No. 44.

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

SIR,—   General Post Office, Wellington, 6th May, 1884.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, and to thank you for the copies of the time-table for the San Francisco mail service for a further period of six months, with Saturday as the day of sailing of the mail steamer from San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.   Secretary.

No. 45

Mr. GRAY to the PRESIDENT, Pacific Mail Steamship Company, New York.

SIR,—   General Post Office, Wellington, 6th May, 1884.

I have the honour to inform you that the time-table, copy enclosed, for the mail service between Great Britain, New Zealand, and New South Wales by way of San Francisco was issued by the Postmasters-General at the end of last month, for a further period of six months.

The only alteration is that the mail steamers are appointed to leave San Francisco on Saturday instead of on Friday as previously announced; but, of course, the steamers will leave on Friday whenever the London mails reach San Francisco on that day.   I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,

The President, Pacific Mail Steamship Company, New York.   Secretary.

No. 46.

Mr. DALGARNO to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—   General Post Office, Sydney, 24th September, 1883.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to forward herewith, for your perusal, a copy of the draft agreement between the Governments of New South Wales and New Zealand and the Pacific Mail Steamship Company for the conveyance of mails to and from Sydney, Auckland, and San Francisco, from the expiration of the present contract.

Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co. have perused this draft, and have asked that the following provision be made therein, as a continuation of clause 15, viz. : " Should the Government of New South Wales withdraw from the contract as before provided, then it shall be optional with the contractors to continue to convey the New Zealand mails alone for such subsidy as may be arranged, terminating the contract at Auckland, but with permission to come on to a port in New South Wales, or to withdraw from the contract altogether."

I have, &c.,

JNO. DALGARNO,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.   (for the Secretary.)

No. 47.

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

SIR,—   General Post Office, Wellington, 22nd October, 1883.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo, covering draft copy of the proposed agreement for the renewal of the San Francisco mail service with the Pacific Mail Steamship Company.

Your draft agreement, which is retained, has been perused by the Postmaster-General, and I am directed to forward you another draft, with a few alterations, which the Postmaster-General considers should be made. The amendments of this office are in red ink; yours in black ink.

In clause 2 the minimum tonnage of the substitute boat is stated; and, in the first of the added clauses (15), the manner in which the contribution (equal to one-third of the annual subsidy) which may be received by the contractors is to be applied in reduction of the colonies' payments, is stated. Clause 16 is a substitution for what has been suggested by Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co. It requires the contractors, in the event of your colony withdrawing from the service, to give the Postmaster-General of New Zealand three months' notice of their intention to abandon the service altogether, and restricts the contractors from visiting any other port in the colonies but Auckland.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.   Secretary.

No. 48.

Mr. LAMBTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—   General Post Office, Sydney, 26th November, 1883.

The draft contract agreement for renewal of the Pacific mail service, as altered by you and forwarded to me in your letter, dated the 22nd ultimo, has been sent for the perusal of Messrs. Gilchrist, Watt, and Co., and I am directed to transmit a copy of their letter in reply.