

FEDERAL SERVICE (FORTNIGHTLY).

DR.	£
Payment to contracting States (population basis)	12,306
Transit, Sydney to Adelaide	2,220
Transit through Italy and France	2,936
Intercolonial service, say	10,000
Interprovincial service, special trains, &c.	5,000
	£32,462
CR.	£
Estimated postages	10,788
From London Post-office—Transit of inward mails, Sydney to New Zealand	2,257
	13,045
Net cost	£19,417

This estimate presupposes that the San Francisco service may not be renewed, that there may be no Vancouver service, and that the intercolonial connecting Federal service will be fortnightly. The payment to the contracting States is on population basis—as the cost of the service is shared by the States on such a basis. The payment would cover the full use of the weekly service. At the present poundage rates the payment would be equal to £20,383 a year; in the place of £12,306, on basis of population.

The average times within which the mails were delivered between London and Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, and Bluff by the San Francisco and Federal services during the year ended 31st December, 1900, were:—

	San Francisco.	P. and O. Line.	Orient Line.
London to Auckland ...	31·71 days.	39·38 days.	39·15 days.
" Wellington ...	32·86 "	40·35 "	39·96 "
" Dunedin ...	34·07 "	41·13 "	41·71 "
" Bluff ...	34·82 "	40·38 "	40·96 "
Auckland to London ...	30·85 "	40·36 "	40·74 "
Wellington " ...	32·69 "	41·20 "	42·14 "
Dunedin " ...	33·69 "	41·01 "	41·89 "
Bluff " ...	34·44 "	40·26 "	41·14 "

Under the proposals of the Postmaster-General—assuming that the service between San Francisco and Auckland will be performed in 17 days, and the intercolonial fortnightly connection with the Federal service to be Sydney and Wellington, mails should be delivered as under:—

	San Francisco.	Federal Service.
London to Auckland ...	28–29 days.	38–39 days.
" Wellington ...	29–30 "	37–38 "
" Dunedin ...	30–31 "	38–39 "
" Bluff ...	31–32 "	39–40 "
Auckland to London ...	29–30 "	39 "
Wellington " ...	30–31 "	37 "
Dunedin " ...	31–32 "	38 "
Bluff " ...	32–33 "	39 "

With a connection between the Bluff and Melbourne direct with the Federal service, the mail-deliveries would probably be:—

London to Bluff ...	36–37 days.
" Dunedin ...	37–38 "
" Wellington ...	38–39 "
" Auckland ...	40–41 "
Bluff to London ...	36 "
Dunedin " ...	36 "
Wellington " ...	38 "
Auckland " ...	39–40 "

And by a direct service between Sydney and Auckland:—

London to Auckland ...	37–38 days.
" Wellington ...	38–39 "
" Dunedin ...	39–40 "
" Bluff ...	40–41 "
Auckland to London ...	37 "
Wellington " ...	39 "
Dunedin " ...	40 "
Bluff " ...	41 "

On the homeward voyages the P. and O. steamers are allowed one day, and the Orient liners two days, longer during the monsoon months—April to October. On the inward voyages the Orient steamers take a day longer than the P. and O. packets. The London mails are due at Melbourne on Tuesday and Wednesday, and at Sydney on Wednesday and Thursday, alternate weeks.