

No. 58.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 12th December, 1888.

I have to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of your letter of the 2nd November, covering correspondence relating to the increased contribution by the United States Post Office to the San Francisco service, and I note that you have, subject to the assent of New South Wales, sanctioned the twelve hours' detention of the ocean mail-steamer at San Francisco in case of necessity.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 59.

Mr. GRAY to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 25th January, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 2nd instant in reference to mine of the 17th November last on the subject of the increased contribution from the United States Post Office towards the cost of the San Francisco mail-service.

Permit me to point out that you have misunderstood the basis on which the \$46,000 are to be divided between the contracting colonies and the contractors. The contractors' agents, Messrs. Spreckels Brothers, claim \$20,000 as the sum they are entitled to for the carriage of the American mails; and this amount appears to be within the mark. The balance, \$26,000, is therefore divisible equally between the two contracting colonies and the contractors. The increased payment dates from the 18th November last. It should be mentioned, however, that the contractors have applied for refund of the sums deducted by the contracting colonies in respect of the previous payment of \$20,000 a year by the United States, claiming that the amount they were entitled to retain for the conveyance of the United States mails exceeded the gross payment made by the Post Office. The question has been referred to the Postmaster-General, Washington, for his opinion and decision, and the contractors informed accordingly.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 60.

Mr. GRAY to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 25th January, 1889.

In agreeing to contribute \$46,000 towards the cost of the San Francisco mail-service for the renewed term of contract, the Postmaster-General of the United States, among other things, desired to have the power to detain the steamers at San Francisco for twelve hours, to insure the due transmission of mails from the East *en route*, but unavoidably delayed from one cause or another. I have now to inform you that the Postmasters-General, after consultation, have agreed to this detention. Our Resident Agent at San Francisco has been informed of the decision, which he will communicate to the Messrs. Spreckels.

I have, &c.,

The Managing Director,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

Union Steamship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 61.

Mr. GRAY to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th January, 1889.

I have been directed by the Postmaster-General to forward, for your information, the accompanying copy of a letter from Mr. J. D. Spreckels, and to ask if you will be good enough to convey to this office your formal approval of the proposal to share \$26,000 with the contracting colonies. The Sydney Post Office has been furnished with a copy of Mr. Spreckels's letter.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

No. 62.

Mr. GRAY to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th January, 1889.

I have the honour, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to forward you copy of a letter (*vide* No. 46) from the President of the Oceanic Steamship Company of San Francisco, intimating that, although he believes the contractors are entitled to the whole of the United States Post Office contribution of \$46,000, it is not the intention to claim the full sum, but to share \$26,000 with the contracting colonies, in accordance with the spirit of the 10th clause of the contract. The contractors have been furnished with a copy of Mr. Spreckels's letter, and asked to be so good as to formally approve of the proposal.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.