

One bag, London to Honolulu, despatched at the same time as the bag for Apia just mentioned, and which should have arrived on train 3, 20th February, was received on train 1, due 20th February. It has been learned that this bag was, through error, put off the train at Buffalo, New York, with Canadian mail. The mistake was noticed, and the bag was promptly forwarded to Chicago. Papers in the case have been referred by this office to the Division Superintendent having charge of the line from which the bag was missent, for appropriate action against the clerk at fault.

The consignment of mail arriving on train 3, 20th February, was also found to be short by one bag for Auckland, one bag for Brisbane, and one bag for Adelaide.

Investigation regarding all the irregularities mentioned in the foregoing was promptly instituted, but the case relating to delay to the bag from London to Honolulu is the only one in which the responsibility has thus far been determined. I shall be pleased to advise you as to the results in the other cases as soon as known.

In this connection I beg to state that every effort is being made to have this mail handled properly, and that such endeavours will be continued in the future. I shall be pleased at any time to take such action as may be found necessary for the purpose of advancing the delivery of this mail.

Very respectfully,

H. P. THRALL, Superintendent.

No. 92.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1903.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th March last, forwarding copy of replies from the Imperial Post Office and the Cunard Company to the request for a detention of the company's steamers at New York, when our mails do not reach there, until the arrival of the 2.55 p.m. train.

I regret to learn that the company is unable to comply with the request; but it is hoped that when occasion arises the agents at New York will do their best to arrange a detention of the steamer when, through the late arrival of the mails, this is desired. The Resident Agent for the colony at San Francisco has been instructed to telegraph to the agents at New York whenever the mails will not reach that port until the arrival of the 2.55 p.m. train.

I have, &c.,

T. Y. DUNCAN, for the Premier.

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

No. 93.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 27th May, 1903.

With further reference to the latter part of your letter of the 17th February last, on the subject of the detention of the Cunard Company's steamers at New York on the occasions when our mails do not reach there until the arrival of the 2.55 p.m. train, I have now the honour to inform you that the Agent-General for the colony has received replies from the Imperial Post Office and the Cunard Company to his representations. I regret to say that the company is unable to see its way to comply with the request, representing that, as the times of sailings of the steamers are fixed according to tide, to miss a tide would mean a detention of twelve hours.

The Agent-General has again been written to, and the hope expressed that when occasion arises the Cunard Company's agents at New York will do their best to arrange the detention of the steamer when, through the late arrival of the mails, this is desired. I shall be glad if you will telegraph the agents whenever the mails will not reach New York until the arrival of the 2.55 p.m. train.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

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

No. 94.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 29th May, 1903.

Referring to my letter of the 27th instant, I have now the honour to forward herewith for your information copy of a letter transmitted by the Agent-General from the Cunard Steamship Company, stating that on a recent occasion the "Etruria" was delayed at New York for one hour in order to receive the mails coming from New Zealand *via* San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

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