

No. 108.

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

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 14th September, 1908.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 9th instant with regard to connection with the incoming Vancouver mail at Suva for Auckland.

Our regular passenger-steamer, as you know, is fitted to connect with the outward Vancouver mail, and she leaves Suva on the return journey seven days after the arrival of the inward Vancouver steamer; and it would be impossible to detain her. The only chance of an occasional connection is by cargo-steamers bringing sugar to Auckland. These vessels run between the months of July and December, but do not, however, adhere to a time-table, leaving as soon as they are loaded.

As to naming a price for which we could detain them, it is almost impossible to do this, as, while the expenses of some of the smaller cargo-steamers run to £50 to £60 a day, the larger ships of 7–8,000 tons capacity would cost fully £100 a day.

A further point to be considered is that at times the refineries in Auckland are waiting for a cargo, and the Colonial Sugar-refining Company would have to be consulted in connection with the detention at Suva.

From the foregoing, you will see that the prospect of a suitable connection is not bright, but we are alive to the advantages to the Canadian and Australian and our own service of a better inward connection, and hope that at some future time it may be practicable.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

C. HOLDSWORTH, General Manager.

[Acknowledged 24th September, 1908.]

[Van. Conn. 08/83.]

No. 109.

PASSENGERS per s.s. "Manuka," Suva to Brisbane, to the Right Hon. the PRIME MINISTER, Wellington.

SIR,—

S.s. "Manuka," at sea, Suva to Brisbane, 5th October, 1908.

We, the undersigned returning passengers by the Canadian-Australian t.s.s. "Manuka," respectfully draw your attention to the disadvantage under which the New Zealand mails and passengers labour by reason of the present arrangements whereby they are carried on to Brisbane and Sydney, thus causing a delay of at least eight days in reaching Auckland and the other parts of the Dominion, making the trip one of over four weeks from Vancouver.

This service could be improved if the Government would arrange a close connection at Suva with the incoming steamers, as is done with the outgoing. The necessity is admitted in the latter case, and there seems to be no reason why the outgoing mails and passengers should receive such preferential treatment.

We would further respectfully suggest that the Government should initiate this reform as another step toward the Imperial route that is now under consideration of the Governments of Great Britain, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand.

Looking at it from the point of view of the tourist traffic—and this is considered of some importance in New Zealand—we are missing, and we shall miss, a large amount of the American traffic. This traffic is certain at times to take the direction of a tour from the western ports of America, by way of Honolulu, Suva, Australia, Philippines, China, and Japan, back to the home port. It has been pointed out that in this case New Zealand becomes a side show, and it is doubtful if many would care to visit the Dominion from Melbourne or Sydney and return there.

From our knowledge of your interest in and support of the "All-red Route," we feel hopeful that you will give the project another move forward by taking such action as we respectfully suggest.

We have, &c.,

T. HOPE LEWIS.

R. DALZIEL.

And 33 others.

The Right Hon. the Prime Minister, Wellington, N.Z.

[Van. Conn. 08/115.]

No. 110.

The ACTING-SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to Dr. T. HOPE LEWIS, Auckland.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd December, 1908.

I have the honour, by direction, to refer to the letter signed by yourself and other passengers by the "Manuka" in October last, urging that arrangements be made for the steamers performing the Vancouver-Sydney mail-service to make a close connection at Suva with steamers for New Zealand.

In reply I am directed to inform you that every endeavour has been made to arrange the desired connection. At present the cost of making the connection would be prohibitive, as an additional steamer would require to be employed in the Auckland-Fiji service. The Postmaster-General is now in negotiation with a representative of the Canadian Government with a view to the future improvement of the Vancouver-Sydney service, or to an early alteration of the time-table of the present service which would meet the case.

I have, &c.,

Dr. T. Hope Lewis, Auckland.

W. R. MORRIS, Acting-Secretary.

[Van. Conn. 08/133.]