

1882.
NEW ZEALAND.

DIRECT STEAM SERVICE WITH GREAT BRITAIN.

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

The Hon. Mr. JOHNSTON to Sir F. D. BELL.

SIR,—

Post Office and Telegraph Department, Wellington, 13th August, 1881.

The question of the desirability of establishing a direct steam service between the United Kingdom and the colony has been brought under the notice of the Government by Parliament. I enclose for your information a clipping from *Hansard* (see I.-9, 1881), from which you will learn that the Government, in order to enable Parliament to deal definitely with the question next session, has undertaken to obtain all possible information as to the terms upon which a direct service could be secured. As I write, a Committee of each branch of the Legislature is taking evidence, with a view of ascertaining, if possible, what support a direct steam service to the colony would meet with, and for what subsidy the colony might reasonably expect to obtain such a service. It is possible that it may make some inquiries from you by cablegram. Meantime, I have the honor to ask you to be good enough to make all needful inquiries from those who may be willing to embark upon the undertaking, as to (1) the class and description of steamers to be employed; (2) the length of the voyage out and Home; (3) the rate of subsidy for a four-weekly service; (4) the rate of passage-money for Government emigrants; and (5) limit of contract.

2. As you are no doubt aware, companies are being formed in the colony for the purpose of exporting meat, &c., under the freezing process; and this export will be greatly aided and promoted by a direct steam service, insuring a regular and speedy transit. There is every reason to believe that the companies will be successfully floated, and that ere long there will be a very large trade in the export of frozen meat and butter. There are at the present time several gentlemen from the colony in London interested in these projected companies, and of these I would mention the Hon. R. Campbell, M.L.C., as a gentleman who could afford you every information as to the probable success of the export of frozen meat from New Zealand. I would suggest that you communicate with Mr. Campbell, because the value of the export trade of the colony will have a direct bearing on the amount of subsidy which may be required to maintain the direct service.

3. I also enclose you a printed paper (H.-28, 1881), which will be laid before Parliament next week, and would direct your special attention to the correspondence between Sir Julius Vogel, Mr. Larnach, and Mr. Galbraith, of Glasgow. I desire to add that the colony would not be satisfied with a bi-monthly service as suggested in the correspondence, but would require a monthly one; and I hope that, inasmuch as steamers like those of the Orient Company, and also those of Mr. R. M. Sloman, of Hamburg, are now running regularly to Australia without subsidy, a monthly service to meet the requirements of this colony can be obtained without paying a very heavy subsidy.

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

I have, &c.,
WALTER W. JOHNSTON,
Postmaster-General.

No. 2.

The Hon. Mr. JOHNSTON to Sir F. D. BELL.

SIR,—

Post Office and Telegraph Department, Wellington, 10th September, 1881.

With reference to my letter to you of the 13th ultimo, I have now the honor to send you enclosed a copy of the report of, and the evidence taken by, the Joint Committee of both Houses of Parliament (I.-9, 1881), in the matter of a direct steam service between the United Kingdom and New Zealand. The report has not yet been adopted by the House.

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

I have, &c.,
WALTER W. JOHNSTON,
Postmaster-General.