

1896.
NEW ZEALAND.

OCEAN MAIL-SERVICES

(FURTHER PAPERS RELATING TO).

[In continuation of Paper F.-6, presented on the 30th September, 1895.]

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

SAN FRANCISCO MAIL-SERVICE.

No. 1.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 14th August, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to forward herewith two copies, duly signed by the Postmaster-General, of the agreement with your company for a renewal of the San Francisco mail-service for a period of three years from the 15th November, 1894, and to request that you will be good enough to have the agreement completed, and one copy returned to this office by first mail.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

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

No. 2.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 20th August, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 14th instant, forwarding two copies, signed by the Postmaster-General, of the San Francisco mail-contract, covering a period of three years from 15th November last. These will be duly put before the directors for completion.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Managing Director.

No. 3.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 11th September, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to remind you that on the arrival of the s.s. "Monowai" at Auckland next month the two voyages will have been completed for which that vessel was allowed to be used in the place of the "Arawa." Please state your wishes in this matter.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

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

No. 4.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 16th September, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 11th instant, drawing my attention to the fact that on the "Monowai's" next arrival at Auckland she will have completed the two voyages for which permission was granted her to replace the "Arawa."

1—F. 6.

I regret to say that our offer to renew the charter of the "Arawa" was not accepted by the owners, and she is now engaged in a foreign trade. Under the circumstances, therefore, we shall be much obliged if you will kindly secure the consent of the Hon. the Postmaster-General to the "Monowai's" continuing to run in the San Francisco mail-service.

I have, &c.,

T. W. WHITSON,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

For Managing Director.

No. 5.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 2nd October, 1895.

SIR,—

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo, requesting permission to continue to employ the "Monowai" in the San Francisco mail-service, your company being unable to replace her with the "Arawa" as intended. In reply, I have to inform you that the Postmaster-General has been pleased to approve of your request.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 6.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco. [Also to Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.]

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 3rd October, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to inform you that, as the contractors for the San Francisco mail-service have been unable to renew the charter of the "Arawa," permission has been granted them to continue to employ the "Monowai" in her place.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

[Same to the Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.]

No. 7.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 5th October, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 2nd instant, and beg that you will thank the Postmaster-General for acceding to our request that the "Monowai" may continue to carry on the San Francisco mail-service.

I have, &c.,

T. W. WHITSON,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

For Managing Director.

No. 8.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 28th October, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to inform you that the Resident Agent for New Zealand at San Francisco reports [see No. 21] the further late arrival of the "Monowai" at that port on Friday, the 30th August—a day behind time.

The protracted voyages of the "Monowai" are the cause of much embarrassment in securing the necessary connection during the United States land-transit to admit of the mails reaching London on time-table dates. It is, of course, after the mails have been landed a day late at San Francisco, only by exceptionally favourable circumstances that this can be done. Seeing that on this occasion the steamer was favoured by having to make only a short stay at Honolulu, on account of the outbreak of cholera there, it appears hopeless to expect that the vessel will be enabled to perform the service with any more satisfaction than at present. Under the circumstances, I should be glad to be informed whether a faster steamer is likely to take the place of the "Monowai," and, if so, at what distance of time.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 9.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 13th November, 1895.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 3rd ultimo, conveying the information that, the "Arawa" not being re-chartered, the "Monowai" will be permitted to continue in the service.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary,
Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

No. 10.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 14th November, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 28th ultimo, drawing my attention to the apparent inability of the s.s. "Monowai" to maintain the mail time-table between Auckland and San Francisco. In reply, I would state that the "Monowai" is quite capable of keeping up to the time-table under light trim and conditions; but, in consequence of the poorness of the traffic and high cost of coal at San Francisco, we are obliged to load her deeply with coal from the colonies for use on return trip. So soon as traffic between the colonies and San Francisco improves she will be able to reduce her coal load hence, and, running light, will have no difficulty in keeping her time.

I have, &c.,

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

T. W. WHITSON,
For Managing Director.

No. 11.

The DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Postal and Electric Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Sydney, 19th November, 1895.

SIR,—

Adverting to your cablegram of the 16th instant [not printed] and previous correspondence, I am directed to inform you that the Postmaster-General has approved of the continuance of this colony's contribution at the rate of £4,000 a year towards the San Francisco mail-service for another year from the 1st instant to the 31st October, 1896, subject to the approval of Parliament; and the necessary provision has been made on the estimates for payments due to the end of our financial year, 30th June, 1896.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON,
Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 12.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 28th November, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 19th instant, notifying that provision has been made on the estimates for the current financial year for the contribution of £4,000 by your colony towards the San Francisco mail-service for the year begun the first *idem*, and to thank you for the notification.

I have, &c.,

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 13.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 2nd April, 1896.

SIR,—

I have to direct your attention to the late arrival of the "Monowai" at San Francisco and at Auckland on the round voyage completed last Friday. The steamer was fifty hours late in reaching San Francisco and sixteen hours in arriving at Auckland, which, I am advised, was largely due to the incompetency of the crew, especially the firemen.

I understand that the shipping of such a crew was the outcome of some labour trouble at Sydney; but, nevertheless, it is a matter of more than ordinary regret that a contract mail-steamer should go to sea with a crew which not only contributed directly to the late delivery of the mails at both ends, besides penalising the company, but discredited the good name of the service as well. I trust you will see that a really competent crew is engaged for the next voyage.

I have, &c.,

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company of
New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 14.

The ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY,
General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 15th April, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 2nd instant.

The long voyage of the "Monowai" was a great disappointment to us, and we are taking such steps as we can against a repetition of it. The delay was caused by bad weather, and was to some extent in consequence of the firemen being unused to working in the hot weather met with in the tropics. The "Monowai," which is deservedly a very popular boat with passengers, has to be run at top speed to keep time. If the Government could see their way to fix a reasonable sum as subsidy, so that it would not be as now an uncertain amount, and also give some permanence to the line, we would gladly build a boat with plenty of reserve power that would give prestige to the service.

I have, &c.,

E. P. HOUGHTON,
Acting General Manager.

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

No. 15.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union
Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 30th April, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th instant, in reference to the late arrival at San Francisco and Auckland of the s.s. "Monowai" on her last voyage. The letter was duly laid before the Postmaster-General, who desires me to say that the question of further subsidising, and extending the contract term of, the San Francisco mail-service will be referred to Cabinet, and you will be informed of the result in due course.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Acting General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 16.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam
Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 13th May, 1896.

SIR,—

Since I wrote to you on the 2nd ultimo, the "Monowai" has again arrived two days late at San Francisco—on the 9th instant, instead of the 7th.

I have no report of the causes of the late arrival, but there is no reason to suppose that they are other than those which have hitherto operated, of which the principal, no doubt, is that the vessel itself is not equal to the requirements of the service. It is incumbent upon your company to improve the regularity of the service, which has certainly suffered since the "Monowai" was re-employed, and I hope to have your assurance that steps will at once be taken in that direction.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 17.

The ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY,
General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 20th May, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 13th instant, and regret that you have again to call our attention to the long voyage of the "Monowai" to San Francisco.

We are very much disappointed that she did not arrive at her destination up to time, and can only presume she again met with bad weather on the way. We gave special instructions to see that she should be supplied with the best quality of coals in Sydney, but unfortunately, owing to the strike at Newcastle, we were only able to get a second-class coal, the bulk of which was small, which does not possess such good steam-producing qualities. On the vessel's return, however, we shall make further inquiry into the matter, but regret that meantime this is the only explanation we can offer.

I have, &c.,

E. P. HOUGHTON,
Acting General Manager.

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

No. 18.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 23rd May, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of the 30th ultimo, I am directed by the Hon. the Postmaster-General to inform you that the question of further subsidising, and extending the contract term of, the San Francisco mail-service has been submitted to Cabinet, which has decided that no change is to be made in the existing arrangements.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company of
New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 19.

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

San Francisco, California, 24th July, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report that advices have been received from New York to the effect that the outward colonial mails from Great Britain reached New York by the Cunard steamer "Campania" on Friday, the 19th instant, and were forwarded that day by the express train for the Pacific Coast, due to arrive here on Wednesday morning. On receipt of this information I at once communicated with Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Bros. to ascertain if it were possible to accelerate the departure of the R.M.S. "Alameda" now in this port. From the fact, however, that they have given wide notification by advertisement in the Eastern States and United Kingdom of the hour and date of departure from San Francisco they were unable to see their way clear to make a departure prior to the advertised day and hour. I therefore impressed upon them the necessity of instructing the master of the R.M.S. "Alameda" to use all possible expedition on the voyage, so that, if possible, the colonies might receive some benefit from the twenty-four hours saved in the transit to this city. This request they agreed to grant, and I think it may be anticipated that the mails will be delivered in Auckland on Wednesday prior to the due contract date.

Trusting my actions in this matter will meet with your approval, and that you will instruct me fully as to whether any other arrangements can be made in connection with the probable earlier arrivals during the summer months.

I have, &c.,

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

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

No. 20.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand, San Francisco.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 5th September, 1895.

SIR,—

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, of the 24th July last, advising me of the efforts made by you in endeavouring to accelerate the despatch of the outward San Francisco mails by the R.M.S. "Alameda," and to inform you, in reply, that the vessel arrived at Auckland one day before contract time.

Yours, &c.,

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

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 21.

The RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

San Francisco, 18th September, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to report that the R.M.S. "Monowai," conveying the homeward colonial mails, reached this port late on the afternoon of Friday, the 30th August, and by considerable despatch the postal authorities were enabled to catch the afternoon express leaving at 6 o'clock that evening; the mails reaching New York on the following Wednesday morning, and succeeding in making a connection with the steamer "St. Louis" for Southampton. This vessel, having been reported passing Land's End late on the 11th instant, would probably make the London connection on the contract date. The Irish portion of these mails was despatched by the White Star Line from New York on the 4th instant, arriving at Queenstown on the 10th.

As pointed out, the protracted voyages made by the "Monowai" cause some embarrassment at this end, as it is only by exceptionally favourable circumstances that they have been enabled to catch the Wednesday despatch from New York. As the "Monowai" on this occasion did not make any stay at Honolulu, it probably would not have landed the mails in London until arrival of the boats leaving New York on the 7th September had the ordinary time been given at Honolulu.

On arrival of the "Monowai" with reports of cholera at Honolulu I deemed it wise, after consultation with the Mail Agent, to add the words "Cholera, Honolulu" to the ordinary cable announcing the "Monowai's" arrival, so as to enable the Government to take such steps as they might deem wise regarding instructions to the following boats to call at that infected port. Since that date cable advices have been received of the arrival of the "Mariposa" at Auckland, reporting that the Honolulu epidemic was simply caused by fish poison. Later advices, however, have contradicted this report, and it has now been fully established that cholera in a malignant form is raging at Honolulu. As, however, these reports have undoubtedly informed you of this contradiction, I have not deemed it necessary to incur the expense of additional cables.

Trusting that my action in this matter may be approved,

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

W. Gray, Esq.,

Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 22.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 11th December, 1895.

I have the honour to report that a fast express train from the Atlantic sea-board to San Francisco has lately been inaugurated, which has reduced the time occupied between New York and this city to a little over four days, arriving here at 8.45 p.m. instead of 10.45 a.m. the following day. In order to secure the benefit of the faster service for the transmission of the New Zealand outward mails I deemed it advisable to communicate with the Foreign Mail Department at Washington. A copy of my communication, and the reply thereto, is herewith enclosed for your information. I also interviewed Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company in reference to the earlier despatch of the contract steamers from this port. These gentlemen seem to be of the opinion that a despatch from this port on Thursday at 9 a.m. or 10 a.m. should be satisfactory. But I am of the opinion that a departure at, say, midnight of Wednesday would be more satisfactory. A departure at that hour would be quite feasible and in accordance with the custom prevailing during a considerable portion of the period during which the Pacific Mail Company were the contractors. I do not see why the colonies should not reap the full benefit of the time gained by the increased speed of the overland transit. The change in the hour or even day of the departure in this case will not in any measure affect European or Eastern United States despatches.

I should be pleased to be placed in possession of your views upon this subject at an early moment. The continuance of the special express referred to, however, is not at present assured beyond the continuance of the winter season.

Trusting my actions as outlined above may meet with your approval,

I have, &c.,

W. Gray, Esq.,

Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

Enclosure 1 in No. 22.

The RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, D.C.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 16th November, 1895.

I have the honour to direct your attention to an announcement in the Press that it is contemplated initiating a fast express train, on and after the 25th instant, which will make the through journey from New York to San Francisco in four days, the route chosen being by the New York Central and Hudson River, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, the Chicago and North-Western, the Union Pacific, and the Central Pacific Railroads. I am informed by the Southern Pacific Railroad of this city that this fast express is assured during the winter season, and, further, that no arrangements have yet been made whereby the United States mails are to be carried upon these trains. I would therefore like to ascertain whether the United States postal authorities propose to make arrangements for eastern connections, in order that this fast express can be utilised to the advantage of the Australian-British mails in transit from the United Kingdom to the colonies.

As the subsidy to the Canadian mail route is now under consideration of the New Zealand Parliament, with prospects of favourable consideration, I am extremely anxious to secure the advantages of any acceleration of speed in transit, in order to demonstrate the superiority of the American route. Your kind and early consideration of this matter will be esteemed, as some change may be rendered necessary in the departure of the connecting steamer from this port.

I have, &c.,

N. M. Brooks, Esq.,

Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington, D.C.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

Enclosure 2 in No. 22.

The SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, to the RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

Post Office Department, Office of Foreign Mails, Washington, D.C.,
30th November, 1895.

SIR,—

Referring to your letter of the 16th instant, asking to be advised whether this department contemplates making arrangements to utilise the fast express train which went into service on the 25th instant from New York to San Francisco, for forwarding across the continent the closed mails for the Australian Colonies received at New York from Great Britain, I have the honour to inform you that the train referred to leaves New York at 1 p.m., and is provided with the necessary equipment for the transmission of all correspondence for San Francisco (including British-Australian closed mails), and that all of said correspondence and mails available for despatch at the hour named are required to be forwarded by the train in question.

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

I am, &c.,
N. M. BROOKS,
Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

No 23.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 20th December, 1895.

Sir,—

I have the honour to enclose copy of a telegram [not printed], which appeared in the San Francisco *Morning Call* on the 13th ultimo, relative to an acceleration of the train-service between Chicago and San Francisco. In reporting on the matter the Resident Agent for the colony in San Francisco states that at present it is only intended to make the change during the winter months. As, however, this is the season during which it is most desirable to make close connection with the mail-steamers, advantage should, if possible, be taken of the saving of time effected by the new service. You will observe that the British mails for the colonies will now arrive at San Francisco on Wednesday at 8.45 p.m., and no doubt arrangements could be made for the steamers to leave immediately thereafter. I shall therefore be obliged if you will communicate with Messrs. Spreckels with the view of having Wednesday substituted for Thursday as the sailing-day whenever the arrival of the mails will render this possible.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

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

No. 24.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand, San Francisco.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 20th December, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter, of the 14th ultimo, relative to the announcement of an accelerated train-service from Chicago to San Francisco, and the effect of the saving of time on the movements of the mail-steamers to New Zealand. [Mr. Smith's letter of the 14th November, reporting the proposal to start the accelerated service, not printed. See his later one of 11th December, No. 22, announcing the service as established.]

If the proposed fast train-service can be relied upon arrangements should be made for the mail-steamers to leave on Thursday morning, and the change advertised. Indeed, if it is considered certain that the connection could always be made on the Wednesday that day should be substituted for Thursday as the sailing-day. Should the Wednesday departure be found practicable, you will perhaps be good enough to notify the change to the Washington Post Office, which will, of course, advise the New York and San Francisco Post Offices. I have written the Union Steam Ship Company, asking that arrangements be made with the Messrs. Spreckels for the Wednesday departure, if this should be found practicable.

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

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

No. 25.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 26th December, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 20th instant suggesting that, in view of the acceleration of the train-service between Chicago and San Francisco, the sailing date of the steamers from San Francisco for Auckland should be made Wednesday

instead of Thursday, as at present. By the outgoing mail I sent a copy of your letter to Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers, and I am sure that if your suggestion can be acted upon they will view it favourably; but, of course, they, being on the spot, are in a better position than we are to say whether or not it would be advisable to adopt the change.

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

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Managing Director.

No. 26.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 9th January, 1896.

Reverting to my communication of the 11th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, as a result of correspondence with Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers, agents for the contractors in this city, I have obtained their consent to despatch the contract steamer conveying the outward British and United States mails from this port at midnight upon such date as the final instalment of mail shall arrive here upon Wednesday evening. Since then, however, I have ascertained, by telegraphic communication with the New York agents of the Cunard Steam Ship Company (whose vessels usually convey the outward mails across the Atlantic), that the R.M.S. "Aurania" is appointed to leave Liverpool upon the dates arranged for the despatch of the colonial mails from that port—up to and including the 16th May, 1896. This steamer being a notoriously slow vessel I have not deemed it necessary to press for any alteration in the advertised dates of departure from this port, as, under these circumstances, it is extremely improbable that even with the acceleration of speed of the overland transit the final instalment of through mails will be received before Thursday evening.

It is much to be regretted that the action of the Cunard Company, in arranging their winter time-table so as to cause the "Umbria" to convey the Australian mails, should deprive us of the advantage of the increased speed in overland carriage.

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

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

No. 27.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 10th January, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to your communication of the 20th ultimo, regarding the acceleration of the train-service in America probably permitting the mail-steamers to leave San Francisco for Auckland a day earlier than at present, I enclose for your information copy of a letter received from Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers by this mail bearing upon the same subject.

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

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Managing Director.

Enclosure in No. 27.

The J. D. SPRECKELS and BROTHERS COMPANY, San Francisco, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

DEAR SIR,—

San Francisco, 9th December, 1895.

Our telegraphic advices of the steamer bringing Australian mails for despatch by the s.s. "Monowai" were received this morning, and read as follows: First one from Fire Island, to the effect that the s.s. "Etruria" south of Fire Island at 8.55 p.m., Saturday, 7th December. Later message, dated 11 p.m.: "Etruria's" mails will reach wharf about 1.30 a.m., Sunday, 8th December." The Post Office advised us that the mails were despatched from New York at 9.30 yesterday morning, Sunday, 8th December, which, according to the new schedule of train service, will bring the mails here on the evening of the 12th, at 8.45; we accordingly look for the sailing of the "Monowai" between 8.45 p.m. and midnight on the 12th. Were it not for this recently expedited train-service the mails would not have arrived here before Friday morning, the 13th, and the "Monowai's" hour of sailing would be 2 p.m.

We notice by the sailing of the Cunard line that the "Etruria" will be on the course to bring the next Australian mail for despatch by the s.s. "Alameda," and in February it will be the "Umbria," and in March probably the "Umbria" again. But no steamer is advertised for the sailing from Liverpool, 22nd February. In event the "Campania" and "Lucania" are returned to this course, as was the case last year, it is more than likely that Wednesday will be a possible sailing-day from here, as intimated to you some time ago; that is, if the present running overland train is continued. For instance, when the steamer arrives in New York too late for the despatch by the

evening train, and the mail is despatched on the morning train ("Lucania" and "Campania" generally arrive in New York before midnight on Friday), the departure from here will be Wednesday, but should the mail arrive in time for the Friday evening's train from New York, which was the case once this year, and the mail arrive here on Wednesday, a day ahead of time, the time of departure may be made 2 p.m. on Wednesday. If the overland train is continued, as is probable, it will be well to calculate on this change, in event the "Campania" and "Lucania" are returned to the course. By the "Etruria" and "Umbria" bringing the mails we can hardly look for the Wednesday day of departure from here.

Yours, &c.,

J. D. SPRECKELS AND BROTHERS COMPANY,

Per L. F. COCKROFT.

P.S.—A further delay of six hours put the sailing off until Friday at 9 a.m.

Mr. James Mills, Managing Director,

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 28.

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

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 23rd January, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th December last and enclosures, advising me of the acceleration of the train-service between the Atlantic sea-board and San Francisco, and informing me of the action taken by you in the direction of changing the sailing date of the steamers from your port to the Wednesday instead of the Thursday.

In reply, I beg to inform you that the Postmaster-General desires that every advantage should be taken of the accelerated train-service, and that, if practicable, Wednesday should be substituted for Thursday as the sailing-day, as suggested. My letter of the 20th *idem*, in reply to yours of the 14th November, will have informed you that I had written to the Union Steam Ship Company, asking that arrangements might be made with Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers Company for a Wednesday departure of the steamers from San Francisco, and I now enclose copy of their reply, and copy of letter from Messrs. Spreckels to the Union Steam Ship Company on the same subject. From these you will gather that the contractors are quite willing to adopt Wednesday as a sailing-day. Mr. Mills, managing director of the Union Steam Ship Company, is a passenger by the "Monowai," and I have taken the opportunity to ask him to arrange with Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers Company to change the sailing-day to the Wednesday if it is still reasonably certain that the accelerated train-service will be continued, and that the London mails will continue to be despatched by the fastest steamers on the Atlantic line.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

No. 29.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 24th January, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, covering one received from Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers Company regarding the proposed alteration in the sailing-day of the mail-steamers from San Francisco to Auckland.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

No. 30.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 5th February, 1896.

I have the honour to enclose herewith copy of a letter, of the 9th ultimo, from the Resident Agent for New Zealand in San Francisco, in reference to the despatch of the colonial mails from San Francisco.

You will observe that the selection by the British Post Office of the "Aurania" and the "Umbria" for the transport of the New Zealand mails to New York is likely not only to delay the mails, but also to neutralise the advantages which are secured by the acceleration of the train running between New York and San Francisco, representing a gain of twelve hours in the overland transit. I shall therefore be glad if you will represent to the London Post Office the propriety of arranging for the despatch of the colonial mails to New York by the swiftest vessels, such as the "Campania" and the "Lucania."

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

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.

No. 35.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 10th March, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to your favour of the 20th December on the subject of an accelerated train-service between Chicago and San Francisco, as mentioned at the time, we passed on a copy of your remarks to Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company, and by the last mail we received their reply, as follows: "Mail-service: We note the suggestion of the Secretary of the General Post Office that the day of sailing from here be changed to Wednesday. The same suggestion was made to us by the Resident Agent for New Zealand here. We talked over the matter with him, but nothing was done, for the reason that we found that the mails were not likely to get here before Thursday, as they are now carried across the Atlantic by a slower steamer, the 'Umbria,' in consequence of which they have not reached here until Friday, this month or last; besides which, we understand that the accelerated train-service will only continue during the winter months. Of course, if it should be continued longer, and quicker time should be made across the Atlantic, we will take up the matter again, but at present we do not consider it advisable to make any change in the schedule." From which you will gather that they do not consider it advisable meantime to make any change in the sailing-day from San Francisco.

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

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Acting General Manager.

No. 36.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 19th March, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing the reply of the J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company to the representations which you conveyed to them on my letter of the 20th December last, in the matter of an accelerated train-service between Chicago and San Francisco. I notice that the Messrs. Spreckels deprecate any change from the present day of sailing from San Francisco.

Since I wrote you the Agent-General has been also written to, and asked again to represent to the London Post Office the disabilities attached to the use of the slower class of steamers for the conveyance of the Colonial mails to New York; and I hope it may yet be possible, as a result of the Agent-General's action, to announce that the mails will leave San Francisco a day earlier than at present.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

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

No. 37.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 31st March, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 5th of February, referring to the midnight despatch of mail-steamers from this port when necessary, and further informing me that representations had been made to the London Post Office, through the Agent-General, regarding the desirability of the colonial mails being despatched by the fastest steamer of the week. In this connection I would report that the outward mails *ex* "Aurania" passed Chicago yesterday morning, and should arrive at 8.45 p.m. of Thursday. I have therefore requested Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers to hold the "Alameda" in readiness to proceed immediately upon receipt of the mails, and I anticipate her departure at midnight on Thursday.

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

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

No. 38.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 31st March, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 6th February, 1896, stating that it had been rumoured that the January mails from here did not receive the utmost despatch at New York upon their arrival from Europe. In reply, I would state that from inquiries made I gather that the mails in question did not arrive at the wharf at New York until past 1 p.m. of the 5th of January, and as the fast express leaves promptly to the minute it was impossible to catch the 1 o'clock despatch. I would mention that the railway dépôt of the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad is about one hour's journey from the steamship dock. I shall endeavour to keep you informed of all cases where any delay is caused to the transit of through mails either by land or sea.

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

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

No. 39.

The ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY,
General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 1st April, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 19th ultimo, regarding the suggested alteration in the sailing-date of the mail-steamers from San Francisco, and note that the Agent-General has been written to to represent to the London Post Office the disabilities attaching to the use of the slower class of steamers for the conveyance of the colonial mails to New York. A copy of your letter has been forwarded to Messrs. Spreckels for their information.

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

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Acting General Manager.

No. 40.

The ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY,
General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 14th April, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring again to your favour of the 19th ultimo, *re* the possibility of making an alteration in the sailing-day of the mail-steamers from San Francisco, the following remarks made by Messrs. Spreckels in their last letter may be of interest to you: "From what we wrote you under this heading ('Mail-service') by the last mail you will have learned that there does not seem to be any prospect of our being able at present to despatch the steamer earlier than Thursday, and we have again, for the third time in succession, to report the mails a day late, the 'Umbria' having only reached New York on Sunday, which makes it Friday morning before the mails could reach here, and we have just learned that they will not arrive until Friday evening. From this you will see that if the mails continue to come forward by the 'Umbria' there will be little probability of our being able to despatch the steamer even on the present schedule date."

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

Yours, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Acting General Manager.

No. 41.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
16th April, 1896.

SIR,—

In accordance with the instructions contained in your letter of the 5th February, I had an interview with the Secretary to the Imperial Post Office, and urged upon him the importance of arranging for the despatch of the San Francisco colonial mails from London to New York by the swiftest steamers.

The Secretary recognised the twofold advantage which would result by the mails reaching New York in as short a time as possible, and promised to at once communicate with Sir John Burns, the Managing Director of the Cunard line, and represent the case to him, and he felt sure that, so far as it could possibly be done, Sir John would endeavour to meet the wishes expressed by the Government.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. P. REEVES.

No. 42.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
29th April, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of the 16th instant, I beg herewith to transmit copy of letter which I have received from the London General Post Office, by which it will be seen that the Cunard Company have stated that it will not be possible at present to transfer the "Campania" or "Lucania" to other Saturdays than those indicated in the company's sailing-list for the current year.

You will observe that Mr. Buxton Forman states that the "Aurania," which is specially referred to by Mr. Stephenson Smith, has not carried the New Zealand mails for more than a year.

I have written to Mr. Smith, giving him the information contained in Mr. Buxton Forman's letter, and informing him that he has apparently been misinformed as regards the "Aurania."

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure in No. 42.

The ASSISTANT-SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

DEAR SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 24th April, 1896.

With reference to the conversation which took place in Mr. Walpole's room when you called here on the 16th instant, I cannot but think that some misunderstanding must exist in regard to the steamers by which the mails from this country for New Zealand are carried to New York.

The "Aurania," the steamer to whose performance you particularly took exception, is not, I find, one of those which carry the mails for New Zealand, and has not done so for more than a year. These mails appear to be carried by the "Etruria" and "Umbria," both of which take a day less than the "Aurania" in getting to New York.

Nevertheless, I wrote to Sir John Burns on the day of your visit, calling his particular attention to the advantages of sending these mails by the "Campania" and "Lucania," and inquiring whether a change in that sense could be made. I have received a reply, from which it appears that the sailings of the steamers are fixed early in the spring for each Saturday during the year, and are arranged with great care and deliberation according to the exigencies of trade; that it would not be possible at present to transfer the "Campania" or "Lucania" to other Saturdays than those indicated in the company's sailing-list for the current year; but that it will no doubt happen in some future seasons, as it has happened in the past, that those two steamers will be despatched to take the New Zealand mails.

From the following table, which gives the average length of voyage from Queenstown to New York during 1895 for each of the five steamers mentioned, and also the shortest voyage, you will see that there is less difference between the performance of the "Campania" and "Lucania," and that of the "Etruria" and "Umbria," than there is between that of the two last-named steamers and that of the "Aurania":—

Name of Steamer.	Average Length of Voyage.	Shortest Period. occupied.
	D. h. m.	D. h. m.
"Lucania"	5 19 52	5 14 10
"Campania"	5 23 52	5 12 55
"Etruria"	6 11 37	6 4 3
"Umbria"	6 17 48	6 4 58
"Aurania"	7 12 58	7 6 10

The Hon. Wm. Pember Reeves,
Agent-General for New Zealand.

Believe me, &c.,
H. BUXTON FORMAN.

No. 43.

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

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 1st May, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st March last, and note your remarks in reference to the circumstances attending the transport by the slow train from New York in January last of the English mails for this colony sent *via* San Francisco.

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

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

No. 44.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 23rd May, 1896.

I have the honour to report that the R.M.S. "Monowai," conveying the homeward April mails from the colony, did not reach this port until Saturday, the 9th instant, too late to connect with the steamer "Paris" from New York on the 13th, which, under ordinary circumstances, would delay the mails until departure of the "Etruria," appointed to leave New York on the 16th. Ascertaining, however, that the s.s. "Normannia," of the Hamburg-American Packet Company, would leave for Hamburg, *via* Cherbourg and Plymouth, at 10 a.m. of the 14th, I at once placed myself in telegraphic communication with the general agents of this line in New York, and prevailed upon them to extend to the New Zealand Government the courtesy of holding their vessel a sufficient time to enable the express from this city to connect. I am pleased to report that the necessary connection was made, and I am to-day advised of the arrival of the "Normannia" at Hamburg, having been reported passing Scilly Islands at 6 a.m. of the 21st, which would have landed the mails at Plymouth a few hours later, thus only causing them to suffer a loss of twenty-four hours on the through time. I enclose copy of a communication addressed by me to the New York agents of the Hamburg-American line expressing thanks for their assistance.

Trusting my action as above may be approved,

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

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

Enclosure in No. 44.

The RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the MANAGER of the HAMBURG-AMERICAN PACKET COMPANY, New York.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 16th May, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communication of the 11th instant, as well as to confirm the telegrams that have passed between us in regard to the detention of the steamship "Normannia" at your port in order to make connection with the New York Central and Hudson River Railroad express from the Pacific Coast. The courtesy of your action in making this connection again places the Government of New Zealand under an obligation to your company, which, I feel assured, will be appreciated at its true worth; and it will afford me much pleasure to direct the attention of my Government to the cheerful and liberal spirit in which the Hamburg-American Packet Company has rendered a valuable service to its interests. Again expressing my highest appreciation of your actions,

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent, New Zealand Government.

Emil Boas, Esq.,

Manager of the Hamburg-American Packet Company, New York.

No. 45.

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 25th May, 1896.

I have the honour to report for your information that I am in receipt of a communication from Mr. Kennaway, Secretary to the Department of the Agent-General in London, under date of the 29th of April, informing me that, on account of the Cunard Steamship Company having already arranged the time-table for the departure of their steamers from Liverpool, it will be impossible at present to so re-arrange the same that the "Campania" or "Lucania" can be substituted for the "Umbria" to convey the outward mails for the colonies; and, further, directing my attention to the fact that the information contained in my communication to you of the 9th of January last, stating that the "Aurania" would be used for this purpose, was erroneous.

Upon review of the information in my hands at the date of the letter referred to, I find that I have inadvertently confused the "Aurania" with the "Umbria" in the first portion of that communication, which is regretted; but the record of the voyages of the "Umbria" since then has demonstrated that the remarks then made in reference to the "Aurania" apply with equal force to the "Umbria," as her arrivals at New York have always been two or three hours too late to connect with the fast express leaving on Saturday at 4 p.m., and which reaches this city upon Wednesday evening.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

W. Gray Esq.,

Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department,
Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 46.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 3rd June, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 16th April last, informing me of the negotiations which will be undertaken by the Secretary of the General Post Office, London, with a view to arranging for the despatch of the Colonial mails *via* San Francisco from the United Kingdom to New York by the swiftest steamers.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves,
Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 47.

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

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 11th June, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to your letter of the 9th January last, acknowledged on the 5th February, in reference to the selection by the British Post Office of the "Aurania" and "Umbria" for the transport of the New Zealand mails to New York, I have the honour to inform you that the matter has been represented by the Agent-General for this colony in London to the British Post Office, and that, from the reply received, there seems to be some misunderstanding about the "Aurania."

You would learn from the Hon. Mr. Reeves's letter that the "Aurania" had not carried the New Zealand mails for more than a year, and that the difference between the performances of the "Campania" and "Lucania" and those of the "Etruria" and "Umbria" are not so marked as the difference between the performances of the last-named steamers and the "Aurania."

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

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

No. 48.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the ACTING GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 12th June, 1896.

SIR,—

Adverting to your letter of the 10th March last, in which you favoured me with an extract from Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company's letter in reference to change of the day of sailing from San Francisco, which was considered impracticable owing to the New Zealand mails being despatched by the "Umbria," and my reply of the 19th *idem*, I have the honour to inform you that the Agent-General for New Zealand in London represented the matter to the London Post Office, which in its turn communicated with the Cunard Company, calling particular attention to the advantages of sending the New Zealand mails by the "Campania" and "Lucania," and inquiring whether a change in that sense could be made. The Cunard Company replied to the effect that the sailings of the steamers were fixed early in the spring for each Saturday during the year, and were arranged with great care and deliberation according to the exigencies of trade; that it would not be possible at present to transfer the "Campania" or "Lucania" to other Saturdays than those indicated in the company's sailing-list for the current year; but that it would no doubt happen in some future seasons, as it had happened in the past, that those two steamers would be despatched so as to take the New Zealand mails.

From the following copy of a table received by the Agent-General from the London Post Office, giving the average length of voyages from Queenstown to New York during 1895 for the five steamers performing the service, and also showing the length of the shortest voyage, it will be seen that there is less difference between the performances of the "Campania" and "Lucania" and that of the "Etruria" and "Umbria" than there is between that of the two last-named steamers and that of the "Aurania":—[For table, see Enclosure in No. 42.]

It was pointed out by the London Post Office that the "Aurania" had not carried the New Zealand mails for more than a year, so that it would appear a misunderstanding exists in San Francisco in regard to her time-table dates. It is to be regretted that no change appears possible for the present.

The Acting General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 49.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Memorandum.)

Premier's Office, Wellington, 19th June, 1896.

I HAVE to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th April last, transmitting copy of letter received from the London General Post Office in reference to the Atlantic transit of the colonial mails. I note that the Cunard Company state that it will not be possible at present to transfer the "Campania" or "Lucania" to other Saturdays than those indicated in the company's sailing-list for the current year; and also that you have written to Mr. Stephenson Smith in the matter.

R. J. SEDDON.

No. 50.

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

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 23rd June, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd ultimo, reporting the late arrival of the "Monowai" at San Francisco, and advising that you were successful in having the British mails conveyed from New York by the Hamburg-American Packet Company's steamship "Normannia," thus enabling them to arrive at Plymouth only twenty-four hours behind time. The Hon. the Postmaster-General is much gratified at the consideration shown by the Hamburg-American Packet Company in detaining its vessel until the arrival of the mails at New York, and he approves of the acknowledgment made by you of their courtesy.

I have, &c.,

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

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 51.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 3rd July, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of 12th ultimo, and have to thank you for the information you give respecting the sailings of the steamers carrying the mails across the Atlantic. I am passing on to Messrs. Spreckels by this mail a copy of your remarks, and, with you, regret that no change appears possible in the sailing-date from San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

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

T. W. WHITSON,

For Acting General Manager.

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