

risk of having the whole cargo left behind owing to the nervousness, impatience, or lack of knowledge of local weather-conditions on the part of the captain whom the Union Company may place in charge of the mail-steamers.

When the "Maitai" left the cargo behind in February, 1912, Captain Stringer was on his first voyage in these waters. He arrived off the anchorage about 2 p.m. and left about 10 p.m. Within a few hours of his departure the wind had changed, and by next morning the sea was almost as smooth as a duck-pond.

In the case of the "Maitai" in October last, Captain Carson was on his first voyage. The vessel arrived at 8 a.m. on the 6th October, but the sea was too rough to work cargo all that day. His thirty hours' time was not up until 2 p.m. on the 7th, yet at 11.30 a.m. on that day he sent a message ashore requesting mails and clearance. At 1.30 p.m. the same day—within two hours of sending his message—he was at the anchorage working cargo. The value of the shipment to the island on that occasion was about £1,500, and had he got his papers at 11.30 a.m. the whole shipment would have been lost.

A more recent case, but of minor importance, was that of the "Taviuni," Captain Dryden, on his second voyage in these waters as a captain. The "Taviuni" arrived from Auckland about 12 o'clock on the 24th February. Several attempts were made to anchor, but unsuccessfully. He then suggested that he should go on to Papeete and land the inward cargo on his return voyage. He waited until 5 p.m. and then went on. By next morning the sea was down, and the cargo could have been worked.

This goes to show these storms at Rarotonga are of comparatively short duration, and if captains of vessels could exercise a little patience there would be few complaints as to cargoes being left behind.

In the case of the mail-steamers the question of catching a south boat or a north train from Wellington seems to be their worry.

Seeing we have no authority in the matter of detaining the vessels, I think it would be a gracious act on the part of the postal authorities if they could arrange with the Union Company for the mail-steamers to stay the full thirty hours if necessary at Rarotonga when loading fruit.

The Resident Commissioner, Rarotonga.

W. J. STEVENSON, Collector.

No. 43.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 19th April, 1915.

Referring to your letter of the 28th October last, in the matter of the stay of the mail-steamer at Rarotonga, I have the honour to inform you that a copy of the letter was communicated to the Cook Islands Administration.

I now enclose copy of the communications received in reply. You will note that the rights of your company as mail contractors are now understood by the Administration. But the incident of the detention of the "Maitai" on the 7th October last appears to be more intimately concerned with the business of the Cook Islands Administration than with the discharge of the contract for the San Francisco mail-service. However, no misunderstanding can arise again, and I have no doubt that your representations will be carefully borne in mind by the Administration's officers at Rarotonga.

I may say that the letter [Enclosure 2 in No. 42] to the Postmaster-General from the Resident Commissioner at Rarotonga under date of the 7th October by some mischance was not received at this office, otherwise probably I should have been able to explain the situation earlier.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

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

OCEANIC STEAMSHIP COMPANY.

No. 44.

The ASSISTANT SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 6th July, 1914.

Is rumour Oceanic Company subsidized by Commonwealth confirmed?

[P. & T. 36/38.]

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