

No. 39.

Mr. GRAY to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Washington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 28th November, 1890.

I have the honour, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to acquaint you that this colony has arranged for the continuance of the San Francisco mail-service for another twelve months. All contributions from your country and from non-contracting colonies are to be retained by or paid over to the contractors for their sole benefit.

With reference to the amount agreed to be paid by your department towards the cost of the service, the Postmaster-General would be glad to be informed whether it includes payment for sea-conveyance on the correspondence from Canada and other places sent in transit through the United States. It is presumed it will not; and the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson would therefore be obliged if you will inform this office how it is to recover such payment from the countries in question.

* * * * *

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Postmaster-General, Washington, United States of America.

No. 40.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. CREIGHTON, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 29th November, 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo with reference to the renewal of the San Francisco mail-service which has been submitted to the Postmaster-General.

The subsequent correspondence will have acquainted you with the exact nature of the mail-service resolutions passed by the House of Representatives, and that no reference was made to a mixed service. The Postmaster-General believes, however, that such a service would be advantageous, and he has approved a request made by the contractors to place the s.s. "Monowai" in the service.

Although Congress prorogued without coming to any decision on the shipping Bill, the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson trusts that on its reassembling next month the Bill and special concessions in the matter of the overland transit of our mails may receive early and favourable consideration.

It will interest you to learn that the negotiations for the renewal of the Direct service with London, on the terms agreed to by the House of Representatives, are on the eve of being favourably concluded.

* * * * *

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

R. J. Creighton, Esq.,

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

No. 41.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 19th November, 1890.

Adverting to your telegram of the 13th and letter of the 23rd ultimo, advising that your colony has renewed the San Francisco mail-service for twelve months, I have the honour to invite your attention to the question of the rates to be paid in connection therewith. I may point out that by the Federal mail-service the non-contracting colonies—of which New Zealand is one—pay for conveyance of books and packets at the rate of 1s. per lb.; whereas by the San Francisco service 1s. 6d. per lb. has hitherto been charged to non-contracting colonies on this class of mail-matter. As there would seem to be no valid reason why more should be charged by New Zealand for conveyance *via* San Francisco than your colony is called upon to pay for conveyance by the Federal service, perhaps your department will be so good as to intimate whether it can see its way to assimilate the rates in future.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary.

The Secretary,

General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 42.

Mr. GRAY to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Sydney.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd December, 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th ultimo, inquiring whether this department would be willing to reduce the charge for books conveyed by the San Francisco contract steamers to the rate in force for conveyance by the Federal service; and have to inform you that the Postmaster-General regrets he does not see his way to make the reduction at present, as the terms of the contract were arranged on the understanding that the existing rates would be continued to be paid by non-contracting colonies.

In connection with this matter I would refer you to my telegram to you of the 26th June last