

SAN FRANCISCO SERVICE.

CONTRACT WITH THE OCEANIC COMPANY, ETC.

No. 1.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,
30th May, 1902.

SIR,—

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your cablegram of the 28th instant [No. 77, F.-6, 1902], stating that, commencing with the s.s. "Ventura's" departure on the 27th June, the steamers taking the mails to San Francisco will leave Auckland on Friday instead of Saturday.

I at once communicated this information to the Imperial Post Office.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. P. REEVES.

No. 2.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to Messrs. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 3rd July, 1902.

THE Superintendent, Foreign Mails, Washington, now advises [No. 73] that his Department agrees to the insertion in the contract of provision for detaining Spreckels's steamers at San Francisco when that becomes necessary in order to receive there the British closed mails, provided such detention is requested by his Department. Nor is objection made to the proposed payment to the company of demurrage at the rate of £5 an hour after the first twelve hours. This is exceedingly satisfactory. The Superintendent also invites attention to the time-table under which the steamers leave Auckland three days before the arrival there of the incoming steamer, and he suggests that, if practicable, the future schedules of the company be so arranged that the steamers shall arrive at and depart from Auckland upon dates which will remove the inconvenience now felt, and about which complaints have been made to the Washington office, owing to the existing time-table. As you are aware, the time-tables have been fixed by Mr. Spreckels, and he informed us he was unable to make the change we suggested to him some time ago, which would have got rid of the objections. Inconvenience is also experienced at New York, as there is no time for replies by return of post to letters received by the incoming mail.

No. 3.

MESSRS. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),
Auckland, 3rd July, 1902.

SIR,—

We are exceedingly pleased to receive your telegram of even date, advising that the Washington postal authorities have agreed to the main points at issue of the New Zealand contract. In reference to the steamers leaving Auckland for San Francisco three days before the arrival of the inward steamer, this point has been discussed at some length locally. Personally, we had formed the opinion that, while it did not suit the Auckland people very well, it gave the merchants, especially of the South Island, an opportunity to read their letters, execute orders, and forward same by the return mail. For example, should the San Francisco steamer arrive here on the Monday and a steamer leave on the following Monday for San Francisco, the mails of the former steamer would barely have reached Dunedin or the Bluff before the others left, and there would then be a blank of at least twenty-one days before replies would go forward. Take the principle centres on the other side at which New Zealand mail is distributed: San Francisco mails distributed on Monday are despatched ten days later; Chicago mails distributed on Friday are despatched two days later; New York mails distributed on Saturday are despatched same day; London mails distributed on Saturday are despatched on the following Saturday.

From the above it would appear that the States from Illinois eastward are inconveniently served by the present service, but the westward States and London seem to have fair time to reply to Australasian mails. Necessarily the Washington Post Office is in a position to exercise con-