

concerned, and had it appeared, on the occasion to which Mr. Vogel refers, that the New Zealand mails were likely to arrive within a reasonable time after the hour appointed for the sailing of the "Baroda," instructions would have been given for the detention of the mail steamer. The fact is, that the "Alhambra" was not reported from Wilson's Promontory, or from any other point of this coast, but entered the Port Phillip Heads during the night of the 21st April, after the "Baroda" had sailed.

No application was made by the agents of the New Zealand Government for the detention of the mail steamer, and it cannot be admitted that anything was left undone that should have been done by this department in the interests of New Zealand on the occasion under notice.

It is to be inferred from Mr. Vogel's letter that, unless this Government will consent to the detention of the mail steamer twenty-four hours for the New Zealand mails, the use of the Suez service will be abandoned by that colony.

However much I should regret that it should be thought necessary to take such a step, I cannot lose sight of the fact that no such demand (if made) has been complied with up to the present time, and that the conditions under which the New Zealand mails are now forwarded *via* Suez certainly supply no stronger reason why such a concession should be now made than has existed during the many years that New Zealand has contributed to the maintenance of the service.

I am quite willing that the contract steamers should occasionally be detained, but not for so many hours as would jeopardize the arrival of the mails at Galle in time for onward despatch.

Before issuing necessary instructions, it should however appear that the branch steamers will sail from New Zealand so as to leave a margin of time for their due arrival in Melbourne previous to the hour appointed for the departure of the Galle packets, and that suitable penalties will be enforced for the non-performance of the voyage from New Zealand to Melbourne within the stipulated time.

Upon being satisfied on these points, I see no objection to the power given to me under the contract being occasionally exercised to the extent of detaining the Galle steamers for twelve hours for the New Zealand mails, should the necessity to do so arise.

Before closing this memorandum, I wish to remark that a telegraphic report has only just come to hand, from which it appears that the "Pera," which left here, according to contract time, on the 19th ultimo, did not arrive at Galle until 7 a.m. of the 11th instant, or twenty-four hours after the time she was due at that port, the onward mail for Aden being appointed to leave Galle at 3 a.m. on the same day, viz., the 11th instant.

EDWARD LANGTON,
Postmaster-General.

No. 6.

The Hon. D. POLLEN to the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY, Victoria.

SIR,—
Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 18th July, 1874.

Adverting to your letter, No. 4,794, of the 24th June, I have now the honor to transmit herewith, for your information, a further memorandum by my colleague the Postmaster-General, with reference to the sailing of the mail steamer *via* Suez from Hobson's Bay, in April last, without the mails from New Zealand.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

I have, &c.,
DANIEL POLLEN.

Enclosure in No. 6.

MEMORANDUM for the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY.

WITH reference to the memorandum of the Postmaster-General of Victoria, on the subject of detaining the Suez steamer for the New Zealand mails, it appears to me the Victorian Government are not averse to meeting the requirements of the New Zealand Government. The Postmaster-General comments upon no application having been made to stop the steamer on the occasion when the "Alhambra" was late. This neglect to apply to the Victorian Government probably arose through the contractors, Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., having overlooked the fact of the altered position of the service. I am under the impression that formerly, by direct communication with the Company, Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. endeavoured to obtain the largest aid in the very rare case of the connecting steamer being late, and similarly the firm have sometimes obtained the mails at the Heads for transmission to New Zealand. I feel called on to say that, though Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. did not on this occasion apply to the Victorian Government, they were not unmindful of the interests of the New Zealand Government, since they put on the "Aldinga" to overtake the mail steamer. The information asked for by the Postmaster-General of Victoria is reasonable. A copy of the contract with Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co. is attached. The time allowed from the Bluff is considerably over the time the ordinary passages occupy, as the Postmaster-General, by communication with Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., will be able to satisfy himself.

In sending a copy of the correspondence to Messrs. McMeckan, Blackwood, and Co., I will instruct them to offer the Postmaster-General of Victoria any information he desires.

If the Postmaster-General of Victoria recognizes that he owes consideration to the Government of New Zealand in the matter, I am quite willing to leave to him the precise time he may consider it prudent to delay the steamer. I think twelve hours as a maximum is a short time, but I recognize that the punctual transit of the Victorian mail must to him be of primary importance. Much must depend on the weather and the time of year, and something may be effected also by allowing the mail steamer to meet the New Zealand mail steamer at the Heads. I shall be quite content therefore, if, without