

competent for this Department to decide whether the rates gazetted by the Commonwealth as payable to non-contract vessels override the provisions under which Postal Union rates are supposed to be paid.

I think it well to mention that the Australian States were not definitely advised until July, 1901, that they would have to make their own arrangements with Mr. Spreckels for the carriage of mails. The Victorian Postal Department was duly informed of the change on the 27th of that month, but unfortunately that letter seems to have miscarried, the Post Office continuing to remit to this Department, as was the case under the contract with the Union Steam Ship Company.

I also forward you further parliamentary papers—F.-6, 1902 and 1903—which contain correspondence relating to Messrs. Spreckels' service and earlier negotiations.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

Messrs. Burns, Philp, and Company (Limited), Managing Agents for Australia,
Oceanic Steamship Company, Sydney.

No. 15.

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

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),
Auckland, 17th October, 1904.

SIR,—

We have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your telegram of the 13th instant [not printed], advising the necessity of postponing the departure of the R.M.S. "Sierra" until Saturday last, in order to take forward the southern mail for San Francisco, which was delayed owing to railway wash-outs, and have to say that the "Sierra" left here at 8.15 a.m. on the Saturday.

We are, &c.,

HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE,

General Agents for New Zealand.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

INCIDENTS OF UNITED STATES AND ATLANTIC TRANSIT, ETC.

No. 16.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 3rd May, 1904.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communications of the 3rd [No. 51, F.-6, 1904] and 30th [not printed] March, the former requesting that you be supplied with a schedule of the running of the express trains conveying the mails across the United States both east and west, which I now enclose for your information. I would say that the dates and hours mentioned in this schedule are rarely kept to even in summer, and in winter the schedule is entirely unreliable.

The latter communication had reference to the connection at New York with the Cunard Steamship Company of the "Sierra's" mails in February. In this connection I have again to report a misconnection at New York of the "Sierra's" mails upon the present occasion, the failure being caused by the early serving of the tide at New York, necessitating the departure of the Cunard steamer before 9 a.m.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 16.

EAST-BOUND.

Time-table of Express No. 2.

| | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|------------|
| Leave San Francisco by Southern Pacific railroad at | 10 a.m., | Monday |
| Arrive Ogden at | 1 p.m., | Tuesday. |
| Arrive Omaha (Council Bluffs) by Union Pacific railroad at | 8.5 p.m., | Wednesday. |
| Arrive Chicago by Chicago and North-western railroad at | 7 a.m., | Thursday. |
| Arrive New York by New York Central and Hudson River railroad at | 9.30 a.m., | Friday. |

(This schedule is seldom, if ever, carried out.)