

MR. TANCRED, TO SUPERINTENDENT OF HAWKE'S BAY.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Auckland, 8th November, 1859.

SIR,—

I have the honor to draw your attention to the fact that the Government have succeeded in establishing a Steam Mail Service on the East Coast, to be performed by the "White Swan," thus affording to the Province of Hawke's Bay a monthly means of communication with Auckland and Wellington.

The Owners of the "White Swan," however, find that the competition of another Service between Wellington and Napier by means of the "Wonga Wonga" (subsidised in part by the Government of Hawke's Bay), deprives them of so great a part of the traffic between the two places, as to make it impossible for them to continue running on this line.

I need scarcely observe to your Honor how important it is that every effort should be made to retain the service of the "White Swan," and I would therefore suggest to your Honor, as the only means of doing so, that the subsidy to the "Wonga Wonga" be withdrawn, or at all events, that no further engagements be entered into for the maintenance of a Competing Line.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) HENRY JOHN TANCRED,
For the Colonial Secretary.

His Honor the Superintendent,
Napier.

SUPERINTENDENT OF HAWKE'S BAY, TO COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Superintendent's Office, Napier,
Dec. 1st, 1859.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of 8th November, drawing my attention to the Steam Mail Service on the East Coast, your Government has succeeded in establishing, between Auckland and Wellington, from which Hawke's Bay will derive the advantage of Monthly Communication with those Provinces. The said Service to be performed by the "White Swan;" and suggesting as the only means of retaining her on this Line, the withdrawal of the subsidy now paid to the "Wonga Wonga," and consequently the probable stoppage of the communication at present kept up by her, between this and Wellington, which no doubt interferes much with the traffic of the "White Swan."

Since the receipt of the letter above referred to, I have communicated with Mr. Blacker, of the "White Swan," and obtained from him a copy of the agreement between the owners of that Vessel and the Coleman Company, dated September 28, 1859. By Article No. 2 :—

"The "White Swan" is to perform a service between Auckland, Napier, and Wellington, and *vice versa*, Monthly, at the date hereinafter mentioned."

By Article 4 :—

"The "White Swan" is to start from Wellington on the 1st of each month, taking on the Mail brought on from Nelson by the Inter-Provincial Boat on her way South, and shall arrive again at Wellington, from Auckland on 12th, in time to meet the Inter-Provincial Boat on her way Northward by the West Coast, unavoidable accidents and stress of weather always excepted."

Article 11 provides that :—

"In consideration of the above Service, the owners of the "White Swan" shall receive a subsidy at and after the rate of £3,000 per annum, payable monthly, or within seven days after the same shall have been received by the Company from the General Government of New Zealand."

I must confess my inability after perusing the above articles of the agreement,—and they are the only ones that the public are interested in—to see that the people of Hawke's Bay will derive the least benefit from the Contract, further than that another opportunity of communicating between Auckland and this place by Steamer, will be added to the at present numerous ones constantly occurring each month by sailing Vessels and Overland. Our interests as far as regards the English and Inter-Colonial Mail Service, that is carefully provided to all the other Provinces, seem to have been lost sight of altogether—and it will really be much more advantageous for us to have the Mail brought up from Wellington by the "Wonga Wonga," as in most cases hitherto—immediately after its arrival there, than to wait till the 2nd or 3rd of each month, for the sake of having it conveyed from Wellington by the "White Swan," and so lose all chance of being able to reply to letters by the steamer to Sydney, that leaves Wellington on the 1st.

I will not conceal the disappointment I feel that the arrangement originally proposed, of Steam Communication between Sydney, Auckland, and Napier, and for which the Time Tables have been published, has resulted only in the present very unsatisfactory Contract with the "White Swan;" for which £3000 per annum is apparently to be paid, more for keeping up a fortnightly Communication between Auckland and Nelson than anything else—leaving to the Province the trouble and expense of procuring the quick delivery of its English and Sydney Mails by whatever means may be within its reach. By the original plan, we should not only have had our Mails with the least possible delay, but an opportunity would have been afforded the Merchants here, each month, of obtaining supplies of all kinds direct from Sydney, which it had been calculated would tend in a short