

Boston does not as a rule exceed six hours, and the trains run at frequent intervals. The delay occasioned by registration should not, I would submit, cause more than, at most, twenty-four hours' delay.

I have, &c.,

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington. H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

Enclosure 1 in No. 107.

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.,
23rd February, 1898.

SIR,—

Referring to my reply, under date the 19th ultimo, to your letter of the 13th ultimo, advising this department that for the future the New Zealand contract mail-steamers would leave San Francisco on Wednesdays instead of Thursdays, as announced in the *pro formâ* time-tables of the service, I have to inform you that attention has been called to the circumstance that if the steamers sail on Wednesday their stay at San Francisco will be limited to fourteen days. That period will allow correspondents at Boston and other places east of New York to send by the same steamer replies to letters received by that steamer only in case the reply is mailed twenty-four hours after the letter is received by them, and provided the letter and reply are sent in the ordinary unregistered mail. If the correspondence is transmitted under registration it is hardly possible that a reply could reach San Francisco in time for despatch upon the return voyage of the steamer.

The delay involved in the new arrangement will be a serious inconvenience to persons in our eastern cities having important business relations in the Australian Colonies involving valuable correspondence which prudence requires to be sent under registration; and I have to request, therefore, that you will bring the matter to the attention of your Government, with a view to maintain, if possible, the original schedule, under which the day of sailing from San Francisco was fixed for Thursday.

I am, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,
Superintendent of Foreign Mails.
H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,
Resident Agent of the New Zealand Government, San Francisco, California.

Enclosure 2 in No. 107.

The RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington.

Resident Agency of the New Zealand Government, San Francisco,
1st March, 1898.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 23rd ultimo, advising me that the change in the day of the departure of the contract steamer conveying the Australian mails from this port will operate adversely to the interests of eastern merchants, inasmuch as insufficient time will be given them to reply to communications by the same mail as they are received by. In reply, I have the honour to inform you that, while I have not the power to make any change in the arrangements lately perfected, yet I will represent the matter to my Government, and hope that some rearrangement of the schedule may be possible whereby a longer time can be given for reply to eastern correspondents.

I would, however, point out that for the next two months at least it is improbable that the Wednesday departure will be effected on account of the inclement weather prevailing on the Atlantic at this season.

I have, &c.,

N. M. Brooks, Esq.,
Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington, D.C. H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

No. 108.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 6th April, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 1st ultimo, enclosing copy of correspondence with the Superintendent of Foreign Mails at Washington on the subject of change of sailing-day of the mail-steamers from San Francisco for Auckland.

Under the present schedule the time given for replies from New York would be four days, which is considered sufficient. The time, however, for Boston would only be about two days. The Superintendent of Foreign Mails has communicated direct with this office on the question [see No. 181], and a reply will be sent in a similar manner. No change is likely to be made during the currency of the existing contract, but it is intended to give the matter consideration when the new time-table is being framed.

I have, &c.,

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