

Enclosure in No. 34.

The GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Wellington.

[EXTRACT.]

Dunedin, 31st October, 1908.

I have to thank you for the copy of the "Postal Convention of Rome," received with your advice of the 10th instant. Not being conversant with the procedure usually followed in apportioning the rates, I am unable to interpret the position under the several provisions of the Convention, so shall feel much obliged if you can ascertain from Mr. Robertson (for our information and guidance only, of course) :—

(1.) What rates are due from San Francisco to Wellington, assuming that nothing be deducted for the San Francisco-Papeete section on the subsidised "Mariposa"?

(2.) What rates accrue from Papeete to Wellington on closed mails?

Herewith I enclose copies of the time-tables we propose [not printed], which please submit to the Postmaster-General for approval.

The small time-table shows the new service alone, and the larger one shows it in relation to the monthly service to Auckland, also the connections to and from Sydney.

[Steamers leave Wellington as follows: Voyages—1, 3rd January; 2, 9th February; 3, 16th March; 4, 21st April; 5, 27th May; 6, 7th July; 7, 12th August; 8, 17th September; 9, 23rd October; 10, 28th November. And arrive at Wellington, as follows: Voyages 1, 24th January; 2, 2nd March; 3, 6th April; 4, 12th May; 5, 17th June; 6, 28th July; 7, 2nd September; 8, 8th October; 9, 12th November; 10, 18th December].

The steamer leaving Wellington in the evening would arrive at Rarotonga early on the morning of the seventh day, stay till the afternoon, and arrive at Papeete early on the tenth day from Wellington. The same time would be occupied on the return trip.

The three days longer from San Francisco to Wellington than in the reverse direction is consequent on a condition in Messrs. Spreckels's current agreement with the Tahiti Government requiring the "Mariposa" to remain four days in Papeete. In order to accelerate the southward time from San Francisco, we are urging Messrs. Spreckels to try to get their time cut down to two days, so that the mail time in both directions would be twenty-three days.

The interval of thirty-six days between our sailings has been adhered to as closely as possible, but a little variation is necessary to avoid Sunday in Rarotonga on voyages 2 and 3 north. The voyages 9 and 10 show departure from Papeete on the same day as arrival: this is in order to make the connection with the Sydney mail.

A Carnival is held in Papeete each year, in July (to commemorate the taking of the Bastille), and the "Mariposa's" dates are made to fit in so that she can take people down from San Francisco and give them a week in Tahiti: hence the departure from our thirty-six days' interval on this voyage. I may mention that apparently Messrs. Spreckels take this opportunity of utilising the five spare days each year remaining over the ten round voyages occupying thirty-six days each. On that occasion it so happens that the Vancouver mail from Wellington 5th or 6th July is due at San Francisco about a day ahead of the "Mariposa's" date. Would the Department object to our despatching the steamer from Wellington on the 4th July, and from Papeete on the 19th July? . . . I suppose the letters would, in any case, go *via* Vancouver, and, as our steamer would leave Wellington late on Sunday, the printed matter could go by her instead of overland. We have not yet heard what the running of the Main Trunk service is to be, so cannot say whether the Vancouver mail would leave Wellington on Monday evening or Tuesday morning.

With regard to the handling of Australian mails at Wellington, will the Postal Department undertake the transshipment without charge, or, as we are to receive the mail-money accruing, shall we have to take charge of them ourselves? in which case, would the Department arrange for transit on the rare occasions it may be necessary to use the Main Trunk line in connection with the Auckland-Sydney service when the Wellington connection does not fit in so well?

No. 35.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Washington.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 4th November, 1908.

NEW ZEALAND Government agrees Oceanic Steamship Company acting as agents for Union Steam Ship Company, our contractors Tahiti-Wellington mail-service.

[P.O. 08/3861.]

No. 36.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 5th November, 1908.

In reference to your letter of the 2nd instant respecting the Wellington-Tahiti mail-service, I have the honour to inform you that the Postal Union rates—

(1.) From San Francisco to Wellington, assuming that nothing were deducted from the San Francisco-Papeete section on account of the subsidised steamer "Mariposa," would be—

Letters, 8 francs per kilogramme (34·56d. per pound);

Other articles, 1 franc per kilogramme (4·32d. per pound).