

No. 17.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

SIR,— Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W., 14th December, 1898.

Referring to my letter of the 16th November last [see No. 238], I beg to transmit herewith copy of correspondence with Messrs. R. W. Cameron and Co., of New York, relative to the forwarding of the mails from New York, by which it will be seen that that firm have, in accordance with my request, forwarded direct to the Postmaster-General at Wellington information respecting the despatch of the principal steamers taking mails from New York to this country.

This information appears to show that, as suggested in my letter of the 16th November, [see No. 238], and also in my cablegram of the 3rd instant [see No. 246], it would be desirable to despatch the Vancouver mails so that they may arrive in New York in time to be forwarded by one of the steamers of the American line.

You will no doubt observe that, with this object in view, it is important, affecting as it does both the San Francisco and Vancouver mails, that arrangements, if possible, be made with the managers of the railway over which the mails are carried to New York that the mail-train should arrive at New York some three hours earlier.

I am writing to Messrs. Cameron and Co., requesting them to make inquiries on this point for the purpose of ascertaining with whom the power to make such an arrangement rests, as it is obvious that it is at that point that delay is, under the present arrangements, likely to take place.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 17.

The SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL to Messrs. R. W. CAMERON AND Co., New York.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
16th November, 1898.

DEAR SIR,—

I am directed by the Agent-General to request you to obtain and forward direct to the Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington, New Zealand, the latest time-tables of the principal steamship lines from New York to this country, including the Cunard, White Star, American ("St. Louis," "St. Paul," &c.), German Lloyds, &c.

The New Zealand postal authorities desire to have this information so that they can fix the dates of the departure of the mails to this country so that they may reach New York in time to catch the swifter outgoing steamers. It would therefore be desirable if, in the tables forwarded, some indication were given as to the average length of voyage of the steamer specified therein.

The Agent-General feels assured, as you have already informed him, that the New York postal authorities use every effort to despatch the New Zealand mails by the earliest and swiftest steamers; and in reference thereto he would be much obliged if you could ascertain for his information whether they have any power or control in fixing the dates at which these steamers leave New York.

I need scarcely add that the Agent-General will be glad to meet any charges which you may think right to make in making these inquiries.

I am, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY.

Messrs. R. W. Cameron and Co., South William Street, New York.

Enclosure 2 in No. 17.

MESSRS. R. W. CAMERON AND Co. to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

New York, 1st December, 1898.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 16th ultimo, requesting us to obtain and forward direct to the Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington, New Zealand, the latest time-tables of the principal steamship lines from New York to Great Britain. We note also that the New Zealand postal authorities desire to have this information so that they can fix the departures of the mails to this country so that they may reach New York to meet the swifter outgoing steamers. In regard to the question as to whether the postal authorities in New York have any power or control in fixing the dates at which steamers leave New York, we would say that they have not, as you will see by the enclosed letter from the New York Post Office, a copy of which we are sending to the Postmaster-General at Wellington.

We are, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand,
Westminster Chambers, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

R. W. CAMERON AND Co.

[For Enclosures 3 and 4 in No. 17, see No. 16 and enclosure therein.]

No. 18.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 14th December, 1898.

DEAR SIR,—

In view of the evident desire for an improved connection between the colonies and America, as indicated by the comments of members during the mail debate last session, and also