

## No. 120.

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

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 19th February, 1891.

MAIL SERVICES.—Fr'sco sailing colony Saturday permanent. Shipping Company adopt Saturday also. Government prefer Monday. Urge Shipping Boards agree Monday both ends. Obtain approval Post Office sailing Plymouth Monday.

## No. 121.

The Hon. J. G. WARD to the AGENT-GENERAL, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd February, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th December last, enclosing copy of a letter from the London Post Office with reference to the change in the date of the departure of the mail-steamers from San Francisco. My predecessor's letter of the 27th December last advised you that Thursday had been fixed as the sailing-day from San Francisco, and the reasons which actuated the department in favour of Thursday.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

J. G. WARD, Postmaster-General.

## No. 122.

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

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

24th December, 1890.

SIR,—

I received in due course your telegram of the 16th instant, stating that the Government had fixed Thursday for the San Francisco sailing-day in the meantime, and directing me to advise the Imperial Post Office accordingly. I gather that this arrangement is only intended so long as the "Umbria" carries the mails. I have also received your telegram of the 23rd December, stating that an Order in Council had been issued approving a letter-postage of 2½d. to this country by San Francisco and Direct steamers, the rate of 6d. being maintained for other routes; also that post-cards will be charged 2d., and that the new rates will begin on the 1st January. I have also communicated this information to the Post Office.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

F. D. BELL.

P.S.—I append an extract from a letter from Mr. Rea, about the 6d. rate.—F.D.B.

## No. 123.

Mr. CREIGHTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 10th January, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter dated the 29th November, 1890. I also received the following cable in reply to mine of the 9th December: "Wellington, 15th December, 1890.—To Creighton, San Francisco.—Consulted Agent-General, contractors Thursday sailing approved. Advise Post Office.—MITCHELSON." In consequence of this despatch I wrote to the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, explaining the reason for making the change, and urging that there should be no unnecessary delay at New York or on the railroad journey to San Francisco. I have not received a reply to this communication. I attach herewith copy of my letter.

It was found, upon looking into the steamship sailings from New York for 1891, that a saving certain of three, and a possible saving of four days on the Homeward mail could be effected by changing the day of sailing from Sydney to Monday, and delaying the departure of the January mail to Monday, the 26th January, instead of despatching it on Wednesday the 21st, as in the old schedule. This saving in time results from avoiding a detention at New York of two days, which is inevitable should the steamer arrive at San Francisco on Saturday, and a further saving of at least one day on the Atlantic passage by connecting at New York with the "Majestic," which is scheduled for Wednesdays' sailings during the year 1891, beginning with the 25th February, and every fourth Wednesday thenceafter. But as the "Majestic" has made the run between Queens-town and New York under six days, it is reasonable to presume an average saving of from thirty-six to forty-eight hours over the time of the slow steamers scheduled for Saturday sailings, by one of which the mail must be shipped at New York if Wednesday sailings from Sydney be adhered to.

By despatching the mail-steamer from Sydney on Wednesday, 26th January, and every fourth Wednesday following, the mail would arrive at San Francisco on Thursdays, and be in the New York Post Office on the Tuesday evening following, in time for despatch by the "Majestic," sailing at 7 a.m. the next day for Queenstown. For this reason I anticipate that the mail leaving Sydney the 26th January will be delivered in London about the same date it would be delivered if it took the usual course, involving two days' detention at New York and slow time across the Atlantic.

Working out a trial schedule of sailings with these changes at the terminal ports, it was found that New Zealand would be specially benefited. The outward steamer leaving San Francisco on Thursday the 5th February would arrive at Auckland, Thursday, the 26th February; and the steamer leaving Sydney on Monday, the 23rd February, would arrive at Auckland on Saturday the 28th February: thus giving New Zealand merchants two days to reply to their correspondence. In other words, nearly four weeks would be saved to New Zealand in its correspondence with the United