

No. 74.

ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, Melbourne, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, Wellington.
(Telegram.) Melbourne, 28th April, 1879.

MR. BERRY has interviewed the Lords of the Treasury, who have consented to reduce the demand of the Imperial share of postage from fourpence to twopence. The Victorian Government have instructed Mr. Berry to accept tender of Peninsular and Oriental Company for fortnightly service.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington. BRYAN O'LOUGHLIN,
Acting Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

No. 75.

The Hon. J. MACANDREW to the ACTING CHIEF SECRETARY, Melbourne.

(Telegram.) Wellington, 29th April, 1879.

I THANK you for your telegram of yesterday.

The Acting Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

J. MACANDREW,
(for Colonial Secretary.)

No. 76.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

(Telegram.) London, 2nd May, 1879.

TREASURY, consequent upon Graham Berry's stating fortnightly Suez Service Melbourne, Sydney, probable, intimate impound twopence all services after February. Have expressed doubt Berry's authority to act Sydney, or that Sydney favour fortnightly Suez Service. Protested also against change during present Frisco contract. Foster concurring.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 77.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 5th May, 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letters of the 14th and 29th January last,* with the several enclosures thereto, in further reference to the question of Imperial postages.

I was pleased to learn, from the copy of the despatch addressed by the Secretary of State to the Governors of the Australasian Colonies, enclosed with your communication of the 29th January, that the joint action of the several Agents-General had resulted in the Imperial Government deciding to have the matter fairly discussed by representatives appointed by the several colonies, and fully empowered to conduct negotiations with Her Majesty's Government and to conclude whatever arrangements may be arrived at.

I enclose for your information copy of a telegram dated the 1st ultimo,† received by His Excellency from the Governor of South Australia, together with a copy of the message cabled to you by Sir George Grey on the 9th April, agreeably with the request made by the Governor of South Australia at the instance of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and I now beg to confirm the authority therein delegated to you.

I enclose for your information copy of a telegram‡ from the Acting Chief Secretary of Victoria, dated the 28th ultimo, intimating that the Lords of the Treasury had consented to reduce the demand of the Imperial share of postage from fourpence to twopence. As further discussion of the matter may therefore be unnecessary, the preparation of the returns asked for in your letter of the 14th January has not been further gone on with, but should you still consider it desirable that the information which would be furnished by the returns should be forwarded your office, I shall have pleasure in directing that the returns be completed and sent you.

I have also to acknowledge the receipt, on the 3rd instant, of your cablegram dated London, the 2nd, a copy of which is enclosed, and to request that you will continue, on behalf of the colony, to protest against the adoption by the Imperial Government of the course indicated in the former part of your telegram, and to use every endeavour to secure for the colony the continuance of the existing rate of payment until the expiration of the present San Francisco Contract. Seeing the extraordinary efforts which have been made by New Zealand during the last fifteen years to establish direct mail communication with the United Kingdom *via* America, the colony's earlier efforts being comparatively unaided by assistance from the Imperial Government, it seems not unreasonable to expect that, now the San Francisco Service is fairly established, the colony should be allowed to reap the benefits of its perseverance and enterprise, without the service being again rendered so costly as to become a heavy burden on the revenue of the colony. Without in any way indicating that the amended proposal of the Imperial Government is not a fair and equitable one to the colonies, I am still of opinion that the existing rate of postage payment should not be disturbed until the expiration of the present San Francisco Contract. I trust your representations to the Imperial Government may ultimately induce Her Majesty's Treasury to make this concession in favour of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

J. T. FISHER,
Postmaster-General.

* *Vide* Nos. 57 and 58. † *Vide* Nos. 69 and 71. ‡ *Vide* No. 74.