

I am pleased to inform you that Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Bros. have recognised the importance of facilitating the arrival of their steamers at this port, and assure me that instructions will be given the commanders of their vessels to make all possible effort to arrive at this port in time to connect with the 10 a.m. train on the Monday morning.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

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No. 77.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 12th November, 1902.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th ultimo, advising that, as the result of your interview with Messrs. Spreckels Bros. and Company, the contractors had agreed to give instructions to the commanders of their vessels to make every possible effort to arrive at San Francisco in time to connect with the 10 a.m. express train over the Southern Pacific railway on the due date.

I am pleased to learn that Messrs. Spreckels Bros. have expressed themselves as so willing to fall in with the suggestion made to insure prompt connection of the mails at San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq., Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

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No. 78.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 16th December, 1902.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 12th ultimo, respecting the promise of Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Bros. to instruct the masters of their steamships to make every effort to arrive at this port sufficiently early on Monday mornings to enable a connection to be made with the 10 a.m. express for the Eastern States.

I would report that, in this connection, the s.s. "Sierra" arrived here on Monday morning last at 7 a.m., and reached the dock by 9 a.m. Through the prompt action of the Postal and Post Office Railway Mail-service officials the mails succeeded in connecting with the overland express at 10 a.m., and reached New York on Friday evening, the English portion going on Saturday at 2 p.m. by the fast steamer "Kronprinz Wilhelm," and the Irish portion by the s.s. "Umbria" at 1 p.m.; which, considering the state of the weather and the season, should be considered a satisfactory inauguration of the early arrivals at this port.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent for New Zealand.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

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No. 79.

Messrs. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),

SIR,—

Auckland, 15th January, 1903.

We have the honour to write you in respect of the mails which left Auckland by the "Sierra" and arrived in London three days late, notwithstanding the fact that our steamer reached San Francisco at noon on the 6th October (due date), and that the mails were despatched from that port the same day to make connection with the "Campania," sailing at noon on the 10th October from New York. Our San Francisco office now forwards us copies of the inquiries made by the Superintendent of the Railway Mail-service, New York, and the following extract from his letter to our New York agent speaks for itself: "The investigation made shows that these mails failed to be transferred at Chicago, Illinois, to the New York and Chicago R.P.O. train No. 6. This was caused by Superintendent West not being advised of the despatch of these mails from San Francisco by the Ogden and San Francisco R.P.O. train No. 6, and no provision was made for the transfer from the Chicago and Council Bluffs R.P.O. train No. 24 to New York and Chicago R.P.O. train No. 6. These mails were forwarded through to New York City *via* New York and Chicago R.P.O. train No. 16, which accounts for the failure to make regular connection with the steamer sailing from New York on the 11th October."

Supplementing the particulars given in the foregoing extract, we may say that train No. 6 leaves Chicago at 8.30 a.m., and arrives in New York the following morning at 10 a.m.; while No. 16 leaves Chicago at 2 p.m., and arrives the following afternoon at 2.55. The Cunard Company