

they will instruct their Agent-General, or some other representative in London, to negotiate and conclude an arrangement for an early commencement of the service, for which the Corporation will then be fully prepared.

The Chief Secretary of the Colony  
of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
EDMUND WM. WHEELER,  
Secretary *pro tem*.

## No. 13.

The Hon. W. GISBORNE to the Hon. I. E. FEATHERSTON and Hon. F. D. BELL.  
(No. 103.)

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Wellington, 28th May, 1870.

GENTLEMEN,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 23rd and 25th February last, in which you enclose communications from the Honorary Secretary of the Atlantic and Pacific Steam Ship Corporation (Limited), containing proposals for the establishment of a through Steam Mail Service between Great Britain and New Zealand and Australia *via* San Francisco.

In reply, I have to state that, as you are by this time aware, a similar service under contract has already been commenced. It is quite possible that the contractors may require to make fresh arrangements with the concurrence of the Government, and I do not undervalue the importance of there being another competitor, or, as the case may be, co-operator, in the field. You will understand, therefore, that it is in a friendly spirit I now criticise the proposal submitted to you. There is, as far as New Zealand is concerned, a cardinal objection to the proposal in the intention to make the New Zealand service only a branch one from the Fijis or New Caledonia; nothing short of New Zealand being placed in the main line of traffic between Honolulu and Australia will suit that Colony.

I may observe, also, that it appears to me the Company is not safe in calculating that all or even a majority of the passengers passing between the Australasian Colonies and England will be content with the Portland route. I think the well-established route by New York will be preferred, affording, as it does, the opportunity of making a stay in that city.

I am not aware if the Company expect any assistance from the United States; but, if so, I may mention that, from inquiries instituted by the late Mr. Crosbie Ward, there is little room to doubt that the aid of the United States will only be extended to an American Company. Seeing that the service must pass through so much of the United States territory, the countenance of that country is for many reasons most desirable.

The Hon. I. E. Featherston and the Hon. F. D. Bell,  
care of John Morrison, Esq., 3, Adelaide Place,  
King William Street, London.

I have, &c.,  
W. GISBORNE.

## No. 14.

The Hon. I. E. FEATHERSTON and Hon. F. D. BELL to the Hon. W. GISBORNE.  
(No. 12.)

SIR,—

London, 25th March, 1870.

Adverting to our communication by last mail, on the subject of the Atlantic and Pacific Mail Company's offer to establish a service by steam between England and New Zealand and Australia *via* San Francisco, we have to enclose a letter received from the Secretary of that Company, from which you will perceive that they are taking steps to prosecute their enterprise, and have been registered.

It is our intention to have further personal communication with the Directors of this Company, of which you will be informed in due course.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,  
New Zealand

We have, &c.,  
I. E. FEATHERSTON,  
F. D. BELL,  
Commissioners.

## Enclosure in No. 14.

Mr. E. W. WHEELER to the Hon. Dr. FEATHERSTON and Hon. F. D. BELL.  
The Atlantic and Pacific Steam Ship Corporation, (Limited),  
Temporary Offices, 40 and 41, Palmerston Buildings,

HON. SIRS,—

Bishopsgate Street, E.C., London, 24th March, 1870.

From the advices we have received, we are able to state that there is no American Company likely to interfere with the service we contemplate undertaking, and that the Government of New South Wales have, in consequence of our tender and the want of Parliamentary powers, declined to subsidize the route proposed by Mr. Hall.

Having now formed a highly influential Board, and obtained considerable private subscriptions towards the capital required for the service, we are now in a position again to lay before you the offer previously made; with this view we enclose you copy of a letter forwarded your Government by the outgoing mail, and as soon as you feel yourselves authorized to make arrangements, I shall be happy, as the Secretary of this Company (now registered), to enter into treaty with you, in order to settle the terms of the subsidy and all details, and arrange for the sureties you will require for the due performance of any contract the Company may undertake.

The Hon. Dr. Featherston and Hon. F. Dillon Bell,  
Commissioners from the Government of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
EDMUND WM. WHEELER,  
Secretary *pro tem*