

It is to be regretted that the colonies have only the choice of three days for despatch from London, viz., Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday; otherwise the fast steamships of the White Star Line would be available for the transit of Australian mails to New York on Wednesday. It may not be inopportune here to remark that when I was in London I was informed that the proprietors of the White Star Line were disposed to carry the Australian mails without any charge upon the Imperial Government. If this be the case, your department might be able to arrange with that Company for the carriage of these mails on the Wednesday following the Tuesday now fixed for despatch. The Australasian passenger and goods traffic would doubtless follow the mails, and thus some advantage would accrue to the White Star Company from the concession.

The plan which the United States Government adopts of sending the mails to the United Kingdom by the fastest steamers which run between New York and England, affords to the Australasian Colonies far greater advantages, as regards the speedy conveyance of the mails, than the system adopted by your department, of restricting the conveyance to certain packets and to certain days.

Relying upon your good offices in the development of the San Francisco Service, which is largely subsidized by this colony and New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
SAUL SAMUEL,
Postmaster-General.

The Right Hon. the Postmaster-General, London.

Enclosure 2 in No. 16.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, London.

(Telegram.)

Sydney, 8th April, 1874.

FEBRUARY mails *viâ* San Francisco seven days late to Boston, causing great dissatisfaction here. This Government will be glad if you will influence Cunard Company to put on fast boat for Australian mails, as promised, or will you send by other fast line to New York. Time kept on Pacific. Reply—charge to us.

No. 17.

The Hon. J. VOGEL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, New South Wales.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 4th May, 1874.

I have had submitted to me the letter of the 11th ultimo addressed to this department by the Secretary of the General Post Office, Sydney, enclosing, by direction, a copy of the communication you deemed it expedient to forward the Postmaster-General, London, in reference to the transmission of the Australian and New Zealand mails from England to the United States, and I have to express my approval of the action taken by you in drawing the attention of the Imperial Post Office authorities to the serious delays complained of.

2. I desire, however, to point out that it does not appear your Government have the power, under the contract, to alter the fixed dates for the departure of the San Francisco mails from London without a reference to this colony; and I think it would be well, for the future, that this Government should first be consulted before any authority is given for disturbing the dates fixed by the published time-table. I may further mention that, as far as this colony is concerned, it is not the case that the vessels have performed the service within contract time. Making allowances for the detention caused by the "Macgregor," and in one case abstaining from taking into account the gain of time on the return voyage in crossing from East to West, the time has exceeded the longest of the three rates of time provided by the contract.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, New South Wales.

No. 18.

The Hon. SAUL SAMUEL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 4th June, 1874.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, dated the 4th ult., relative to the communication which I addressed to the Postmaster-General, London, on the 11th April last, in reference to the transmission of the Australasian and New Zealand mails from England to the United States.

With regard to the second paragraph of your letter, I have to point out that, in my communication to the London office, I did not propose to alter the time-table, but merely suggested that if a fast steamer could not be secured from London on Tuesday, there would be no alternative but to change the day of despatch to Thursday.

I may add that I had, and have, no desire to take any action in the matter of the mail service *viâ* San Francisco without consulting with the New Zealand Postal authorities, in accordance with the provisions of the contract.

I have, &c.,
SAUL SAMUEL,
Postmaster-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.