

No. 56.

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

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 17th February, 1899.

Your telegram received yesterday. We intend to despatch Monday. Saving two days important. Sunday undesirable. Slow German steamers frequently Tuesday.

No. 57.

Messrs. R. W. CAMERON AND Co., New York, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—

New York, 17th February, 1899.

We have to acknowledge the receipt of your esteemed communication of the 19th ultimo [see No. 32], in regard to New Zealand mails *via* San Francisco and New York.

We have placed ourselves in communication with the Post Office in New York since the receipt of your letter, and are assured by both the Superintendent of Foreign Mails and Superintendent of Railway Mails that there is every prospect of the present service remaining in operation until better time can be made, of which there is some prospect, although the Government is very well satisfied with existing arrangement.

The time given by you in your communication now before us is practically correct, except that the fast mail-train leaves New York at 9.15 instead of 9 p.m., and the east-bound train reaches New York at 5.15 instead of 5.35 a.m.

We are, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

R. W. CAMERON AND Co.

No. 58.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 18th February, 1899.

SAN FRANCISCO service: Stephenson Smith states Monday departure Auckland too close for Wednesday connection New York. Disagree. What your opinion, Cameron's?

No. 59.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 20th February, 1899.

IN reply to your telegram of 18th, do not rely on mails leaving Auckland Monday catching New York Wednesday steamer.

No. 60.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 20th February, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your cable of the 14th, from which I understand that, in order to save, if possible, the delay now frequently occurring at New York awaiting steamer-connections, it is proposed to leave Auckland two days later, consequently arriving here on the Friday instead of on the Wednesday, the object being, I presume, to make a close connection with the White Star and International Navigation Companies' boats appointed to leave New York on Wednesdays.

This change will give a very small margin for delays and accidents, as, if all goes right and no delay occurs either on the Pacific voyage or on the overland carriage, the mails will arrive at New York an hour and a half before the closing of the mails for the International vessels, and three hours and a half before the closing for the White Star vessels. This, in my judgment, is too close a connection for practical working, and I fear will in winter often result in serious delay, as no steamers leave New York between Wednesdays and Saturdays. And, as also I find by the time-table issued by the North German Lloyds that the fast steamer "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse" is scheduled to leave New York on Tuesdays, connecting with our mails during March, April, May, June, and July, and the "Kaiser Friedrich" will connect in September and October, I have deemed it advisable to cable you as follows [see No. 54].

To this cable I received your reply, dated 17th February, from which it would appear that the department had concluded under any circumstances to carry the contemplated change of date of departure into effect. I fear, however, the change will not work to the best interests of the service in view of the good prospects there were of making fast through trips by the fast boats of the North German Lloyds. Our best results lately have been by their vessels when the schedule has been arranged so that we caught the "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse," and I regret that it was not considered feasible to make a Sunday departure from Auckland, as we should have then been one day ahead at the outset, and had a good chance at the same time of making the Tuesday's connection with the "Kaiser Wilhelm" at New York.

In connection with this matter, your cable does not advise any alteration of the departing dates from this port, therefore I presume these dates will remain as at present, which will reduce the time that the mail-vessel remains in this port to twelve days, which, if my presumption is correct,