

Enclosure 1 in No. 5.

(Extract from United States Congressional Record of May 7th, 1880.)

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.—POST OFFICE APPROPRIATION BILL.

The Clerk read as follows :

“ Office of Superintendent of Foreign Mails :

For transportation of foreign mails, 225,000 dols.”

Mr. DAVIS, of California. Mr. Chairman, I offer the amendment, which I send to the Clerk's desk.

The Clerk read as follows :

After line 131 add the following :

“ Provided, That the Postmaster-General be authorized to remit in favour of the colonies of New Zealand and New South Wales so much of the cost of overland transportation of the Australian closed mails as he may deem just.”

Mr. DAVIS, of California. I offer this amendment simply as an act of justice to the Australian colonies. It is but right and proper that it should be passed. These colonies have had a line of steamships composed of American vessels, sailing under the American flag, at an annual expense of 500,000 dols, and they carry all our mails on the Pacific and the China mail and charge us nothing therefor. They carry all our mails to Australia, Samoa, Fiji, New Caledonia, and all our correspondence with the Hawaiian Islands free of cost to us, and in return for that service this Government charges them full expense for the transportation of their closed mails across this country both ways.

It seems to me that it is neither consistent with the dignity of this country, nor with justice, nor with generosity, to allow these two small colonies, with a total population of only about one million of inhabitants, to pay this enormous subsidy of 490,000 dols., to speak accurately, and carry all our mails for us for nothing, while we charge them in return for the transit of their mails across our continent, not merely the ordinary amount for overland transit, but an extra amount in return for their generosity to us.

The British Government is anxious to put an end to this mail. They have found that these people are desirous to travel across our continent. It is a favourite route for passengers. They come here and are introduced to trade with us. They have bought from us last year 7,000,000 dols. of American products, and in return we purchase from them less than 1,000,000 dols. worth. And these are not California products. They have bought locomotives from Boston. They have bought street cars from New York. They have bought steam-engines from Philadelphia. They have bought reapers and mowers and all kinds of agricultural implements from Ohio, Illinois, and other States. They have thus produced a benefit that accrues to the entire United States. The British Government seeing this is anxious to break up the system, and with that intention they have doubled and trebled the facilities which these colonies have with England on the other side. They have made the mail by way of the Red Sea a fortnightly mail instead of a monthly mail, and have at the same time expedited the route, and put on another line by way of the Cape of Good Hope and expedited that. They have been endeavouring by every means to detach these colonies from the American line they have established.

I ask this House as a matter of generosity, of justice, of business prudence, that they shall concede to those colonies this small favour which they ask ; that the Postmaster-General should be permitted to make such an allowance in favour of these colonies on the transit of these closed mails as he may deem just.

Mr. BLACKBURN. I have no doubt the statement of facts made by the gentleman from California is altogether accurate ; and assuming that to be so, I see no reason why the amendment should not be agreed to.

The amendment was agreed to.

The Clerk resumed and concluded the reading of the Bill.

Enclosure 2 in No. 5.

SIR JULIUS VOGEL TO MR. R. J. CREIGHTON.

SIR,— 2, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., May 12th, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th April. I have read it with great interest, and, on behalf of the Government, desire to thank you for the trouble you have taken and are taking.

I am not, however, in a position to adopt any action in the matter, and I fear you are under a misapprehension on the subject. The postal authorities here do not return to the New Zealand Government so large a proportion of the postages as they did before the commencement of the present year. Various excuses were made for the change ; amongst them was the increase of cost of carrying mails to California. But I do not think much weight was attached to the cost of that part of the transit which is comprised in the land carriage through America. An agreement was entered into on the 6th October, 1876, between Sir Edward Thornton (on behalf of the British Government) and Mr. Tyner (on behalf of that of the United States) for the carriage of mails across the American continent. The rate fixed by that agreement is certainly not oppressive. I think for letters it averages slightly over a halfpenny each, and I doubt if a reduction can fairly be asked for. It is not that rate, in my opinion, which led to the British Government retaining a larger proportion of the postages. Many circumstances, I believe, impelled the Government to the course, and I have already expressed the belief that amongst them was a desire to promote the interests rather of the Eastern than the Western route.

I do not think any of the Governments concerned would trust the mails to the private charge of the railways ; which is, I understand, what you propose ; and if they did, the English Government