

No. 48.

Mr. GRAY to the Hon. GEORGE McLEAN, Dunedin.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 6th November, 1891.

HAVE you yet received a cable from Spreckels about renewal Frisco service? Do you select Wellington or Auckland as the port of call? Wish to have matter settled, in order that we may issue time-table. I also await reply from your company about coastal service.

No. 49.

The Hon. GEORGE McLEAN to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Dunedin, 6th November, 1891.

No reply from Spreckels. Probably cable sent about Imperial Government declining for more than one year may have stopped them cabling. Better wait "Monowai's" letters. Think £3,000 fair sum for coastal distribution. Mills reaches Wellington by "Arawa." Wait his arrival before fixing port, but think unlikely disturb Auckland.

No. 50.

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

SIR,—

Office of the Postmaster-General, Washington, 8th October, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your reply, under date of the 8th ultimo, to my letter of the 14th July last, suggesting your co-operation in the efforts I am making to establish a fast fortnightly direct mail-service between the United States and the Australian Colonies, *via* New Zealand, pursuant to the provisions of the recent Act of Congress "to provide for Ocean Mail-service between the United States and Foreign Ports, and to promote Commerce," which Act authorises this department to enter into contracts with steamship companies for the conveyance of mails to foreign countries.

In your reply you state that you are "prepared to consider the merging of the San Francisco service now maintained by New Zealand (or any renewal thereof) into such a service as is proposed, provided New Zealand steamers are allowed equal payments with others," and ask to be advised of my views upon the subject; adding that, in your judgment, "two separate services between the United States and New Zealand under distinct contracts are not required at present."

In reply, I have to inform you that it will be impossible to employ New Zealand steamers in the proposed service to be rendered under contract with this department, for the reason that the Act of Congress authorising the contracts in question expressly provides "that the vessels employed in the mail-service under the provisions of this Act shall be American-built steamships, owned and officered by American citizens," as you will see by reference to section 3 of the Act, as published in the pamphlet which accompanied letter of the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, dated the 17th ultimo, confirming my cable message of the same date in reply to your telegram of the preceding day announcing that your Administration proposed to renew the present contract for the San Francisco mail-service.

I agree with you that "two separate services between the United States and New Zealand under distinct contracts are not required at present;" and my letter of the 14th July last was written in order that your Administration might be fully advised respecting the action of this department looking to establish a contract service prior to any negotiation for the renewal of the contract now in operation.

It cannot be stated definitely at this time when the new service will go into operation; but the bids therefor will be opened on the 26th instant, and I will advise you by wire as soon as the award is made, referring to the contract by its number on page 12 of the pamphlet relative to the "Ocean Mail-service" hereinbefore mentioned, and stating the date when the service will begin.

While it is possible under the offer of subsidy by this Government to secure a better service than that now existing, it has been my hope to have the co-operation of your Administration in order to obtain a much more frequent and faster communication than is possible if either country operates independently.

I am, &c.,

JOHN WANAMAKER,

Postmaster-General.

The Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 51.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Sydney, 12th November, 1891.

FULLY considered your cable twenty-fourth ultimo, and consulted Adelaide and Melbourne. Postmaster-General thinks fairest arrangement is to follow recommendation of heads of departments, Sydney Conference, and charge twelve shillings per pound on letters by both Frisco and Suez routes.