

No. 89.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.
 Sir,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 7th April, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th ultimo, advising that, without any consultation with your office, the sailing-hour of the San Francisco mail-steamers from your port had been changed from 4 p.m. to noon, and pointing out the inconvenience of so early a departure.

My telegram of the 29th idem informed you that the change had been made without the knowledge of this office. Since then I have been in communication with the Managing Director of the Union Steam Ship Company, informing him of your objections to the alteration, and have his reply that noon was fixed for the winter months only to enable the steamers, in the event of bad weather, to get well up towards Auckland before dark. Mr. Mills, however, agreed to telegraph to his company's manager at Sydney to confer with you in the matter, and he has, no doubt, met your wishes by fixing the sailing-hour at 1 or 2 p.m.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.

No. 90.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Sir,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 4th April, 1899.

Herewith please find, in duplicate, contract for the conveyance of mails between Sydney and San Francisco for the year ended the 31st March. It is requested that both copies may be signed, one to be retained by you and the other returned to this office.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to say that a draft agreement for the further year's extension will be submitted for approval in the course of a week or two.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director,

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 91.

CONTRACT FOR CONVEYANCE OF OCEAN MAILS.

AGREEMENT between the UNION STEAM SHIP COMPANY OF NEW ZEALAND (LIMITED) and the POSTMASTER-GENERAL of New Zealand.

ARTICLES of agreement made and entered into this eleventh day of April, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-nine, between the Right Honourable Richard John Seddon, the Postmaster-General of the Colony of New Zealand, appointed as such Postmaster-General under "The Post Office Act, 1881," and acting for and on behalf of the Government of the said colony, of the one part, and the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), carrying on business at Dunedin and elsewhere in the Colony of New Zealand (hereinafter termed "the Company"), of the other part.

WHEREAS by articles of agreement made on or about the fourteenth day of August, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-five, between the then Postmaster-General of the said colony, of the one part, and the Company, of the other part, for the considerations, in the manner, and on the terms and conditions therein set forth, the company agreed to convey Her Majesty's mails and other mails as therein mentioned between the Ports of Sydney, Auckland, Apia, Honolulu, San Francisco, and any ports intermediate between Auckland and San Francisco as therein provided, during a period of three years to be computed from the fifteenth day of November, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-four: And whereas the period for which the said agreement (hereinafter referred to as "the original contract") was made has now expired, but by mutual arrangement between the parties hereto the Company is continuing to perform the said service up to and including the thirty-first day of March, one thousand eight hundred and ninety-eight, upon the terms of the original contract, so far as the same are applicable, and a true copy of such contract is hereunto annexed: And whereas, on or about the thirteenth day of December, 1897, the House of Representatives of the said colony passed the following resolutions, that is to say,—

"Resolved,—

- "(1.) That this House authorises the Government to extend the San Francisco mail-service for twelve months from the 31st March, 1898.
- "(2.) That the basis of payment for the conveyance of mails from New Zealand to San Francisco shall be at the rate of 10s. 5d. per pound for letters, 1s. per pound for books, packets, &c., and 6d. per pound for newspapers, with a guaranteed minimum payment of £7,500.
- "(3.) That the port of call in the colony shall be Auckland.
- "(4.) That the time between San Francisco and Auckland shall not exceed nineteen days.
- "(5.) That no bonus shall be paid for early arrival, and penalties at the rate of £4 an hour to be enforced only when late delivery exceeds forty-eight hours.
- "(6.) That at least one New-Zealand-owned steamer shall be employed in the service.
- "(7.) That the steamers to be employed shall be of not less than 3,000 gross registered tonnage.
- "(8.) That all payments or contributions from Great Britain and other countries shall be receivable by the contractors.