

MAIL-SERVICE VIA TEHUANTEPEC.

No. 44.

Mr. W. J. NAPIER, Auckland, to the Hon. the ACTING-POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Auckland, 14th May, 1907.

In view of the cessation of the San Francisco mail-service, I desire to direct your attention to the possibility of establishing a new and more direct mail-service to England *via* Tehuantepec, Mexico. From information I gathered during a recent visit to the United States of America, I understand that by July next there will be a steamboat connection between the Hawaiian Islands and the Isthmus of Panama at Tehuantepec. A railroad has been constructed across the isthmus from the Pacific to the Atlantic side, and breakwaters have been constructed on both sides, enclosing harbours with a depth of 35 ft. at low water, spring tides. An English company, headed by Sir Weetman Pearson, the Liverpool engineer, holds the concession for the railroad and docks from the Mexican Government. There are excellent wharves, and on the Pacific side the sheltered deep-water harbour has an area of 90 acres. On the Atlantic side steamers are to connect at present with New York. If a steamer could be arranged for to take the New Zealand mails from the railway on the Atlantic side of the isthmus, the letters could be delivered in London in twenty-three days from Auckland.

The matter is one of such great importance to New Zealand that it will well repay your early attention. If a reasonable subsidy were given there would be no difficulty in getting steamboat connection with England from the Atlantic side, and we could easily send our mails to Honolulu to connect with the company's line from that port to Tehuantepec.

Trusting that you will favourably consider this proposal,

I have, &c.,

W. J. NAPIER.

The Hon. the Acting-Postmaster-General, Wellington.

[P.O. 07/237.]

No. 45.

The Hon. the ACTING-POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to Mr. W. J. NAPIER, Auckland.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1907.

I have the honour to refer to your letter of the 14th instant suggesting that the Tehuantepec route be used for the exchange of mails between New Zealand and the United Kingdom.

In reply, I have to thank you for the trouble you have taken, and to explain that the Post Office was already in possession of information about the Tehuantepec railway connection of the Pacific and the Atlantic. You may rest assured that the Department, when considering the scheme of ocean-mails, will not lose sight of the advantages attaching to the Tehuantepec route.

The latest information received by the Department appears to indicate that the steamers of the American-Hawaiian Steamship Company, which were to commence running in January of this year between Salina Cruz and Honolulu, proceed by way of San Francisco. If you have any later particulars about the actual route of the steamers I shall be pleased to hear from you.

I have, &c.,

J. G. FINDLAY,

Acting-Postmaster-General.

W. J. Napier, Esq., Auckland.

[P.O. 07/237.]

No. 46.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Hon. the ACTING PRIME MINISTER.

SIR,—

Westminster Chambers, 13 Victoria Street, London, S.W., 19th April, 1907.

General Post Office.—Tehuantepec Mail-route Inquiry.

Referring to your letter of the 13th February last [No 261, F.—6, 1907], and to previous correspondence on the above subject, I have now to enclose copy of Consular Report No. 658, Mexico, issued from the Foreign Office this month, dealing further with the Tehuantepec Railway. The Tehuantepec National Railway Company, in furnishing this report, desire to draw special attention to the comparative table of distances given on pages 16 and 17.

The company have also issued the attached circular notifying that the name of "Coatzacoalcos" has been officially changed to "Puerto Mexico."

I have, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY,

For the High Commissioner.

The Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington.

[P.O. 07/237.]