

No. 86.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 2nd October, 1907.

In reference to a question recently asked in the House of Representatives about a close connection with the Vancouver steamer at Suva, I have the honour to inquire whether it would be possible to arrange a closer connection for the inward Vancouver mail with your company's steamer from Suva to New Zealand. and, if so, what would be the lowest terms asked for such a connection.

I have, &c.,

D. ROBERTSON, Secretary.

The General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

[Van. Conn. 07/58.]

No. 87.

The COLONIAL POSTMASTER, General Post Office, Suva, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Suva, 9th October, 1907.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter [No. 82] with reference to the New Zealand portion of the Vancouver mails, that arrived at Suva on the 1st ultimo, being carried on to Brisbane by the "Manuka" instead of being transhipped to the "Wanaka" for Auckland direct.

2. In reply, I beg to inform you that when the "Manuka" passed through Suva this Department had no notice whatever, from the agent, of the "Wanaka's" movements, and it was not until the 4th September that the Department was notified of the vessel's sailing for Auckland. I then made it my business to interview the company's manager, and pointed out to him that the mails should have certainly been sent forward by the "Wanaka," and he promised me that he would in future see that this Department received due notice of the movements of the company's irregular steamers.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

H. ST. JULIAN, Colonial Postmaster.

[Van. Conn. 07/62.]

No. 88.

House of Representatives, 16th October, 1907.

11. MR. BAUME to ask the Postmaster-General, Whether his attention has been directed to the statements made in the subjoined letters, published in the *New Zealand Herald* of the 28th August, 1907, and the 12th September, 1907; and will he endeavour to have the evils complained of removed? Note: The letters are as follows:—

"ALL-RED ROUTE.—SIR,—After all the excitement, agitation, &c., *re* the above, what do we find—viz., that the present treatment of the Vancouver mail-services is a farce—*e.g.*, the Vancouver steamer reached Suva last month on the 9th; we received our letters on the 22nd instant. This month the steamer arrived at Suva on the 6th; we got our letters on the 20th—fourteen days in transit this month and thirteen days last month. Now, in all conscience, why should this be thus when four or five days is the run from Suva here? Could it not be arranged for one of the Union Steam Ship Company's boats to be at Suva in time to take over the mails and bring them on direct to Auckland, instead of all this delay? I throw out this suggestion in the hope that the Chamber of Commerce or some one more able than myself will take the matter up.—28th August, 1907.—MAILMAN."

"ALL-RED ROUTE, VANCOUVER MAIL-SERVICE.—SIR,—You were good enough to insert a letter from me signed 'Mailman' in your issue of the 28th ultimo upon the above subject. I notice in your issue of this morning (September 6) that the mails from Vancouver and the United States will be due at Auckland from Sydney on the 15th instant, which means the following day before letters are delivered. Now, seeing the Vancouver steamer 'Manuka' reached Suva on the 2nd instant, and that the 'Atua' is due here on the 10th, why in the name of conscience were the mails taken on to Sydney, instead of being sent here per 'Atua'? Even had this been done, there would be a delay of four or five days, but now it will be thirteen or fourteen days. What is the good of all our agitation in trying to obtain a fast Vancouver service if we are to be treated in this manner?—12th September, 1907.—MAILMAN."

Right Hon. Sir J. G. WARD.—Referring to the letter published in the *New Zealand Herald* of the 28th August, I am making inquiries with a view to seeing whether the Union Company can arrange to make a closer connection from Suva to New Zealand. As regards the September arrival, the "Atua" was time-tabled to leave Suva four days before the arrival of the Vancouver steamer, but a non-time-table steamer, the "Wanaka," left for Auckland four days after the Vancouver mails reached Suva. During the sugar season several vessels of the Union Company do not run to a fixed time-table, and probably the Postmaster at Suva was not aware when the Vancouver steamer of the 2nd September arrived there that a better despatch for the New Zealand mails would offer than that by way of Sydney. In order that the Postmaster, Suva, may in future be in a position to determine as early as possible the best mode of despatching the transhipped Vancouver mails to New Zealand, arrangements have been made for the local office of the Union Steam Ship Company to furnish him regularly with particulars of the movements of the company's vessels.

[Van. Conn. 07/60.]