

day. In order to secure the benefit of the faster service for the transmission of the New Zealand outward mails I deemed it advisable to communicate with the Foreign Mail Department at Washington. A copy of my communication; and the reply thereto, is herewith enclosed for your information. I also interviewed Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company in reference to the earlier despatch of the contract steamers from this port. These gentlemen seem to be of the opinion that a despatch from this port on Thursday at 9 a.m. or 10 a.m. should be satisfactory. But I am of the opinion that a departure at, say, midnight of Wednesday would be more satisfactory. A departure at that hour would be quite feasible and in accordance with the custom prevailing during a considerable portion of the period during which the Pacific Mail Company were the contractors. I do not see why the colonies should not reap the full benefit of the time gained by the increased speed of the overland transit. The change in the hour or even day of the departure in this case will not in any measure affect European or Eastern United States despatches.

I should be pleased to be placed in possession of your views upon this subject at an early moment. The continuance of the special express referred to, however, is not at present assured beyond the continuance of the winter season.

Trusting my actions as outlined above may meet with your approval,

I have, &c.,

W. Gray, Esq.,
Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

(Enclosure 1 in No. 1.)

The RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN
MAILS, Washington, D.C.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 16th November, 1895.

I have the honour to direct your attention to an announcement in the Press that it is contemplated initiating a fast express train, on and after the 25th instant, which will make the through journey from New York to San Francisco in four days, the route chosen being by the New York Central and Hudson River, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, the Chicago and North-Western, the Union Pacific, and the Central Pacific Railroads. I am informed by the Southern Pacific Railroad Company of this city that this fast express is assured, during the winter season, and, further, that no arrangements have yet been made whereby the United States mails are to be carried upon these trains. I would therefore like to ascertain whether the United States postal authorities propose to make arrangements for eastern connections, in order that this fast express can be utilised to the advantage of the Australian-British mails in transit from the United Kingdom to the colonies.

As the subsidy to the Canadian mail route is now under consideration of the New Zealand Parliament, with prospects of favourable consideration, I am extremely anxious to secure the advantages of any acceleration of speed in transit, in order to demonstrate the superiority of the American route. Your kind and early consideration of this matter will be esteemed, as some change may be rendered necessary in the departure of the connecting steamer from this port.

I have, &c.,

N. M. Brooks, Esq.,
Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Washington, D.C.

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

(Enclosure 2 in No. 1.)

The SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, to the RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW
ZEALAND, San Francisco.

Post Office Department, Office of Foreign Mails, Washington, D.C.,

SIR,—

30th November, 1895.

Referring to your letter of the 16th instant, asking to be advised whether this department contemplates making arrangements to utilise the fast express train which went into service on the 25th instant from New York to San Francisco, for forwarding across the continent the closed mails for the Australian Colonies received at New York from Great Britain, I have the honour to inform you that the train referred to leaves New York at 1 p.m., and is provided with the necessary equipment for the transmission of all correspondence for San Francisco (including British-Australian closed mails), and that all of said correspondence and mails available for despatch at the hour named are required to be forwarded by the train in question.

I am, &c.,

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

N. M. Brooks,
Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

(No. 2.)

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam
Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 20th December, 1895.

SIR,—

I have the honour to enclose copy of a telegram which appeared in the San Francisco *Morning Call* on the 13th ultimo, relative to an acceleration of the train-service between Chicago and San Francisco. In reporting on the matter the Resident Agent for the colony in San Francisco states that at present it is only intended to make the change during the winter months. As, however, this is the season during which it is most desirable to make close connection with the mail-steamers, advantage should, if possible, be taken of the saving of time effected by the new service.