

## No. 116.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

SIR,—

12th December, 1890.

I received your telegram yesterday, stating that the contractors for the San Francisco service proposed leaving San Francisco on Thursdays, as the mails would be conveyed across the Atlantic by the "Umbria" during 1891; and desiring me to inform you whether the latter statement was correct. I communicated at once with the Post Office, and now enclose copy of a letter from Mr. Rea, from which you will see that the "Umbria" will only sail on the New Zealand (Fr'isco) mail-days from January to April inclusive, and that Mr. Rea does not think it would be prudent to substitute Thursday for Saturday as the sailing-day, because the mails by the "Umbria" could not be safely calculated to reach San Francisco before Friday mornings. I have sent you a telegram to this effect, copy of which is annexed.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

---

Enclosure in No. 116.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

DEAR SIR FRANCIS,—

General Post Office, E.C., 12th December, 1890.

I could not answer your note of yesterday without first obtaining information from the Cunard Company as to their sailing arrangements for next year. I have ascertained that in 1891 the "Umbria" will sail on the New Zealand (Fr'isco) mail-days from January to April inclusive.

As to the proposed alteration in the sailing-day of the New Zealand packet from San Francisco, I doubt whether it will be prudent to substitute Thursday for Saturday. I find that during the present year the mails carried by the "Aurania" have nearly all reached New York on Sunday or Monday, and Fr'isco on the following Saturday morning. Now, the "Umbria" is only half a day quicker than the "Aurania," and I do not think it would be safe to calculate on the "Umbria's" mails reaching Fr'isco before Friday morning. This, however, is a question for your Government to settle. Of course, the New Zealand steamer would have to wait for the mails if they failed to arrive on Thursday.

Yours, &c.,

Sir F. D. Bell, K.C.M.G., C.B.

EDWD. H. REA.

---

No. 117.

The SECRETARY, New Zealand Shipping Company, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Christchurch, 12th February, 1891.

At Conference shipping companies, held here this morning, it was not considered advisable to alter dates of despatch of mail-steamers from the colony.

---

No. 118.

The SECRETARY, New Zealand Shipping Company, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited), Christchurch,

SIR,—

13th February, 1891.

I have the honour to hand you herewith draft contract for carriage of mails between New Zealand and Plymouth for one year ending December next. The contract has been submitted to and approved by the directors of this company. Please forward copy for signature at your convenience. We shall also be obliged if you will kindly send us a number of spare copies of the contract.

With reference to the proposed alteration in despatch of the mails *via* San Francisco, and in reply to your inquiry as to whether any alteration could be made in the date of despatch of the Direct mail, I am directed to state that this company is desirous of meeting the wishes of the Hon. the Postmaster-General if possible; but in view of the small amount we receive for carrying the mails and the fact that all our almanacs, time-tables, and advertisements are out for this year, we hope the Hon. the Postmaster-General will not make any alteration in the dates of despatch from the colony of either the San Francisco or Direct service for the remaining ten months of the contract. If the Direct mail leaves a week after the San Francisco mail, as is proposed under the new time-table, and then no mail for three weeks, we venture to think the colony will not be so well served as under present arrangements, which gives as nearly possibly a fortnightly despatch from Wellington.

I have, &c.

ISAAC GIBBS, Secretary.

The Secretary, Post Office and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

---

No. 119.

THE SECRETARY, New Zealand Shipping Company, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Christchurch, 16th February, 1891.

Would alteration in despatch homeward mails from Thursday to Saturday meet your wishes?