

No. 44.

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

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited).
Dunedin, 25th October, 1912.

SIR,—

With reference to your letter of the 17th ultimo, regarding detention of San Francisco mail-steamers at San Francisco awaiting the arrival of the overland mails, I have the honour to advise you that by last mail, "Aorangi," 11th instant, we instructed our San Francisco agents that we have agreed to detain the steamers, beyond the forty-eight hours mentioned in the contract, on the written application of the New Zealand Government Agent. We have instructed our agents to cable us on such occasions what the circumstances are, and what detention is required. This will doubtless meet the requirements of your Department at San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

R. MCK. McLENNAN,
For General Manager.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[Wn.—S.F. 12/206.]

No. 45.

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

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 25th October, 1912.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your favour of the 17th instant, with regard to the letter dated 25th ultimo from the Secretary, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, to the Hon. the Minister of Industries and Commerce.

In reply, I beg to say that we received a similar communication from the Secretary, Chamber of Commerce, through our Wellington manager, and, by our instructions, Mr. Kennedy wrote to the Secretary on 10th instant as follows:—

"Referring to your letter of the 25th ultimo, on the subject of Wellington-Rarotonga trade, in which you state that the San Francisco mail-steamers do not always remain at Rarotonga sufficiently long to allow of all the Wellington cargo for that port being discharged, and consequently cargo often has to be carried on to Tahiti to await transshipment there: Since the receipt of your letter the records of the service have been examined, and we find that during the past twelve months there has been no overcarrying of Rarotonga cargo owing to lack of time for discharging purposes, though it is true that owing to the exigencies of the mail-service we cannot count upon a stay at Rarotonga of more than three or four hours, and, as in the case of every open roadstead, there is always the risk of unfavourable weather interfering with the work. The steamers engaged in the service are required to leave Wellington at 5 p.m. sharp, and the speed required under the contract means their arrival at Rarotonga about 1 p.m., and it is necessary that they should leave again before dark—say, 5 p.m.; and under these circumstances I regret that it is impracticable meantime to make a longer stay at the islands on the northward voyage. On the return voyage from San Francisco, however, a longer stay is possible at Rarotonga for the convenience of shippers of fruit, &c."

We have further to remark that although the service is intended primarily for mails, passengers, and through freight, there has been no refusal of cargo from Wellington for Rarotonga by the mail-steamers so far, nor would it be necessary to do so even if the Wellington shipments more than doubled their average volume. Provided the steamers leave Wellington about their fixed time of departure, there would be very little likelihood of overcarriage to Papeete unless unfavourable weather should interfere with the work of discharging at Rarotonga, which, however, is a risk that must always be reckoned with in working an open roadstead.

We may also mention that although there was a service from Wellington for some considerable time by the "Manapouri," and afterwards by the "Mokoia," affording ample time at Rarotonga for working cargo, the shipments from Wellington did not show any noticeable increase.

I have, &c.,

R. MCK. McLENNAN,
For General Manager.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[Wn.—S.F. 12/208-209.]

No. 46.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, Wellington.

(Memorandum.)

General Post Office, Wellington, 1st November, 1912.

REFERRING to your memorandum of the 10th ultimo, with which you enclosed a copy of a letter from the Secretary of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce about the time of stay of the San Francisco mail-steamers at Rarotonga on the outward voyage, I have the honour to forward, for your information, copy of a letter from the Union Steam Ship Company (Limited), which appears to fully reply to the complaint of the Chamber of Commerce.

D. ROBERTSON, Secretary.

The Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Industries, and Commerce, Wellington.

[Wn.—S.F. 13/5.]