

contract, I have the honour to inform you that the matter has been fully considered, and it has been decided that it is inadvisable for Government to introduce legislation for the repeal of the section or to exclude the exemption from future ocean mail-service contracts.

I have, &c.,

W. F. MASSEY,

Prime Minister.

The Secretary, Wellington Harbour Board, Wellington.
Wn.—S.F. 13/41.]

No. 14.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.
SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 15th August, 1913.

I have the honour to inform you that, in connection with the proposed renewal from October next of the New Zealand—San Francisco mail-service contract, it has been suggested by the contractors that the day of departure from London of the mails to be carried by that service be altered from Wednesday to Saturday, and to inquire whether you are willing to make the alteration.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS,

For the Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.
[P. & T. 36/16.]

No. 15.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.
SIR,— General Post Office, London, 3rd October, 1913.

With reference to your letter of the 15th August last, inquiring whether this office is willing to despatch the mails for New Zealand via San Francisco on Saturdays instead of Wednesdays, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you that under present arrangements such mails are despatched by White Star packet sailing from Southampton on Wednesday and Queenstown on Thursday to connect with the steamer sailing from San Francisco on the following Wednesday week. When the Cunard packet sailing from Liverpool for New York on the Saturday following the despatch by White Star packet is either the "Lusitania" or the "Mauretania" supplementary mails are forwarded by the Cunard service, in view of the greater speed of those two ships, to connect at San Francisco with the same steamer as the mails despatched by White Star packet.

It is not clear from your letter whether an alteration in the day of sailing from San Francisco is contemplated, or, if not, whether it is desired that the mails should in future be despatched on the Saturday week or the Saturday fortnight before the sailing from San Francisco. On the assumption that the sailings from San Francisco will take place on Wednesdays as at present, a despatch from this country on the Saturday week before the sailing from San Francisco would render the connection at San Francisco insecure when the Saturday sailings from Liverpool are performed by the slower packets of the Cunard line, while on the other hand a despatch from this country on the Saturday fortnight before the sailing from San Francisco would render the time of transit via San Francisco greater than via Suez, and would greatly lessen the value of the service. It would therefore appear that with the existing day of sailing from San Francisco the present arrangements for the despatch of mails from this country via San Francisco are the best possible, and that no change is desirable.

The alteration of the day of despatch from this country from Wednesday to Saturday concurrently with an alteration in the day of sailing from San Francisco would apparently afford little or no acceleration in the outward mail-service from this country, as it would be necessary to allow approximately the same period for the transmission of the mails to San Francisco as in the case of the existing despatches by White Star packets on Wednesdays, whereas the possibility of sending supplementary mails by a later packet would disappear.

In this connection I am to add that the proposed provision of another fast packet in the Cunard service will in present circumstances allow of the more frequent despatch of supplementary mails for New Zealand via San Francisco and via Vancouver.

The Postmaster-General will be glad if you will furnish him in due course with information as to the conditions governing the renewal of the contract with the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand for the mail-service between San Francisco and New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

E. W. FARNALL.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.
[P. & T. 36/16.]

No. 16.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the DIRECTOR, International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, Berne.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 7th October, 1913.

I have the honour to refer to your letter of the 17th October, 1911, No. 4501 [not printed], on the subject of the inquiry of this Administration whether the Administration of the United States of America is at liberty to fix any rate other than that provided by the Postal Union Convention for the conveyance from San Francisco to New Zealand and Australia of mails originating in the United States and the United Kingdom.