

No. 35.

The SECRETARY, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,— Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington, N.Z., 24th February, 1914.

I am directed by my Council to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, on the matter of the New Zealand—San Francisco mail-service contract.

I have to inform you that Messrs. J. B. MacEwan and J. G. Harkness have been appointed the Chamber's representatives, and they will be pleased to attend the conference to be held in the Prime Minister's room, Parliament Buildings, on Friday, the 27th instant, at 11 a.m.

In this connection I am directed to say that since the members of the Chamber interviewed you in this matter the subject has been taken up with Auckland exporters, and they expressed the desire to be represented at the conference which is to be held, and possibly one or two representatives from Auckland will be in Wellington. My Council trusts that it will be permissible for them to attend the conference, as then the meeting will be fully representative of North Island commercial interests.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

H. D. VICKERY, Secretary.

No. 36.

The ASSISTANT SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 27th February, 1914.

In reference to your letter of the 24th instant, I beg, by direction, to inform you that the Postmaster-General agrees that Auckland exporters may have two representatives at the conference to be held in the Right Hon. the Prime Minister's room at 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 3rd proximo, on the San Francisco mail-service.

I have, &c.,

F. V. WATERS,

Assistant Secretary.

The Secretary, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington.

No. 37.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company (at Wellington), to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Wellington, 9th March, 1914.

SIR,—

With reference to the negotiations which were carried on last week: I beg to submit herewith a rough draft of the old contract amended in all its clauses to cover the proposals made for the company, and which would be acceptable to us for the new contract. I merely submit this to facilitate consideration of details. The alterations are marked in the draft where departures from the old contract are made. I beg to make the following remarks regarding some of the alterations:—

Passenger Rates.—It occurs to us that the most effective way of fixing these as between Wellington and the islands is to make them subject to the rates (on a mileage basis) similar to those by the mail-steamers between Auckland and Fiji.

Freights.—Butter to San Francisco: Reduced to $\frac{3}{4}$ d. per pound from the date of signature of the new contract. I have to say here that it is understood that when this reduction to San Francisco is made we are agreeable to let it apply simultaneously to the rate on butter from Auckland to Vancouver during the currency of the existing Vancouver contract.

Fruit from Rarotonga: To avoid complaints from importers of discrimination we suggest that these be specified as not to exceed the rates ruling by the local service from Fiji to Wellington.

Freight Space.—The clause inserted is an adaptation of clause 28 in the Vancouver contract, and its great advantage to New Zealand shippers is that it will secure the whole range of the ship's cold-storage space up to within thirty days of the sailings from Sydney, instead of, as in the C.A. contract, receiving only a portion of it after the 1st September each year.

Time in Port at Rarotonga (Southward).—Liberty to extend this stay, in order to avoid loss of perishable cargo, is a continuation of an arrangement made by correspondence in connection with the old contract.

Subsidy.—(Clause 13): This is merely an expression of the proposal already submitted by us.

Harbour Dues.—Though we are at present contesting a claim made by the Wellington Harbour Board for dues on the steamers employed under the contract when they proceed to Sydney and return, it was clearly the intention of the Government, as it was our understanding, that these steamers should be free from dues in New Zealand while they remain in the service called for by the contract. We would now submit the desirability of redrafting the clause so as to make it literally cover the extensions to and from Sydney. I have made a suggestion that this may be done by the insertion of a little addition to clause 31, but doubtless it will be necessary to get legal opinion regarding this.

I have, &c.,

R. McK. McLENNAN,

For Managing Director.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.