

and myself by the Pacific Mail Steamship Company, in reference to the foot-note on the time-table for the San Francisco Mail Service; and also copy of our reply thereto.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 34.

The PRESIDENT of the PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY to the AGENTS-GENERAL for NEW SOUTH WALES AND NEW ZEALAND.

GENTLEMEN,— Pacific Mail Steamship Company, New York, 29th November, 1878.

We have received, through Messrs. Foster and Thomson of this city, your notification of the 13th instant, and accompanying schedule for 1879.

We notice at the bottom of said schedule a note which reads:—"Or immediately on arrival of London mail at San Francisco, if it shall arrive before the dates respectively appointed."

This note refers to the departures of the steamers outward from San Francisco for Auckland and Sydney, which are set down for every fourth Monday as at present.

Are we to understand from this note that, if the London mail arrives in San Francisco by any chance on the 18th of January, for example, the steamer which has been advertised to sail on the 20th (Monday, the regular sailing day), must be despatched on the 18th (Saturday)?

If so, we decidedly object to the exaction, as we should be unable to issue any time-table for the Australian line which would be otherwise than ambiguous in the information it would afford to the public, and we should besides (which is the most serious consideration) lay ourselves open to innumerable claims from intending passengers, should we despatch a ship *sooner* than the date for which she had been regularly advertised.

In advising passengers hitherto we have been in the habit of qualifying the dates given by the remark that the steamer would be despatched on the date named, or as soon *thereafter* as the London mail arrived in San Francisco. This to prevent claims for possible detention of passengers by non-arrival of the mail in time.

Should we be obliged to carry out the programme indicated in the note to which we have referred, however, the chances for detention and consequent claims for damages arising therefrom would certainly be very much increased, as few passengers arrange to arrive in San Francisco more than a day before the appointed day of sailing, and many make their calculations to arrive the evening before.

The overland train arrives in the evening (as you are doubtless aware), and the steamer is usually despatched as soon after noon as is practicable.

We beg, therefore, to be advised at your early convenience as to the intention of your good selves in appending said note to the schedule, and, if we are wrong, that your intention may be more clearly expressed.

I have, &c.,
D. S. BABCOCK,
President.

William Forster, Esq., and Sir Julius Vogel,
Agents-General for the Governments of New South Wales and New Zealand,
3, Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, S.W., London, England.

Enclosure 2 in No. 34.

The AGENTS-GENERAL for NEW SOUTH WALES and NEW ZEALAND to the PACIFIC MAIL STEAMSHIP COMPANY, New York.

GENTLEMEN,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 13th December, 1878.

In reply to your letter of the 29th ultimo, relative to the note on the 1879 time-table for the New Zealand and New South Wales Mail Service by way of San Francisco: "Or immediately on arrival of London mail at San Francisco, if it shall arrive before the dates respectively appointed."

We desire to explain that, in framing the above note, we intended to permit, but not to compel you to arrange an earlier departure for the steamer from San Francisco on any occasion on which the mails might arrive from New York before the day named in the table.

We have, &c.,
WILLIAM FORSTER,
Agent-General for New South Wales.
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General for New Zealand.

The Pacific Mail Steamship Company, New York.

No. 35.

The Hon. J. T. FISHER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 13th February, 1879.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 17th December last, enclosing copy of a letter addressed by the President of the Pacific Mail Steamship Company to Mr. Forster and yourself, in reference to the foot-note on the time-table for the San Francisco Mail Service; together with a copy of the joint reply sent thereto.

I have, &c.,
J. T. FISHER.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.