

No. 90.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

15th April, 1903.

SIR,—

Referring to my letter of the 16th March last, I beg to transmit herewith copy of further letter received from the Cunard Steamship Company, stating that on a recent occasion the "Etruria" was delayed for one hour in order to receive the mails coming from New Zealand *via* San Francisco.

I have replied thanking the company for this action on their part.

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY, for the Agent-General.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 90.

The SECRETARY, Cunard Steamship Company, Liverpool, to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW ZEALAND.

The Cunard Steamship Company (Limited), Secretary's Office, Liverpool,

14th April, 1903.

SIR,—

With reference to the correspondence which has passed between us in relation to the arrangements for connecting the New Zealand mails to New York with the sailings of the company's steamers, I think it well to mention for your information that the company's steamer "Etruria," which sailed from New York on the 28th ultimo, was advertised to sail from the company's wharf at 3 p.m., but, in deference to the wishes of the United States Post Office officials, the ship was delayed until 4 p.m., in order to receive the Australian and New Zealand mail, which was due at the Grand Central Station, New York, at 2.45 p.m. on that day. I mention this matter to show that the company's agents at New York do everything possible to assist in the direction indicated.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

A. P. MEARNS, Secretary.

No. 91.

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

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco,

14th May, 1903.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 14th April in regard to various short delivery of mails by the overland express from the east, as reported in your communication of the 18th of March, 1903; and herewith enclose a communication from the Superintendent of the Railway Mail-service for this division in reference thereto. A further report will probably be forthcoming later.

I feel confident that the Railway Mail-service will use every effort to minimise these irregularities in the future, but, of course, much rests with the various railroads conveying the mails from the Atlantic seaboard.

I am still in correspondence with the Railway Mail-service in an endeavour to arrange with the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern Railroad to permit our letter mails to go forward on the 20th Century (Limited) train from Chicago when that course will enable a connection to be made at New York.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 91.

The SUPERINTENDENT, Railway Mail-service, San Francisco, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND.

Post Office Department, Office of Superintendent Railway Mail-service,

Eighth Division, San Francisco, 8th May, 1903.

SIR,—

In reply to your letter of 29th April, relative to shortage of Australian mails despatched from New York City which were due to arrive at San Francisco on or about 19th February, the records of this office show the following irregularities in connection with mail due at San Francisco on Southern Pacific train number 3 of 20th February, which probably have some connection with the irregularities mentioned by you, and which may be briefly stated as follows:—

A consignment of mail despatched from New York on 15th February reached San Francisco apparently short of one bag, Dublin to New Zealand. The San Francisco office was subsequently advised by the New York office that this mail had been incorrectly billed, and that only six bags were despatched, instead of seven, as stated in the bill.

One bag, Cologne-Verviers to Apia, despatched from New York, 15th February, did not reach San Francisco with the balance of the mail despatched on the same date. This consignment of mail arrived at San Francisco on train 3, 20th February, while the missing bag for Apia arrived on train 1, due 20th February, but which arrived on the morning of 21st February.