

weekly service by that route on the basis of 11s. per pound for letters; and that, therefore, it has become of urgent importance that the decision of the Imperial Government with reference to the apportionment as regards the future should be made known with the least possible delay, in order that my Government may be placed in a position to conclude the contract.

My Government, in instructing me to request the favour of an early reply, express a hope that the Imperial Government will continue to act in the liberal manner in which they have hitherto dealt with the question of the postal services with New Zealand, and that they will consent to the renewal of the existing apportionments, and thus insure the maintenance of the San Francisco route, which, amongst other advantages, provides a most efficient alternative mail-service between the United Kingdom and Her Majesty's Australasian and Pacific Colonies.

With reference to the Direct mail-service, my Government state that the Shipping Company, who has hitherto contracted to convey the mails both ways, has declined to enter into another contract so far as regards the conveyance of the Homeward mails, but that it offers to contract to take the outward mails. My Government are not inclined to entertain this offer, but they are nevertheless desirous of obtaining the views of Her Majesty's Government with respect to it; and, in communicating the decision as to the apportionments, I shall be much obliged if you will state whether the absence of a definite contract for the conveyance of the Homeward mails by the Direct steamers will be objected to as regards the Imperial contribution.

In bringing this matter again before your notice, and in asking for a speedy reply, I desire to point out that, as regards the San Francisco mail-service, the contract which the colony now desires to renew terminates with the mail which left London on the 3rd instant, and that it is therefore urgently necessary that my Government should be informed of the decision of the Imperial Government in respect to the apportionment.

With respect to the Direct mail, it is also important that a definite decision should be arrived at, as the present contract with the Shipping Company expires, as regards the despatch of the outward mail, with that which leaves Plymouth on the 14th proximo.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand.

WALTER KENNAWAY.

Enclosure 2 in No. 156.

The MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company, to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

New Zealand Shipping Company, 138, Leadenhall Street, 8th October, 1891.

Referring to my interview with you to-day respecting the continuance of the present Direct mail-service, I have to inform you that we are not aware of any proposal having been made by this company to carry the outward mails only. We did ask our colony office to keep us fully advised if there was any prospect of the Colonial Government making such a contract, but did not authorise any proposal being made.

The Board, however, has decided that, subject to reply in ten days, this company is willing to undertake a monthly service at the same speed to and from the colony, for one year, for a subsidy of £16,000 per annum, other conditions of contract to be agreed. Failing acceptance of this, the Board would contract for conveyance of the outward mails only.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

O. R. STRICKLAND, Manager.

Enclosure 3 in No. 156.

The ACTING AGENT-GENERAL to the MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, 9th October, 1891.

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, in which, while informing me that you were unaware of any authorised proposal having been made by your company to carry the outward mails only, you state that your Board has now decided to make an offer to undertake for one year a monthly service to and from the colony, on the conditions which you specify, for a subsidy of £16,000.

You are no doubt aware that the New Zealand Government has already declined an offer made by your company in the colony to perform a fortnightly service for £600 per voyage, and in the face of this it would seem improbable that your present offer will be entertained.

You add, however, that, failing its acceptance, your company is willing to contract for the conveyance of the outward mails only, and, in communicating your offers to my Government, it appears to me expedient that the terms under which your company would undertake the outward service only should be specified.

I shall therefore await your reply to this before communicating your offers to the Government in the colony.

I am, &c.,

The Manager, New Zealand Shipping Company.

WALTER KENNAWAY.

No. 157.

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

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 2nd December, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Kennaway's letter of the 9th October, detailing the negotiations he undertook with the Imperial Post Office and Treasury and the New