

instance there is a special reason—that a grant of the request would much facilitate the Postal Conference which I have referred to, and help to settle the important questions affecting any permanent establishment of a Pacific mail-service. It is very urgent that New Zealand should be able to decide quickly whether to join New South Wales in the temporary renewal of the present service, and this must be my excuse for also asking that the decision of the Post Office and Treasury may be communicated to me at the earliest possible date.

The Secretary, General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand.

I am, &c.,

F. D. BELL.

No. 31.

Mr. GRAY to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 17th October, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th ultimo, regarding the renewal of the San Francisco mail-service contract for another year. I note the tenor of your official letter of the 4th idem to the Imperial Post Office, and have to thank you for the action you have taken in the matter.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY

(For the Postmaster-General).

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B., Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 32.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 10th September, 1889.

I duly received your telegram of yesterday, urgently requiring an answer to your previous message of the 3rd instant relating to the San Francisco service. I immediately communicated again with the Imperial Post Office, but was informed that it was impossible to say when a decision would be given, nearly all the members of Her Majesty's Government being away; and I telegraphed to you, with regret, to that effect.

I need hardly say how difficult it always is to get any decision from the Treasury here on a hypothetical question; and, although, as you are aware, I had prepared the ground privately with the London Post Office so long ago as last July, it was always necessary that I should be in a position to make a definite statement as to the renewal of the service. The New South Wales Government have never approached the Post Office at all themselves, and even now the only thing I can say to the Imperial authorities is that the matter is likely to be brought before our Parliament. I am therefore afraid there will be exceptional difficulty in getting any answer from the Treasury until it is decided whether New Zealand is to join New South Wales or not in continuing the service another year.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

No. 33.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th September, 1889.

I duly received your telegram of the 13th instant, informing me that Parliament had approved of renewing both the San Francisco and the Direct mail-services for twelve months longer; and I immediately communicated with the Imperial Post Office, using the news you had sent me to press for the Treasury decision as to continuing the existing arrangements on this side in the case of the San Francisco service. Copy of the correspondence with that department is annexed.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 1 in No. 33.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 13th September, 1889.

In continuation of my letter of the 4th instant, I beg leave to inform you that I have now received a telegram from my Government stating that the New Zealand Parliament has approved of renewing the San Francisco mail-service for twelve months longer. There is no doubt of this having been done in the hope that the Treasury would consent to the existing arrangements on this side being also continued for another year, to November, 1890, so as to afford further time for considering the questions involved in the maintenance of a Pacific ocean-service. Under these circumstances, I may be permitted to urge the great importance of the Treasury's decision being communicated to me at the earliest possible date.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, St. Martin's-le-Grand.

F. D. BELL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 33.

Mr. REA to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, E.C., 14th September, 1889.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, announcing that the New Zealand Parliament has approved of renewing the San Francisco mail-service for twelve months longer.