

No. 18.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd June, 1898.

I have to confirm my cablegram [quoted in No. 14] asking you to proceed to New York with the homeward mails per the "Miowera" for the purpose of ascertaining, if possible, at what point between Vancouver and New York the delay to mails from the colonies by that route takes place.

My cablegram to you was the result of a representation by the Agent-General for this colony to the effect that much dissatisfaction is caused in London business circles at the unpunctual deliveries. The delay was particularly noticeable in the case of the "Aorangi's" homeward mails, which, although they reached Vancouver a day in advance of time, were not delivered in London until three days after time-table date.

I trust that you will be able to go through to New York with the mails by the "Warrimoo." I also enclose copy of a cablegram [No. 13] to the Postmaster-General, Ottawa, on the same subject, to which no reply has yet been received.

I have, &c.,

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

No. 19.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT for NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 5th July, 1898.

ACCOMPANY mails due Vancouver fourteenth to New York.

No. 20.

The GENERAL MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company, Christchurch, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited),
Christchurch, 8th July, 1898.

SIR,—

Referring to the voyage of the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Steamship Company's steamer "Aorangi," which left Wellington on the 28th April, I have the honour to hand you the following extract from the official liquidator's letter, dated London, 4th June: "Our part of the contract was performed by the 'Aorangi' in excellent time, but, besides being unfortunate in catching a slow Cunard steamer, the 'Aurania,' that vessel was delayed two days in New York owing to danger in the bay from torpedoes; but for this, which is entirely outside our contract, the mail would have been delivered in very good time."

The following is a copy of a Dalziel telegram from Queenstown: "The Cunard liner 'Aurania,' from New York, arrived this morning with passengers and heavy mails. She reports that she was detained at New York for two days through mines laid in the harbour, and could not leave until Thursday. She passed on the 1st instant upwards of forty sailing-ships grain-laden for Queens-town."

I have, &c.,

ISAAC GIBBS,

General Manager.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 21.

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

[Extract from letter from the New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited), Christchurch, to the Local Manager, Wellington, 9th July, 1898.]

"CANADIAN-AUSTRALIAN COMPANY.—With reference to the despatch of the Canadian-Australian Company's steamers from Wellington, Mr. Hunter writes from Vancouver as follows: 'Another important matter mentioned by Captain Hay is the time of departure of the steamers from Wellington for Suva. It would be a great advantage to fix this time at 1 p.m., instead of at 3 or 4 p.m. as at present. The time allowed after 3 or 4 p.m. for reaching Suva is too short, and if any delay from bad weather occurs the steamers miss their time at Suva, and in consequence may be made late for Honolulu, and so lose a whole day. Captain Hay says the time for leaving Wellington depends solely on the arrangement made by the Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand, who could deliver the mail in time for 1 o'clock sailing. I hope you can get this improvement made.'

"The Union Company's steamer leaves Lyttelton at about 10.30 p.m., carrying the Vancouver mails to connect with the Canadian-Australian Company's steamer. The "Rotomahana" can easily make the run up in thirteen hours, arriving in Wellington, say, at 11.30 a.m. If the Vancouver mail-steamers were despatched at 1 p.m. this would give about one hour and a half for the transshipment of mails from the Union Company's boat. We should be glad if you would see Mr. Gray, and ascertain if anything can be done to expedite the transshipment of mails in Wellington so that the mail-steamers can be despatched promptly at 1 p.m."