

Enclosure 2 in No. 34.

STATEMENT showing the Departures from San Francisco and the Arrivals at Auckland of the San Francisco Mail Steamers from the 4th January to the 26th August, 1906.

Vessel.	Left San Francisco.		Arrived Auckland.	
	Date. (Due 2 p.m.)	Hours late.	Date.	Hours beyond Time-table Date (5 a.m. Monday).
	1906	h. m.	1906.	h m
" Ventura "	January 4 ...	6 29	January 23 ...	22 15
" Sierra "	January 25 ...	2 22	February 12 ...	13 10
" Sonoma "	February 15 ...	1 24	March 6 ...	33 0
" Ventura "	March 8 ...	3 3	March 27 ...	30 53
" Sierra "	March 29 ...	1 28	April 16 ...	9 50
Service stopped by earthquake. Mails of 19th April sent by " Moana " from Vancouver. Voyage of 10th May missed.				
" Sonoma "	May 31... ..	4 0	June 23 ...	121 35
" Ventura "	June 21 ...	7 5	July 12 ...	85 25
" Sierra "	July 12... ..	4 12	July 30 ...	10 30
" Sonoma "	August 5 ...	62 0*	August 26 ...	149 35

* Not in original (the Mail Agent not having then reported).

No. 35.

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

Oceanic Steamship Company, American and Australian Line,

SIR,—

Auckland, 13th September, 1906.

In reply to your telegram [not printed] of this morning, we wired you that " Ventura " will leave Auckland for San Francisco on due date. The delayed arrival at this port from San Francisco was not, so Captain Hayward informs us, due to fault of machinery, but to the inefficient crew of firemen.

Owing to the abnormal demand for workmen at San Francisco and the high rate of wages paid for even unskilled labour to clear away *debris*, &c., many of the regular firemen are working ashore, and the vessels have to take numbers of men who have never been in a fire-room before, with the result that after a few days' work they get run down.

This condition of affairs will, in the opinion of Captain Hayward, be ameliorated on the homeward voyage, and he confidently expects that the influx of workmen to San Francisco, attracted by the high rates of wages ruling there, will release some regular firemen and so enable better crews to be obtained in future.

We remain, &c.,

HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[P.O. 06/3014.]

No. 36.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to MESSRS. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland.

GENTLEMEN,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 20th September, 1906.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, explaining that the late arrival of the " Ventura " at Auckland on that date was due to the inefficient crew of firemen, many of the regular firemen having left the vessel to work ashore at San Francisco.

The explanation has been noted. I would, however, point out that this Department is advised that the " Ventura's " machinery gave trouble during almost the whole journey from San Francisco, and that the detention at Pago Pago is alleged to have been due to the necessity for repairs to the ship's machinery. While no doubt the inexperienced firemen had much to do with the prolonged voyage, this fact alone cannot be considered responsible for the steamer's late arrival at Auckland. It is hoped that the " Ventura's " machinery will be put in thorough repair at Sydney, and that a prompt arrival at San Francisco on the return trip may be reasonably expected. Both the Department and the public look for this.

I have, &c.,

Messrs. Henderson and Macfarlane, Auckland.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

[P.O. 06/3014.]