

bound to England due at that place on Wednesday mornings, and I think there is every prospect of his anticipations being realised during the summer months, when no delays are expected, but fear we must be prepared for delays when winter once more returns. The department probably realises that a few hours' delay in the overland transit means three days' detention at New York, should the Wednesday connection not be made.

The "Moana" mails duly made the connection yesterday with the R.M. s.s. "Paris," and I trust will insure another fast through trip.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 48.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 17th May, 1899.

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The mails ex "Moana," 5th May, went through on time and connected with the "Paris" at New York on the following Wednesday, 12th, and arrived at Southampton this morning at 8 a.m. (contract date), a thirty-days trip.

In regard to the steamers of the Spreckels Company, I would say that these vessels are to be of 6,000 tons gross tonnage, are to have twin screws, and are guaranteed to maintain a sea speed of seventeen knots. The contract stipulates for the delivery of the vessels in twelve, fifteen, and eighteen months respectively from the date of contract, which was about the 1st April. In respect to the United States subsidy, of course the Hanna-Payne Bill [see No. 113, F.—6, 1899] has not yet become law; but under the old schedule (which I believe is still in operation) the increased size and speed of the new vessels would secure a considerable increase in the remuneration payable. I believe you have a copy of the law under which the present service is operating.

It is anticipated that the "Moana" will get away this (Wednesday) evening, as the mails are reported on time. The vessel, I hear, is badly lumbered up with deck cargo again.

I am, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 49.

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

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 10th June, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 12th ultimo, covering copy of correspondence with the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington, with reference to the shorter time under the San Francisco mail-service arrangements allowed for replies from merchants and others on the Atlantic seaboard.

I regret that the alteration should have resulted in the inconvenience mentioned by Mr. Brooks. The change was made to shorten the through time between the colony and London by two days, which was all-important. I do not think that any change can be made in the desired direction in the meantime, but when the time comes for reviewing the schedule of sailings consideration will be given to these representations.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq., Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

No. 50.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 12th July, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 10th June, having reference to the complaint of correspondents in the eastern portion of this country in regard to the short time afforded them for reply to colonial correspondents under the schedule of arrivals and departures of the mail-steamers from San Francisco as now operating, the same being forwarded under cover from the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington.

The contents of your communication have been duly communicated to Mr. Brooks.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.