

I am to suggest, therefore, that if practicable the revised contract shall provide that future schedules of the company be so arranged that steamers shall arrive at and depart from Auckland upon dates which will do away with the inconvenience now sustained by reason of the current schedules.

I am, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,

Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 74.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 1st July, 1902.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 30th May [No. 79, F.-6, 1902], informing me that arrangements have been concluded with Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Co. whereby the steamers of their fleet, commencing with the "Ventura" on the 27th June, will leave Auckland on Fridays instead of Saturdays, as hitherto, it being anticipated that this change will insure the connection at New York with the Cunard Steamship Company's steamers on Saturday.

I am pleased to hear of this change, and think there is a prospect of your anticipations being realised, except in cases of extremely rigorous weather being experienced either on land or sea.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 75.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 3rd September, 1902.

Your letter of the 6th August [not printed] duly to hand. I am pleased to note that Messrs. Spreckels have signed the contract with seventy-two hours' detention at this end when necessary. . . . The mails per "Ventura," which missed connection at Chicago on the eastward trip, finally arrived at Southampton per "Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse" on the 18th August, two days late. I have not yet been informed as to the exact cause of the misconnection, as also I am awaiting information as to whether the new 20th Century train on the Lake Shore, Chicago to New York, can be induced to take mails. If we can get this arranged it is possible to make the trip to New York in three days and twenty hours, which may be of material assistance in some cases.

The "Sonoma's" mails left New York on Saturday per "Lucania," so we may anticipate a quick trip. Even with the Friday's departure from Auckland we still have a close call for connections, and I think it would be well if Messrs. Spreckels were urged to instruct their captains to use every endeavour to arrive here in time to catch the 10 a.m. train, as it will give us nearly twelve hours' leeway to provide for train-detentions.

I expect the "Sonoma" will get away at schedule time to-morrow morning, although I am advised that two mail-bags are missing, and have telegraphed for a description thereof, as if letter-mails are included it may be necessary or advisable to hold the steamer a limited time. Please answer my question in previous letter [not printed] in respect to the time for commencement of payments to contractors in case of delay. I mean the hour after due time of arrival.

Yours, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 76.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 15th October, 1902.

I have the honour to report that, recognising the importance of having a margin of time for leeway in the overland carriage of the through mails during the approaching winter, I waited upon Messrs. Spreckels and Bros. this morning, and urged upon them the importance of so accelerating the trans-Pacific voyage from the colonies as to enable the steamers to arrive here in time to connect with the 10 a.m. express over the Southern Pacific railroad-lines. I am actuated in making this request by the fact that the last Homeward mails, as well as the present Homeward mails per s.s. "Sierra," have misconnected with the Atlantic steamer at New York, in both cases the cause being a few hours' detention (alleged) upon the Union Pacific railroad through labour troubles now being experienced upon their line. The delayed mails in this case will not, I anticipate, leave New York until to-day, which will, in all probability, cause three days' late arrival in England.