

PRE-PAYMENT FOR TELEGRAMS, TO GREAT BRITAIN AND OTHER COUNTRIES.

MEMORANDUM FOR HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

THE Commissioner of Telegraphs respectfully requests His Excellency to move the Secretary of State for the Colonies to communicate with the Post Office and Telegraph authorities at Home, with the view of ascertaining whether some facilities cannot be afforded for the receipt and transmission of Telegrams to or from the Mother Country. The Commissioner believes that very extensive use would be made of the Telegraph, if persons could feel assured that, without the necessity for writing to a special or other correspondent in each case, Telegrams would be conveyed to the nearest port in Great Britain or a Colony, and be thence at once forwarded to their respective destinations. Such an arrangement would be especially valuable to New Zealand, which may be entered at so many different ports, from so many different points.

It has been the object of the New Zealand Government to enable residents in other countries to forward Telegrams to the Colony, through the nearest station to be thence transmitted to their destinations. To effect this purpose, three things are necessary:—1. That the rates of charge should be generally known.—2. That a convenient means of paying for the Telegrams should be afforded.—3. That separate Post Bags containing such Telegrams should be made up, and be forwarded to the nearest Telegraph Station in New Zealand, for transmission to their destination. On the other hand, it would doubtless be a great convenience to residents in the Colonies, if bags of Telegrams could, in a similar manner, be sent to Great Britain, under an arrangement for their delivery to the telegraphist at the nearest station, and for their being duly transmitted thence.

The Commissioner for Telegraphs suggests—That the rates of charge for telegraphic messages within Great Britain should be made known in New Zealand, and that New Zealand stamps should be declared receivable as payment of telegraphic charges; such stamps, uncanceled, to be returned to the Colony, and payment to the amount of the same to be made by the Colonial Government. In the same way, the Colonial Government would be willing that telegrams from Great Britain for any part of the Colony, should be paid for in English stamps, if the English authorities would agree to refund to the Colony the amount of such stamps on their being forwarded home uncanceled. The English Post Office authorities should also agree to make up a special bag of telegrams, as already described.

The Commissioner ventures to suggest, that it would be a very great boon, and very greatly calculated to promote interchange of communication throughout the world, if the Imperial authorities would endeavour to arrange with all countries possessing interior lines of telegraph, for the affording of such facilities as are herein proposed; and the Commissioner thinks that the matter would be a simple one, as regards any country in which postal or other stamps are used.

The Commissioner encloses herewith copies of the rates of charge adopted in New Zealand, together with forms for the transmission of messages. It would not, however, be necessary that those forms should be used or adhered to in carrying out the plan proposed. It would be well that the authorities at home should be asked to state whether they would make it a condition of entering into an arrangement, that the authorised English forms should be adopted; and if so, the authorities should be requested to send out to the Colony a considerable supply of such forms.

JULIUS VOGEL.