

than 10s. 5d. for letters. At the request of the company's representative, definite action has been deferred until there is time to receive a further cable from the company after the arrival at San Francisco of the "Ventura," by which steamer he forwarded newspaper reports of the debate, and fully reviewed the position, which may result in the new terms being accepted by the company.

At the moment of writing, advice has been received that the "Ventura" reached San Francisco on the 4th instant, so that the expected further reply may reach me before the departure of the mail from Auckland, in which case I shall supplement this letter by a telegram to be posted there, and will at the same time cable you of the final decision.

In the event of the Oceanic Steamship Company refusing to accept the terms approved by Parliament, Government will probably arrange for a temporary service by Federal packet until the possibilities of a satisfactory Vancouver service are known. You may perhaps be in a position to ascertain what is being done by the companies interested, and whether there is any intention of including New Zealand in any scheme for a fast service between Vancouver and the colonies. Owing to the absence from New Zealand of the Managing Director of the Union Steam Ship Company, who is giving this business particular attention, little or no reliable information is obtainable here.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD, for the Premier.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves, Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 25.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 7th November, 1901.

I have the honour to forward, under separate cover, three copies of the debate which took place in the House of Representatives on the 17th and 18th ultimo on the question of the ocean mail-services.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

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

[Copies similarly forwarded on the same date to Mr. SPRECKELS and Mr. DUNNET.]

No. 26.

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

(Telegram.)

San Francisco, 27th November, 1901.

HAVE you made any agreement Spreckels?

No. 27.

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

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 28th November, 1901.

No; Spreckels has not yet confirmed the arrangement.

No. 28.

The SECRETARY, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington, 3rd December, 1901.

I am instructed to respectfully remind you of the representations made by a Conference of Chambers of Commerce held in Christchurch, in the month of January last, in reference to the rates of freight [see No. 190, F.—6, 1901] charged by the Oceanic Steamship Company on cargo for the several ports of the colony. It was a matter of complaint that one port received an advantage over all other ports of the colony of 12s. 6d. per ton, or over 30 per cent., in the rate of freight, and it was urged that a system should be adopted whereby a uniform rate of freight should be charged, at all events to the principal ports of New Zealand, as is done practically by some of the main lines of steamers plying in the colony. It was further urged that that rate should not exceed the rate charged to Sydney.

I understand that you were good enough to promise that these representations should be borne in mind in any negotiations relative to the San Francisco mail-service; and the southern Chambers of Commerce are very anxious that the matter should not be overlooked.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

S. CARROLL, Secretary.