments of the contracting colonies. It was promptly ratified by the Parliament of New South Wales, and consequently the Contractors made all necessary arrangements to begin the service at all points this month, the "Mikado" being set aside for the service at and from Port Chalmers. In consequence, however, of the delay in ratification of the contract by New Zealand, it was impossible to arrange to withdraw the "Mikado" from the temporary service, and the ratification by New Zealand was only known in this colony on the 25th ultimo, two days after the "Mikado" had sailed from here. This I learned in Auckland on the 6th instant, and the same day I met Dr. Pollen, the Premier of New Zealand, and explained to him the difficulty, and stated my intention that the "Vasco de Gama" should call at Auckland for the New Zealand letters, being the best arrangement I could make; and I arranged that the letters from the Southern Island should be sent to Auckland for this month, which I confirmed by telegram from here last night.

Under these circumstances, I trust that you will sanction the "Vasco de Gama" calling at Auckland to pick up the New Zealand mail, otherwise I must send the ship *via* Kandavau—greatly, I fear, to the loss and inconvenience of New Zealand.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General,
New South Wales.

I have, &c.,
H. H. HALL,
General Agent, Pacific Mail Steamship Co.

Enclosure 18 in No. 52.

Mr. LAMBTON to the GENERAL AGENT, Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 15th November, 1875.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you, with reference to your letter of the 13th instant, in which you reiterate your proposal to be permitted to send the "Vasco de Gama" *via* Auckland, that the Government adheres to its former decision as conveyed to you in my letter of the 13th idem, that the Government cannot sanction any departure from the contract.

The General Agent P.M.S.S. Co., Sydney.

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

Enclosure 19 in No. 52.

Messrs. GILCHRIST, WATT, and Co. to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

SIR,—

Sydney, 16th November, 1875.

We must now decide definitely on the employment of the "Cyphrenes," and as, in the event of her proceeding to Hong Kong, there may be no second ship available to begin B service