

Enclosure 6 in No. 31.

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

13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 5th September, 1892.

SIR,—

Renewal San Francisco Mail-service.

Since writing my letter of the 3rd instant, I have received a cable from my Government, in which it is stated that the Imperial Government now pay to the colony 12s. and not 11s. a pound as the contribution of the United Kingdom for the carriage of the outward mails across the Pacific.

As in my letter of the 4th July I stated that last year the amount was reduced to 11s., I take the earliest opportunity of making this correction.

The Secretary, General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand.

I am, &c.,

W. B. PERCEVAL.

Enclosure 7 in No. 31.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 6th September, 1892.

Your letters of the 3rd and 5th instant were brought to this department yesterday together, and no time has been lost in bringing before the Postmaster-General, who is not at present in London, the further appeal of your Government against the decision of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury not to make any special contribution after November next towards the support of the colonial packet service between New Zealand and San Francisco.

Mr. Morley will doubtless communicate to the Lords Commissioners the further appeal in question, but it may perhaps be desirable to recall to your recollection that their Lordships' decision on the subject was first communicated to your predecessor as long ago as the 17th of October, 1891.

With special reference to your letter of the 5th instant, I have to point out that, in the letter from this department just mentioned, it was announced that this country would continue to pay for the Pacific service outward at the rates paid for it to the contractors by the colony, "not exceeding 12s. per pound for letters," and that this arrangement should be limited to one year from the 1st of November, 1891. This department has since been given to understand that the rate paid to the contractors by the colony is 11s. per pound, and this is why that rate has been quoted in recent correspondence on the subject.

The decision, of which your predecessor was informed in the letter of the 17th of October, appears to have been duly announced to the New Zealand Government, as requested in that letter; and, on the 6th of November following, Mr. Kennaway requested, on behalf of the colonial Government, that the question might be reconsidered. That request was at once forwarded to the Treasury, as was also a further letter from Mr. Kennaway, dated the 17th of the same month; and, on the 8th of February, 1892, I had the honour of informing you of their Lordships' adherence to their previous decision. Your further appeal of the 4th of July was also sent to the Treasury without loss of time, but again with the same result, announced to you in my letter of the 15th ultimo, that their Lordships still adhered to their original decision.

Acting upon the evident intention of the Treasury that the arrangements already announced should be adopted, the Imperial Post Office has, as intimated in the final paragraph of my letter of the 15th ultimo, communicated directly with the New Zealand Post Office with a view to the adoption of the new principle in future accounts; and, looking at the recent course of the discussion of this matter between the Imperial and colonial Governments, it is hardly to be anticipated that the Lords of the Treasury will now arrive at a different conclusion from that already formed.

It has seemed advisable to recapitulate the more recent part of the correspondence in order to avoid any misunderstanding on the actual aspect of the question; and you will probably concur in the opinion that, if it is necessary for your Government to take any immediate steps for the renewal of its packet service to and from San Francisco, it will be safest to act upon the assumption that the Imperial Government does not wish to influence that of the colony in one way or the other, having already concluded that it is undesirable to support the service to any greater extent than is implied in using it, if its maintenance is continued, upon the terms prescribed by the Postal Union Convention.

I have, &c.,

H. BUXTON FORMAN,

W. B. Perceval, Esq.

For the Secretary.

No. 32.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

29th September, 1892.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of the 9th instant, I beg to transmit copy of letter which I have this day received from the General Post Office, by which it will be seen that the Imperial Treasury declines to alter the decision which was conveyed to me by the General Post Office letter of the 15th instant, which was to the effect that the Imperial Government were not prepared to continue to contribute towards the cost of the mail-service between New Zealand and San Francisco except at ordinary Postal Union rates.

I feel so strongly that in adhering to such a decision the Imperial Treasury and Post Office fail to recognise how inequitable it is to the colony, that I have asked for an interview with the Postmaster-General for the purpose of representing to him personally the views of the Government with respect to the matter, and then if that fails I propose, unless I receive instructions from you