

## No. 31.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,  
Wellington, 5th February, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th ultimo, notifying that you had come to an arrangement with Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers for the despatch of the mail-steamer from San Francisco at midnight of Wednesday on any occasion upon which the final instalment of mails should reach San Francisco on that day, and also that you had later ascertained that that arrangement was likely to prove ineffective owing to the action of the London Post Office in despatching the mails for the colonies by slow steamers.

It is a matter for regret that the slower steamers should have been selected for the transport of the mails to New York during the winter, and the Agent-General has been communicated with and asked to suitably represent to the London Post Office the propriety of always despatching mails by the fastest vessels in the week in which the colonial mails are forwarded to New York.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,  
Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

I have, &c.,  
W. GRAY, Secretary.

## No. 32.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,  
Wellington, 6th February, 1896.

SIR,—

Adverting to the letter of the 30th November last from the Superintendent, Foreign Mails, Washington, to you, in which it was stated that mails available for despatch at New York at 1 p.m. are required to be forwarded by the fast express train which commenced running on the 25th *idem*, I have the honour to inform you that the Mail Agent, by the last trip of the "Alameda," reports [report not printed] that the vessel left one day late, but that the delay would have been lessened had the mails been forwarded from New York by the fast express instead of the ordinary train. This information appears to have been obtained from the San Francisco Post Office, but the Mail Agent is not clear that the mails arrived in time for the fast express. No doubt you will be careful to inform me in due course of any occasion on which the connection has failed at New York from avoidable causes.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,  
Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

I have, &c.,  
W. GRAY, Secretary.

## No. 33.

The RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 5th February, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 20th of December, 1895, principally having reference to the question of changing the day or hour of the departure of steamers from this port should the alteration of the time of running the overland trains justify such change. My communication upon this subject by the last mail will have explained the situation, the substitution of the steamer "Umbria" for the "Lucania" upon the Atlantic rendering no action necessary at present. I have not therefore held any communication with the Washington authorities in regard to any change in departure. I have also to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of several copies of the contract for the San Francisco mail-service for the period from November, 1894, to November, 1897.

W. Gray, Esq.,  
Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
H. STEPHENSON SMITH,  
Resident Agent.

## No. 34.

The RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 5th March, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 23rd of January, with enclosures, having reference to the question of despatching the contract steamer from this port on Wednesday should circumstances warrant that course. I am pleased to note that Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers are willing to effect this change. You will, however, have learned from my previous communications that at present no advantage has been derived from the establishment of the fast express service. Close attention to the matter, however, will be given, and if the New York departure indicates an early delivery at this end I will endeavour to secure the advantage of a Wednesday departure.

W. Gray, Esq.,  
Secretary to the General Post Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
H. STEPHENSON SMITH,  
Resident Agent.