

No. 91.

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

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
5th November, 1890.

SIR,—

The enclosed letter from the Imperial Post Office completes the record on this side of the new arrangements for continuing the ocean mail-services.

The condition is still maintained that the differential 6d. rate *via* Suez is to be abolished next session, but the rate can be collected until then. The special address for letters sent by this country *via* Suez is maintained, at all events during the year for which the new arrangements are made. And the existing allowance of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a letter, and 3s. a hundredweight printed matter, is continued to New Zealand for sea-conveyance from Australia of correspondence sent by the Federal packets.

Since the last mail left, the manager of the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company came to me to explain what had passed on this side between the two shipping companies. I strongly advised the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company to accept at once the terms you had offered for the Homeward service; and I hope they will cable to their agents at Wellington to do so.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.

Enclosure in No. 91.

The SECRETARY, Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 4th November, 1890.

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your three letters of the 27th, 29th, and 30th of October, relative to the newly-authorised arrangements concerning the New Zealand mail-service.

Mr. Raikes notes that the vote of the New Zealand Legislature sanctioning the renewal of the San Francisco and Direct sea-services, and the adoption of the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate, was accompanied by a proviso retaining the 6d. rate on letters forwarded from the colony *via* Suez, and that this proviso can only be rescinded by the Legislature; but that the Colonial Government undertake to recommend the Legislature at its next session to adopt the $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate for all routes. Under this assurance, whenever it may be found expedient to carry out the reduction as regards Australia, New Zealand can be included in the arrangement, the colony being left to collect for a short time the 6d. rate on the trifling amount of correspondence sent thence *via* Suez, so as to give the Legislature time to sanction the reduction of the rate by that route to $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. You will, of course, understand that the eventual reduction remains a condition of the support which the Postmaster-General has been authorised by the Treasury to give to the packet service *via* Plymouth for a year.

In regard to the special address required for letters sent from this country to New Zealand *via* Suez, I am to add that, while retaining its freedom in this matter, the Imperial Post Office has not any intention of abolishing the special address restriction, at all events during the year for which the new arrangements are conditionally authorised.

In regard to the question, what provision this Office proposes to make for sending on to New Zealand the correspondence conveyed by the Imperial packets as far as Australia, I am to state that the present arrangement would remain in force; this department providing the service to Australia, and paying the New Zealand Post Office at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a letter, and 3s. a hundredweight for printed papers, &c., for the sea-conveyance from Australia to New Zealand.

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B.

I have, &c.,
S. A. BLACKWOOD.

No. 92.

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

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
28th November, 1890.

SIR,—

With reference to what I said in previous letters as to the intentions of the New Zealand Shipping Company and the Shaw-Savill and Albion Company in regard to the Direct service, I am glad to say that I have now been informed that both companies have authorised a contract to be concluded for the service both ways for one year.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. D. BELL.