

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

ABANDONMENT OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MAIL ROUTE

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM from His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the Hon. the PREMIER.

A CIRCULAR telegraphic despatch, in cypher, has been received from the Secretary of State through the Governor of South Australia, intimating that it is proposed to abandon the Southampton mail after January next, sending all Suez mails by Brindisi, and charging as follows: Letters, 7d.; newspapers, 1½d. four ounces; book-packets and patterns, 1½d. two ounces. Letters and newspapers specially addressed private ships to be liable to present Southampton rates.

The opinion of the various Governments is desired.

The Governor begs that the Premier will favour him with an expression of the opinion of this Government upon the foregoing proposal.

Wellington, 28th August, 1879.

HERCULES ROBINSON.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM by MR. GRAY for the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

THE payments made for the overland transit of the Brindisi mails are: On letters, 7¼d. per ounce; books, 7¾d. per pound; newspapers, 5d. per pound. The additional postage levied on correspondence intended for transmission *via* Brindisi is: On letters, 2d. per half-ounce; books, 1d. per two ounces; newspapers, 1d. per four ounces. This extra postage is presumed to cover the payments for overland carriage, but, as a matter of fact, the transit postage does not cover the payments in the case of letters by nearly 1d. per ounce. Unless the transit payments are to be reduced the loss will be greater under the new proposal, as the Brindisi rate is to be reduced from 2d. to 1d. per half-ounce letter, books from 1d. to ½d. per two ounces, and newspapers from 1d. to ½d. per four ounces.

I have assumed that the payments for the transit of the mail between Brindisi and Calais, so soon as the whole of the mails are transmitted by that route, will be reduced, as I do not think the London Office would have seen its way to reduce the postage unless the cost of the carriage of the mails was to be lessened.

In assenting to the proposal to abandon the Southampton route in favour of that of Brindisi, the department should perhaps stipulate that a corresponding reduction in the payments for overland carriage should follow the reduction of postage, so that the transit postage covers all charges in connection with the transmission of the mails through the Continent of Europe. I also think that only specially-addressed letters should be sent by the Brindisi route, either to or from the United Kingdom.

General Post Office, 22nd September, 1879.

W. GRAY,
Secretary.

No. 3.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE for the COLONIES to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT (Circular.) of NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 26th August, 1879.

On the 25th instant I communicated to you by telegram through the Governor of South Australia the arrangements proposed for the transmission *via* Brindisi after January next