

No. 24.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
12th February, 1904.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of the 26th January last and to previous correspondence, I beg to inform you that the Postmaster-General has accepted the proposal that he should deliver in the United Kingdom without surcharge newspapers posted in New Zealand at a postage-rate of 1d. for each newspaper, irrespective of weight.

I accordingly cabled to you to the above effect, and also called your attention to the wishes of the Imperial Post Office as expressed in the second paragraph of the letter, copy of which is herewith enclosed, and I have this day received Sir J. G. Ward's cablegram instructing me to inform the Postmaster-General that it is proposed to commence sending newspapers under the new postage-rate on the 1st March next.

The Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure in No. 24.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, E.C., 8th February, 1904.

With reference to Mr. Walter Kennaway's letters of the 7th December and of the 15th ultimo, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acquaint you that in concurrence with the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, he now accepts the proposal from the Government of New Zealand that he should deliver in the United Kingdom without surcharge newspapers posted in New Zealand at a postage rate of 1d. for each newspaper, irrespective of weight.

I am to inquire on what date the arrangement should come into force, and to observe that, in order to prevent the erroneous collection of surcharges in this country, it is very desirable that it should in every case be made clear by the New Zealand office that the papers dealt with have been posted in New Zealand, and that the postage has been prepaid there.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I am, &c.,

H. BABINGTON SMITH.

No. 25.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to Mr. GEORGE FENWICK, Dunedin.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 27th February, 1904.

In connection with reduced newspaper postage-rate to Great Britain, I find that the heavy transit charges across America and Atlantic, which we do not control, will make it necessary for Post Office to send all newspapers exceeding eight ounces in weight by direct steamers, so as to obviate heavy loss *via* San Francisco. I have assumed that transmission by the slower service will make little or no difference to newspaper-proprietors and the public, so long as penny-rate secured. I shall be pleased to hear from you to-day collect.

[Also in same terms to Messrs. P SELIG and J. C. WILKIN, Christchurch; R. E. BANNISTER, Wellington; and WILSON and HORTON, Auckland.]

No. 26.

Messrs. J. C. WILKIN, GEO. G. STEAD, H. BRETT, and GEORGE FENWICK, Dunedin, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Dunedin, 29th February, 1904.

At largely attended meeting leading newspaper-proprietors to-day, your telegram *re* sea-carriage overweight weekly newspapers carefully considered. Result discussion was that be singularly retrograde step hold over weekly newspapers for despatch by direct steamers, and proprietors represented strongly urge you adhere original intention send overweight papers Fr'isco mail. Many strong arguments against proposals you make which will set out in letter to you. With reference to Christmas numbers, we approve of your suggestion that they be forwarded by direct steamers, as there would be ample time between publication-date for these numbers to reach England before Xmas.

No. 27.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to Messrs. J. C. WILKIN, G. G. STEAD, H. BRETT, and GEORGE FENWICK, Dunedin.

GENTLEMEN,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd March, 1904.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 29th ultimo, in continuation of telegraph correspondence about the route for newspapers exceeding 8 oz. prepaid at the new rate of 1d. for each newspaper. I note that you are averse to my proposal to send all