

spondence will show (copy enclosed) that no such condition as is cited by the Washington office was made by the colonies' delegates. Under these circumstances, Washington should reconsider the proposal, and the Postmaster-General will be obliged if you will make further representations with that object. There is no great hope of your success, it is confessed, as you will understand from the cablegram of the 22nd ultimo from the Agent-General, of which I send you a copy. This was in reply to one asking whether the transit rates should not now be reduced to New Zealand, seeing that we had entered the Union, and that the railway mail-service was not specially maintained for the conveyance of the colonial mails.

I note the delay to the "Mariposa," and the further most unfortunate delay to the train which rendered futile the detention of the "Furst Bismarck." The Hamburg American Packet Company well earned your acknowledgments; and the Postmaster-General would be glad if you would send another letter to the company expressive of his recognition of the very valuable services which the company intended to render the colony, and enclosing \$40, the expense it was put to in detaining the "Furst Bismarck." The mail-agent will pay you the amount.

The official time-table has already been drafted on the particulars you have furnished, and I hope to have it issued in a few days.

In reference to the newspaper-cuttings, and the fourth paragraph of your letter, I have to express the department's acknowledgments of the steps you have taken to give as wide publicity as possible to the fact of the renewal.

R. J. Creighton, Esq.,

Resident-Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 44.

Mr. GRAY to the CHAIRMAN of DIRECTORS, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

General Post Office, Wellington, 4th November, 1891.

Proposed Four-weekly Mail-service viâ Melbourne and Suez.

I SEND you a trial time-table, from which you will see how the Bluff-Melbourne service would need to be run. I have assumed that the time-table for the Suez service next year will be a continuation of this year's, under which the inward mails are timed to reach Melbourne on the Saturday. I have allowed six days from Melbourne to Bluff, which probably would admit of your steamers leaving Melbourne as late as Monday, arriving Bluff Friday. But the inward mails arrive irregularly. Thirty-six days are allowed for delivery from London to Melbourne; but the mails generally arrive ahead of time—in some instances nearly a week. For 1890, the Suez delivery in Melbourne averaged thirty-three days ten hours, the shortest in thirty days fifteen hours. In no instance did the delivery exceed thirty-six days. The steamer reaches Albany about six days before mails arrive at Melbourne, and you will always have the advantage of knowing about a week beforehand what arrangements to make. Six days are also allowed the steamer from Bluff to Melbourne. The day of departure is Wednesday, but probably it would be safe to make it Thursday, as the outward mails do not leave Melbourne until 4 p.m. on the Tuesday. Thursday would suit both our mails and your steamer better than Wednesday.

I also send you sketch time-table showing how the San Francisco and Suez services will alternate. In point of time Frisco is a long way to the fore, and there is about as much difficulty now in fixing a time-table with even intervals between the departures and arrivals as there was with the Direct steamers.

The Chairman of Directors, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

W. GRAY.

No. 45.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

Premier's Office, Wellington, 5th November, 1891.

SIR, I have the honour to enclose copies of telegrams which have passed between us on the subject of the renewal of the San Francisco and Direct mail-services since I wrote you on the 8th ultimo.

You have already been advised by my telegram of the 30th ultimo that the terms offered by the Imperial Post Office in aid of the San Francisco service for twelve months have been accepted. But I shall be obliged if you will inform me whether the unwillingness of the Imperial authorities to agree to a three years' renewal had any direct reference to a Canadian service, and whether the prospects of such a service are more hopeful now than when Sir Dillon Bell last wrote on the question.

It is indeed a serious disappointment to find that, while the colony is now called upon to defray the cost of the Atlantic transport Homeward, no reduction is to be made in the United States territorial transit charges. Without losing sight of the fact that the present high rates are maintained under the special agreement of 1876, it is considered that the altered conditions of the San Francisco service suggest a more equitable rate being charged New Zealand for the territorial transport of the colonial mails, and that another endeavour should be made to induce the United States Postal authorities to lower the charges, if not to those contemplated by the Postal Union Regulations, at least to amounts much below those at present levied. I shall be glad, therefore, if you will bring the matter under the notice of the Imperial Post Office, and urge for a concession in favour of the colony.

Government quite agrees with the view of the London Post Office that a partial performance only of the Direct service, as proposed by the New Zealand Shipping Company, would be unsatis-