

No. 20.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 14th December, 1905.

OUR High Commissioner cables that it is reported three hundred bags Australian mails *via* San Francisco burnt. London Post Office, however, informs him no British mails destroyed. This cable not sufficiently clear to indicate what mails referred to. Presumably American mails on way from New York to San Francisco. Have you any information?

No. 21.

The SECRETARY, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 14th December, 1905.

YOUR wire to-day. We have no information *re* destruction mails.

No. 22.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 4th January, 1906.

Considerable changes are now being made in the train schedules this year, and in future the mails will cross the Continent at something a little over three days instead of over four as hitherto, so the Tuesday's arrivals will now unfailingly catch the Saturday's steamers, bar accidents. The mails leaving New York last Monday morning will catch the 2 p.m. Thursday departure here, or at least would if on time; but the train is reported three hours late, so the "Ventura" will probably get off by 5 p.m. instead of 2 p.m. The last mails which went forward by the "Umbria" got home on the 17th December, one day late.

As soon as I get the official memorandum of the change in the running-time under the new schedule I will forward you the information; but as it has only been two days in effect, the railroad mail-service people are not yet in receipt of the details.

Yours, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[Inc. 06/4.]

No. 23.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 5th January, 1906.

MY telegram fourteenth. Mail Agent now reports that "Overland Limited" train, which left San Francisco fifth ultimo, collided with heavy freight train at Ah Say, Wyoming, when mail-car and other vans were thrown from track and completely burnt. All United States mails were destroyed, including correspondence from Australia and New Zealand for points between Wyoming and New York State, except registered mails, which had missed despatch from San Francisco. Information not very definite, but total number of bags from Australia by "Sonoma" was one hundred and thirty-one, of which fifty-six were despatched from San Francisco fourth December with New Zealand eastern and English mails, which went through without mishap. Remaining seventy-five bags from Australia were sorted San Francisco during night fourth December, forward correspondence being amalgamated with San Francisco mail and despatched east next morning, and subsequently destroyed. Probably about fifty bags of your mail destroyed. Mail Agent could not get exact figures, as San Francisco forwarded correspondence bulked with New Zealand and Australian.

[Inc. 06/25.]

No. 24.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to all CHIEF POSTMASTERS.

(Memorandum.)

General Post Office, Wellington, 8th January, 1906.

IN connection with the San Francisco mail from Auckland of the 17th November last, of which a portion was burnt in America, please note that the mails for the following places are understood not to have been destroyed: San Francisco and California, Oregon, Washington State, Nevada, Utah, Arizona, Montana, part of Colorado.

The mails for the following places were safe, not having been sent by the train that suffered mishap: Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Illinois and Chicago City, Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts and Boston City, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Ohio, South Carolina, Tennessee, Vermont, Wisconsin, New York City, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Jersey.

The registered letters for all places in the United States escaped destruction.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

[Inc. 06/3.]