

I was not informed of this officially, but, becoming cognisant of the fact, I wrote to J. A. Fillimore, General Superintendent of the Southern Pacific system, requesting him to inform me what had been decided upon, intimating that I would forward a copy of his letter to you, with a request that you would advise the Postmaster-General of New South Wales accordingly.

I received the accompanying reply, from which you will gather that it is in contemplation to run a fast mail- and passenger-train between Omaha and San Francisco, connecting with the daily West bound express from Chicago at Council Bluffs, thereby shortening the time between New York and San Francisco twelve hours. The spring and summer schedule will be several hours shorter than the winter card.

As the New South Wales and New Zealand Parliaments have extended the contract for another year, would it not be well to consider how this fast railroad transit can be taken advantage of to reduce the through time between Sydney, Auckland, and London? That it will be permanent there is no doubt, inasmuch as the competition of other overland railroad systems compels the Southern Pacific and Union to keep pace with their rivals, if not ahead; and these corporations do not want to lose the Australian mail- and passenger-receipts.

Without going closely into the calculation, it is evident that a very considerable saving in time might be effected by forwarding the Australian mails from England by the fastest boats—for example, the "Alameda" this trip received the first instalment of the English mail for the colonies 12 days from London. Now, if the entire British mail had been transmitted by the "Teutonic," and if the new railroad time-schedule had been in operation, the time would have been reduced to 11 days 12 hours, with the result that the London mail might have been delivered in Auckland in 32 days 12 hours, and in Sydney in 37 days 12 hours, with the chance of a saving of time by the Oceanic Company's steamer on the Pacific route. It is perfectly feasible to make this saving without increasing the cost. The minimum time between London and Auckland last year (*vide* Table No. 8, Postmaster-General's Report, 1889) was 34 days, and between London and Sydney 39 days. The suggested shortening of the transit-time would reduce that minimum by 36 hours, and the maximum by 5 days 12 hours.

I have the honour to suggest, therefore, the advisability of the New Zealand and New South Wales Governments jointly requesting the London Post Office Department to select only the fastest steamers on the Atlantic route for despatch of the colonial mail to New York; and, should there be any difficulty in making the change on the present time-table, to make the necessary alteration in the day of despatch from London. The "Teutonic" and "City of Paris" have made the passage to New York under six days, and this will probably be the maximum for the Atlantic mail-boats during 1890. Should this change be made you will, of course, notify the contractors here and in New Zealand, and issue a new schedule of sailing dates.

Despatches from London and New York intimate that Messrs. Anderson, of the Orient Company, who obtained a contract to build and run three eighteen-knot steamships to Montreal in connection with the China line of the Canadian Pacific have withdrawn from it, the supposition being that the Canadian Pacific Company will take it up and secure better terms from the Imperial and Dominion Governments. The Anderson's were to receive £100,000 a year subsidy for a fortnightly service. The affair has the look of a friendly arrangement with the Canadian Pacific on an understanding with the Dominion Government. This may have some bearing upon Mr. Abbott's mission to Australia.

I have, &c.

ROBT. J. CREIGHTON,
Resident Agent, New Zealand Government.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, Post and Telegraphs, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 41.

Mr. J. A. FILLIMORE to Mr. R. J. CREIGHTON.

DEAR SIR,— Southern Pacific Company, San Francisco, California, 15th October, 1889.

I have your favour of the 14th, and in reply will state that Mr. E. Dickenson of the Union Pacific Railway, and Captain White, of the United States mail-service, have been over here relative to putting on a fast mail over the Union Pacific and Central Pacific, in connection with the fast mail now arriving at Council Bluffs. We have made out our figures, and the time from New York will be 4 days 8 hours. This is not allowing for the difference in time. Allowing the difference in time would make it about 4 days 12 hours. Mr. Dickenson left here last evening for Omaha, and I am just in receipt of a telegram from him, from Wadsworth, in reply to one I had sent him, asking if he had heard anything from his people relative to the proposed figures we had made, and he replies that Mr. Holcomb is in New York, and cannot say positively about new card until he returns; but, I have no doubt but that the new time-card will be adopted and go into effect about the 1st November. The figures above given are for winter card; the card for the spring and summer months would be from one and a half to three hours shorter than the winter card.

I think that with this card we should be able to receive the mails from Australia and the colonies over the Central Pacific and Union Pacific. When you are in receipt of any information that would be of benefit to us we would be pleased to hear from you.

Yours, &c.,

J. A. FILLIMORE,
General Superintendent.

Mr. R. J. Creighton, Agent, New Zealand Government,
Care J. D. Spreckels and Bros., 327, Market Street, San Francisco, California.