

No. 58.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 9th June, 1897.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th April last, asking for further information on the subject of the proposed calling at New Zealand of the steamers of the Vancouver mail-service, to enable you to approach the Imperial Post Office on the question of granting a subsidy towards the cost of the service.

As the Hon. the Premier, before leaving for England, obtained a copy of correspondence bearing on the proposed service, he will no doubt ere this have given you the information desired. Since his departure a letter has been received from the Deputy Postmaster-General, Ottawa, a copy of which I enclose for your perusal.

I have, &c.,

W. C. WALKER,

For the Premier.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves, Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 59.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Memorandum.)

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 24th May, 1897.

Vancouver Mail-service.

I beg to transmit herewith copy of letter and enclosures which I have received from Messrs. J. Huddart and Co., the managers of the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Steamship Company, giving particulars relating to the mail-service which it is proposed to establish between this country and New Zealand *via* Vancouver.

W. P. REEVES.

To the Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 59.

Messrs. JAMES HUDDART and Co., London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

150, Leadenhall Street, London, E.C., 21st May, 1897.

In view of the immediate visit to London of Mr. Seddon, Premier of New Zealand, we have the honour to inform you, as managers for the above company, that our board of directors has decided to make Wellington the port of call in New Zealand.

The Board has had some perplexity in reaching this decision, and it has been felt that nothing but a test can solve the problem as to which port in New Zealand will bring to the steamship company the largest traffic in mails, passengers, and cargo.

It has been arranged that the New Zealand connection shall be inaugurated by the R.M.S. "Aorangi" to leave Sydney on the 19th July, arriving at Wellington on the 23rd, and sailing at noon on the 24th July; calling at Suva, Honolulu, and Victoria, B.C., and due to arrive at Vancouver on the 14th August.

We enclose copy of proposed time-table, which shows that the "Aorangi" will leave Vancouver for the above ports on the 23rd August, being due at Wellington on the 15th September.

You will take note that our sailings from New Zealand are arranged to alternate with the sailings of the Oceanic and Union line to San Francisco, thus affording to the people of Australia and New Zealand a fortnightly service to the Continent of America and to Europe. But, in regard to the return journey from America, we are asking the Messrs. Spreckels to adjust their time-table to ours, so as to alternate in a similar way at the American end. We consider that, as we have alternated with them from Sydney, they should submit to the temporary inconvenience in their sailings from America, so as to sail their steamships alternately therefrom with our Vancouver service.

After you have had time to consult with the Premier of New Zealand, we shall be glad to know if it can be arranged for the Oceanic steamers to leave San Francisco on Monday the 9th August, and thenceforth every four weeks, or, if necessary, the change could be delayed until the month of September; but we respectfully submit, in the interests of the Canadian-Australian Steamship Company, that it is important this adjustment should be made at an early date, in order that we may secure a fair share of the New Zealand mails to and from New Zealand, America, and Europe.

We were glad to note that the New Zealand Premier had visited Ottawa *en route* to London, and we shall hope that the preliminary conversations which he may have had with the Canadian Government shall induce them to take immediate steps to do what is practicable to assist our mail-service in its transit across the Continent of Canada.

We beg to enclose herewith copy of a letter which we are despatching to the Minister of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa on this subject.

We shall be glad if you will afford our senior a very early opportunity of discussing with Mr. Seddon this important subject.

We have, &c.,

The Hon. W. P. Reeves,

JAMES HUDDART and Co.

Agent-General for New Zealand, Victoria Street, Westminster.