

No. 111.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 10th September, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd July last, enclosing copy of one from the Imperial Post Office, asking whether the new San Francisco mail-service included the voyage of the 21st November last from San Francisco to Sydney, seeing that the trip was undertaken by a steamer employed in the previous service.

In reply, I have to inform you that the arrangement between this Government and the former contractors did not include the voyage in question. It is true that the running was overtaken by the "Mariposa," a vessel which was employed under the Union Steam Ship Company's contract, but this Department understands that she was engaged as a substitute for the "Sierra." The late contract terminated with the voyage of the 4th October from San Francisco, and with that of the 29th idem from Auckland.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD, for the Premier.

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

No. 112.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 10th September, 1901.

I have the honour to report that the "Ventura," conveying the Homeward mails from the colonies, did not reach this port until 7 p.m. on the 3rd instant, too late to connect with the 6 p.m. express for the east; but mails went forward at 10 a.m. on the 4th. The "Campania" was appointed to leave New York at 12 (midday) on Saturday, the 7th.

I immediately communicated with the Cunard Steamship Company and the various railway mail-service officials *en route*, in an endeavour to hold the "Campania" for the 1.30 p.m. train at New York. The Union Pacific train, however, was delayed in arrival at Council Bluffs, and the connection appeared hopeless. Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Company, at this juncture, arranged with the Lake Shore Company to send a special train from Chicago on arrival of the mails at that point, and succeeded in overtaking the 8.30 a.m. fast mail from Chicago at Toledo, and the mails arrived at New York at 10 a.m. on Saturday, thus effecting a connection with the "Campania," which left New York at midday according to time-table, and there is every probability of a fast through trip being accomplished.

In connection with this matter, I have much pleasure in informing you that the management of the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy Railroad running from Council Bluffs to Chicago, recognising the importance of the connection of the mails at Chicago, I believe, voluntarily, put on a special train from Omaha, which enabled the Lake Shore special to leave Chicago in time to effect the overtaking of the fast mail.

It affords me much pleasure to report this action of the Burlington Railroad Company, who are entitled to the best thanks of the Department for their grasp of the situation, and of the timely assistance rendered. I have expressed the thanks of the New Zealand Government for their courtesy in rendering this most important and effectual assistance.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 113.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

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

SIR,—

11th October, 1901.

Referring to your letter of the 23rd July last, I beg to transmit herewith copy of correspondence with the London General Post Office, by which it will be seen that the Postmaster-General declines to make any alteration in the present arrangements as regards the route by which the mails for New Zealand are forwarded.

I have, &c.,

W. P. REEVES.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 113.

The SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, S.W., 3rd September, 1901.

Referring to my letter of the 20th March last [Enclosure 2 in No. 150, F.—6, 1901], pointing out that the mail *via* Italy, leaving London in the week before the mail *via* San Francisco, reaches the North Island of New Zealand one or two days after the arrival of the succeeding San Francisco mail, I am directed by the Agent-General to bring under your notice copy of a