

the Agent-General for New South Wales, we have obtained, to be executed in duplicate by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company and by their sureties, the necessary deed to enable you and the Postmaster-General of New South Wales to vary during the current year, 1877, the route by which the mails have been contracted to be carried, by adopting a route from Sydney *viâ* Auckland to San Francisco, and *vice versâ*, and to vary the number of hours during which the mails are to be carried, and the payments to be made for the same; and we send you one of the duplicates herewith.

Although this deed only applies to arrangements during this year it will apply to and cover voyages commenced this year, but which will terminate in 1878.

Please acknowledge receipt of the enclosed.

The Postmaster-General of New Zealand.

We have, &c.,

JOHN MACKBELL AND CO.

No. 4.

The Hon. JOHN DAVIES to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.
(Telegram.)

Sydney, 27th September, 1877.

In view of delay, consequent on Ministerial changes, in obtaining Parliamentary sanction to modification of Pacific Contract, I am of opinion that no further time should be lost in rearranging the Time Table so as to alternate better with Suez mail, to give contractors a little more time at Sydney in consideration of Auckland detour, and to insure mails reaching Frisco in time to catch a fast steamer at New York. We have sketched out a time table providing for these requirements, a copy of which will go by the mail on 3rd October. The following is the principle of it: Leave Sydney, say, Thursday, 6th December; arrive London Monday, 21st January; leave London Thursday, 31st January; arrive Sydney Monday, 18th March; leave Sydney again Thursday, 28th March. These dates will enable you to form an opinion on the suitability of the table for New Zealand, and I shall be glad to hear from you at your earliest convenience, if you approve. I propose at once submitting it to Contractors' Agents here, and if all parties agree it might be brought into operation as soon as possible, say, 1st January.

JOHN DAVIES,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 5.

The Hon. JOHN DAVIES to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

Sydney, 27th September, 1877.

Referring to my telegram to you of the 27th instant (copy of which is appended hereto), I have the honor to forward for your information six printed copies of the time table for the regulation of the San Francisco Service, which appears to this department best calculated to meet all the circumstances that require to be considered in forming a time table for this service.

On one of the printed tables herewith have been inserted in ink the dates of arrival and departure of the mail *viâ* Brindisi, with the view of showing the alternation of these dates, which have been calculated on the existing Peninsula and Oriental time table, with the proposed days of arrival and departure of the San Francisco mail. The table itself will best explain how far an alternation can be effected. I may, however, remark that, as the mail *viâ* Brindisi for some time past has arrived at Melbourne considerably before the specified time, it may fairly be expected that it will continue to do so, in which case there will be a better alternation of days in this respect with the proposed San Francisco time table.

Sir Daniel Cooper, in a letter, dated 9th October, 1875, he addressed to the Colonial Secretary of this colony, remarks that "the steamers should arrive at San Francisco on a Thursday, so that the mails can leave by the only through train at 7 o'clock on Friday morning, and so reach New York on the following Friday morning at 7 o'clock. In case of the steamer arriving a day late, or a day being lost on the railway, the Saturday (White Star) steamer would delay her departure, below the bar of the river, until the mail and passengers could be got on board." By fixing the day of departure from Sydney on Thursday, and allowing twenty-eight days for the voyage to San Francisco, it is thought that this consideration will be met. I suppose we may now calculate upon there being no objection on the part of the Imperial Authorities to Thursday being fixed as the day of departure from London, and I think it is understood that that day is the one best suited to meet the interest of the colonies. The time between London and San Francisco has been calculated at eighteen days, and it is thought expedient to give the minimum time in the proposed table. In the case of the mail from London, it is essential that no time should be lost at San Francisco on arrival there of the mail from London, and there is a danger, if more time than eighteen days is allowed, and fixed by schedule of time, that, in case of mails occupying only the eighteen days from London to San Francisco, the mail packet might not be in readiness to proceed on with them until the later time mentioned in the schedule, and a day might be lost in this manner. Indeed, I am informed that this has occurred, at all events, on one occasion.

I do not think I need say more in explanation of the proposed time table than to express a hope that you will give it your early attention, and communicate to me as soon as possible whether it meets your approval.

It would, I think, be desirable to bring the new table into operation, say, in January next.

I have, &c.,

JOHN DAVIES,

Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.