

Federal packets; and this the House will now (as stated in my letter to you of the 27th instant) be invited to withdraw, so that the universal rate may apply to all routes. I trust this assurance will be entirely satisfactory to Her Majesty's Government.

The Secretary, General Post Office, E.C.

I am, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 4 in No. 89.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 30th October, 1890.

The arrangements which have been pending for some time between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of New Zealand for the renewal of the ocean mail-services *via* San Francisco and by Direct steamer having been brought to a conclusion, I have received the commands of my Government to express their high appreciation of the liberality with which New Zealand has been treated in the settlement of the question: and I have now to beg the favour of your conveying their best thanks to Mr. Raikes for the recommendations he has been pleased to make to the Treasury.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, E.C.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 5 in No. 89.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 30th October, 1890.

In view of the possibility that it may be found expedient to carry into effect at very short notice the scheme for reducing the letter-postage between this country and the Australasian Colonies, I have to inquire whether it would be convenient to you to arrange, in concert with your colleagues representing the other Australasian Colonies, an early meeting at the Post Office, to consider with me certain points that require settlement. These are: (1) The postage on post cards; (2) the manner of charging unpaid and insufficiently prepaid letters and cards; (3) the agreements with France and Italy, requiring notice of termination before the postage from the Colonies to the Continent of Europe can be reduced; (4) the use of the special train service through France and Italy for the Homeward mails; (5) the position of Fiji and New Guinea in respect of reducing postage. Perhaps you will kindly let me know the day and hour at which it will be convenient for you and your colleagues to call here.

I am, &c.,

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B.

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

No. 90.

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

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

SIR,—

1st November, 1890.

Permit me to express my thanks for the generous terms in which the Cabinet has been pleased to approve of the part I have had in bringing about the settlement with her Majesty's Government for the ocean mail-services. It was impossible not to be sensible all along of the embarrassing position you were in, and of the extreme inconvenience caused by your long suspense. But you will have seen that my own task was not an easy one, and that only by great patience and care was there ever any hope of the negotiations being brought to a successful issue. The most difficult part of them, indeed, was that you had not found yourself able to send me instructions of any kind, so that there was no escape from having to take a great responsibility upon myself, as has so often had to be done before in many other cases. Happily it all ended in an arrangement very favourable to the colony, and I was glad to read of the "chorus of congratulations" you received in Parliament.

It was also a pleasure to receive your commands to express to Her Majesty's Government the appreciation of New Zealand for the liberality with which she has been treated. A copy of my letter to the Treasury is annexed, and you may be sure it was welcome there. Nor are the Imperial Government, on their part, less sensible of the prompt response made by the colony to their proposals for reducing postage to the universal rate; and this will not be forgotten, when a more permanent arrangement for the ocean-services must take the place of the present makeshift for twelve months.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure in No. 90.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, Treasury, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 30th October, 1890.

The arrangements which have been for some time under the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury for the renewal of the ocean mail-services between this country and New Zealand having now been brought to a conclusion, I have received the commands of my Government to express their high appreciation of the liberality with which New Zealand has been treated by Her Majesty's Government in the settlement of the question. I beg you will be pleased to convey this expression to their Lordships.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary of the Treasury, Whitehall.

F. D. BELL.

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