

2. His Excellency trusts that if your Government decides that it is not advisable that the vessels should call both at Apia and at Suva you may see fit to give Suva the preference, for the reasons that it is a British port with a good harbour, on which a large expenditure has already been incurred, and a further outlay of some £3,000 is to be made this year in improving the wharf-accommodation so as to enable steamers drawing up to 27 ft. to lie alongside at low water; that it is desirable to encourage the trade between New Zealand and Fiji; and that the impetus which should be given to trade by the vessels in question calling at Suva would be of advantage to New Zealand as well as to this colony. It may be added as a minor consideration that Fiji offers some attraction to tourists, and that by the end of this year some thirteen miles of metalled road now in course of construction in the vicinity of Suva, as also a service of steam-launches running daily to various points of interest, will be available for their benefit.

3. The Governor regrets that Fiji is not in a position to supplement the subsidy paid to the company, or to bear a share of it; but, provided the vessels will carry our mails, they will be exempted from the payment of all wharfage-, harbour-, pilotage-, and light-dues in Suva.

I have, &c.,

W. L. ALLARDYCE,
Assistant Colonial Secretary.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 38.

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

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 30th January, 1899.

PLEASE wire definitely *re* change Fr'isco running before you leave.

No. 39.

The Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington, to the Hon. the PREMIER, Sydney.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 31st January, 1899.

Fr'isco service: Railway journey from New York to San Francisco shortened by thirteen hours, and to New York by five hours. Steamers should now be able to leave Fr'isco regularly on advertised day, and a two-days later departure from the colonies, with an assured connection with the Wednesday fast boats of the American line from New York, made practicable. The change at this end will effect great improvement in service by reducing through time to London by two days. Union Company is prepared to make the change. I shall be glad if you will consider and agree to proposal to start two days later from this end, which might commence in March next.

No. 40.

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

(Telegram.)

Auckland, 31st January, 1899.

WROTE you yesterday [not printed] *re* proposed alteration Fr'isco dates. Agreeable make change with March steamer if you wish experiment tried. Do not forget, however, that our nineteen days does not expire until evening of the day of arrival in San Francisco, so that you are really relying upon us arriving several hours within contract time.

No. 41.

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

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 31st January, 1899.

THANKS for telegram. Steamers leaving Auckland at 2 p.m. are due at Fr'isco at 6.11 p.m. If really necessary, no doubt departure from Auckland could be made an hour earlier.

No. 42.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 1st February, 1899.

Referring to my letter of the 19th ultimo, on the subject of the acceleration of the railway-service between New York and San Francisco, I have now the honour to inform you that negotiations for the despatch of the San Francisco mail-steamers from Auckland on the Monday instead of the Saturday are progressing satisfactorily. The contractors are agreeable to commence the change