

With reference to Sir Harry Atkinson's request for an expression of the views of Mr. Roberts as to the future of any Pacific mail-service to be directly subsidised by New South Wales and New Zealand, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to state that he would much regret the discontinuance of a mail-service across the Pacific, but if a fresh contract be entered into Mr. Roberts is inclined to think that steamers of larger tonnage and greater speed should be employed in the work. At all events, if a proposal be submitted it will receive every consideration.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary.

No. 14.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 22nd November, 1888.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 5th instant, replying to mine of the 5th September last, on the subject of the discontinuance of the subsidy by New Zealand to the San Francisco mail-service in November, 1889, and the question of future Pacific mail-services.

Your letter has been submitted to the Postmaster-General, and I am directed to state that as yet this department is without advice from the Agent-General as to the progress of his negotiations.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 15.

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

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th October, 1888.

I have to acknowledge with thanks your letter of the 4th September, with the *Hansards* containing the complete report of the debate in the House of Representatives on the ocean mail-services. I now beg leave to enclose copy of a letter from the Imperial Post Office, from which you will see that the course proposed to be taken by New Zealand is regarded favourably by Her Majesty's Government, and that whenever a definite proposal can be submitted to Mr. Raikes he will bring it before the Imperial Treasury. I take this opportunity of also thanking you for your letter of the 5th September (not printed) notifying the arrangement between the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Shaw, Savill, and Albion Company for the homeward service during the remainder of the existing contract term of the direct mail-service.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure in No. 15.

Mr. REA to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 12th October, 1888.

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 5th instant enclosing a copy of a despatch from the Government of New Zealand in which it is announced that the House of Representatives of that colony has decided to discontinue the use of the mail-service *via* San Francisco at the expiration of the present contract in November, 1889, and that it is now proposed to invite tenders for a four-weekly service *via* Vancouver and the Canadian Pacific Railway, as well as for a service by direct packet between this country and New Zealand. In reply, I am desirous to acquaint you that the course taken by your Government is regarded favourably by the Imperial Government, and that when a definite proposal for the establishment of the new service is submitted to him Mr. Raikes will be prepared to bring the matter under the consideration of the Treasury.

I am, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

EDWARD H. REA.

No. 16.

The Hon. Sir H. A. ATKINSON to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 15th January, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th October last, enclosing copy of one of the 12th idem from the Imperial Post Office, on the subject of the ocean mail-services. I note that Mr. Raikes expresses himself as ready to bring any definite proposal for a Vancouver service under the consideration of the Treasury, Her Majesty's Government being favourable to the proposal.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

H. A. ATKINSON,
Postmaster-General.

No. 17.

The Hon. Sir H. A. ATKINSON to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 24th January, 1889.

I have the honour to forward you a dozen copies of a draft advertisement calling for tenders for a direct mail-service between the colony and Plymouth, and fifty copies of the particulars and