

No. 60.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 6th May, 1890.

I have the honour to forward you herewith copy of a letter from the Resident Agent of this department in San Francisco concerning the detention of the "Alameda" for four days at that port in consequence of the late arrival at New York of the "Bothnia," one of the slow steamers of the Cunard line, with the March mails from the United Kingdom for the colonies.

The Agent-General for this colony in London will be again requested to impress on the Imperial Post Office authorities the necessity for selecting faster boats than the "Bothnia" for conveyance of the colonial mails; and the Hon. Mr. Mitchelson would be glad if your office would also cause representations to the same effect to be made through the Agent-General for your colony.

I have &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 61.

HON. E. MITCHELSON to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 6th May, 1890.

I have the honour to request that you will again draw the attention of the Imperial Post Office authorities to the necessity for selecting only the fastest boats for conveying, from Liverpool or Queenstown, the colonial mails to New York.

I am prompted to make this request on account of the mail leaving London on the 22nd March last having been forwarded from Liverpool by the "Bothnia" (one of the slowest of the Cunarders) which did not reach New York until the 4th April, and caused the detention of the "Alameda" for four days in San Francisco.

Delays of this kind have occurred more than once lately, solely through such slow boats as the "Bothnia" being selected to carry our mails. May I therefore beg that you will impress on the Imperial authorities the need for a change. The New South Wales office has also been asked to cause similar representations to be made.

I have, &c.,

E. MITCHELSON, Postmaster-General.

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

No. 62.

MR. R. J. CREIGHTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 2nd May, 1890.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter informing me that for the present no change would be made in the day for despatching the New Zealand and Australian mail from London *via* New York and San Francisco. Perhaps, in the present condition of the service, it is not advisable to take further steps in the matter; but, if the best possible service is to be secured by the colonies, a change must ultimately be made, unless meanwhile only swift steamships should be kept in the Atlantic service by the Cunard Company.

The outgoing mail per "Mariposa" has been reported up to time, and I anticipate no delay in the despatch of the steamer to-morrow.

A cable from Auckland reported the arrival of the "Alameda" on the 28th ultimo, two days late. As she sailed four days after schedule time, it would appear that she had saved two days between this port and New Zealand. When it is considered that the contract does not provide for paying a bonus this fact is creditable to the contractors, and shows their anxiety to render the service as efficient as possible.

I have also the honour to enclose copy of the Shipping Tonnage Bill, which would provide a subsidy for the Californian mail-service, in addition to payment for carrying the United States mail. Attached to the copy of the Bill is an extract from the report of the House Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries, recommending its passage. You will notice that the report is an earnest one, and, inasmuch as both political parties are committed to the policy of the Bill, I do not anticipate any difficulty in its progress. The administration is in full sympathy with the measure.

I have, &c.,

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, Post Office, &c., Wellington.

R. J. CREIGHTON.

Enclosure in No. 62.

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE IN THE FOREIGN TRADE.

[Extract from Report from the Committee on Merchant Marine and Fisheries of the House of Representatives on H. R. Bill 4,663, known as "The Tonnage Bill."]

"In conclusion, we deem it a State necessity to enact this measure. We cannot submit to subjugation by our rivals, whose subsidies, subventions, bounties, or insurance policies, working without limitations, have taken captive our foreign trade. We cannot abdicate national control of our ocean commerce, or resign the navigation of the high seas, no matter what it costs to maintain our rights and protect our interests. We have bound our limbs and cramped our energies by Acts and treaties that bind no longer any nation but our own. A remedy for this there must be found, and that immediately. The Bill herewith returned, with amendments, is the best measure at our command, and we urgently ask for its passage by the House."