

No. 55.

The MANAGER, Union Steamship Company of New Zealand (Limited), to the SECRETARY,
General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steamship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 11th January, 1888.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 29th ultimo, and note that Parliament has authorised the Government to arrange for an extension of the San Francisco contract for twelve months on its present lines. As I have already advised you by wire, I have cabled the information to San Francisco, and look forward to a reply in a short time.

Yours faithfully,

F. W. WHITSON,
for Manager.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 56.

The Hon. Sir W. FITZHERBERT to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,—

Lower Hutt, Wellington, 31st March, 1888.

Referring to the interview which I had with you on my return from the Postal Conference, when I informed you that I had, in accordance with your request, brought the subject of the extension of the San Francisco mail-service for a further period of twelve months under the consideration of Sir Henry Parkes on two separate occasions, but that unavoidable circumstances had precluded Sir Henry from giving a definite assurance at a subsequent appointment, I have now the honour to enclose copy of a letter which, under the circumstances, I addressed to the Postmaster-General of New South Wales. I may add that the Hon. Charles J. Roberts was good enough to call on me on the evening of the day on which I forwarded him the letter, of which I now enclose a copy, when he explained to me that a sad and sudden bereavement had prevented Sir Henry Parkes from keeping his appointment with me, and then entered himself into the question of the proposed extension, and expressed himself very favourably towards your proposal.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM FITZHERBERT.

The Hon. Sir Harry Atkinson, Premier.

Enclosure in No. 56.

The Hon. Sir W. FITZHERBERT to the Hon. CHARLES J. ROBERTS, M.P., &c., &c.

DEAR SIR,—

Royal Hotel, Sydney, 2nd February, 1888.

I have just come from the Colonial Secretary's office, but as I did not find him in, and as I propose leaving Sydney on Saturday, I wish to ask you if you will kindly suggest to me in what way I could most suitably bring the question of the San Francisco mail-service under the notice of your Government.

I was requested by Sir Harry Atkinson to ask Sir Henry Parkes if he would consent to extend the service for another twelve months—that is, from November, 1888, to November, 1889. If Sir Henry's Government would consent to this proposal the New Zealand Government would appreciate such acquiescence. By such an arrangement the contracts for the San Francisco service and the New Zealand direct mail-service would terminate simultaneously, and the New Zealand Parliament would then be in a position to arrange its future mail-services more easily and satisfactorily. I venture to submit that such a brief extension of the existing service could not be adverse to the interests of New South Wales, inasmuch as I find that Spreckels alone uses 45,000 tons of coal (including Honolulu consumption), and that the San Francisco firms load annually thirty vessels, so that the total annual freightage in that connection of Newcastle coal amounts to 200,000 tons.

If, before I leave for New Zealand on Saturday, I could receive an assurance that Sir Henry Parkes's Government would accede to the proposal which I have submitted I can only assure you that it would be a particular satisfaction to me to be the bearer of such an assurance.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM FITZHERBERT.

The Hon. Charles J. Roberts, M.P., &c.

No. 57.

The Hon. Sir H. A. ATKINSON to the Hon. Sir W. FITZHERBERT, Wellington.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 9th April, 1888.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st March, enclosing copy of one which, while in Sydney, you had addressed to the Hon. C. J. Roberts, on the subject of the extension of the contract for the San Francisco mail-service. I have to convey to you the thanks of the Government for your services in connection with the matter, and an expression of regret that circumstances, of which you had no control, should have prevented your bringing it to a successful issue.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. Sir W. Fitzherbert, K.C.M.G., &c.

H. A. ATKINSON.