

No. 116.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 22nd November, 1900.
I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of the following cables since my last advices [Nos. 33 and 111]. I have sent the following cables in reply [Nos. 34 and 112].

In respect of your evident desire to arrange a connection with the Saturday steamer from New York on the 29th December, I have succeeded in securing Messrs. Spreckels' agreement to despatch the "Alameda" from Sydney two days earlier (the 2nd December), and at the same time have obtained their consent to cable the captain of the "Alameda" to use every possible despatch in coming up this time, calculating that he can save one day on the trip, which will give a Monday's arrival at this port in place of the schedule date of the 27th (or Thursday). This, we hope, will enable us to connect at New York with the Cunard boat on the Saturday following.

I desire to bear testimony to the accommodating spirit in which Messrs. Spreckels and Brothers are attempting to meet the views of the New Zealand Government in this case, as it should be borne in mind that a departure earlier than that which they have advertised lays them open for actions for damages on the part of intending passengers. I sincerely trust this connection may be secured, but recognise that the margin for accident or delay is extremely small. I will do all that is possible in the way of getting the mails off by the Monday evening express, without which our object will be defeated.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 117.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,— Premier's Office, Wellington, 4th December, 1900.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th October last, transmitting copy of correspondence with reference to the establishing of the three-weekly mail-service *via* San Francisco.

Owing to the new steamers which are to be employed in the service between the colonies and San Francisco not being ready at the expected time, the s.s. "Alameda" and "Mariposa"—two of the steamers engaged in the former service—have to be utilised for one voyage each, and probably the first-named vessel will be required to perform a second voyage. Her departure this week has had to be put forward two days in order to assure connection with the Saturday's fast boat from New York, and the same acceleration will have to be repeated in respect of the "Mariposa's" outward trip at the end of this month.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD, for the Premier.

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

No. 118.

The SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Post Office Department, Office of Foreign Mails, Washington,
4th December, 1900.

SIR,—

I have the honour, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th October last, enclosing copy of the correspondence between the Resident Agent for New Zealand at San Francisco and the Superintendent of the United States Railway Mail-service at San Francisco, relative to the failure of the trains conveying from San Francisco the colonies' mails for Great Britain to make connection at Chicago with the trains for New York.

The Superintendent's communication explains that the failure of the trains to connect at Chicago was caused by the train arriving from San Francisco having been delayed *en route*; and I have now to add that the delay in question, as well as the failure to connect in October last, were both caused by the circumstance that extensive improvements were being made on the Union Pacific Railroad west of Cheyenne, which prevented the trains on that road from making their runs in accordance with the schedules.

Close attention is being given to the matter of the connection at Chicago of the trans-continental trains, with the result that since the 10th ultimo the connection at Chicago has been missed only once—viz., on the 20th ultimo; but, unfortunately, the train which missed connection on that date conveyed the closed mails from the colonies for Great Britain.

These failures to connect are deeply regretted by this department and cause it mortification; but every effort is being and has been made to prevent them.

I am, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS, Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.