

at San Francisco to the following effect: "I have the honour to enclose copy of despatch of this date from New York Postmaster—viz., 'Final instalment current British-Australian mails, 136 sacks, per s.s. "Bothnia," forwarded by 9 p.m. train, N.Y.C. and H.R.R., this day, making a total of 247 sacks for dispatch per s.s. "Zealandia."'" I found, however, on inquiry that the New York telegram referred to was dated the 9th January. This would make the final instalment of the mails due here at 8.15 this morning, but I have since learned that they will not arrive until 11.45 to-day, and it will therefore be 3 or 4 o'clock before the steamer gets away. It appears that the steamer "Aurania" (which has brought the mails to New York for some months) has been laid off for one trip; but the "Aurania" is advertised to sail again next month, and I trust therefore that the mails will arrive in better time next month.

I have, &c.,

C. R. BUCKLAND,

Acting Resident Agent for New Zealand.

W. GRAY, Esq., Secretary, Post Office and Telegraph Department,
General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand.

Enclosure in No. 67.

The ACTING-SUPERINTENDENT FOREIGN MAILS to the RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand,
San Francisco.

SIR,—

Washington, 24th December, 1888.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, relative to the detention at Chicago of the final instalment of the British-Australian closed mails, which was forwarded from New York, on the 10th instant, for despatch per the steamer "Mariposa," scheduled to leave San Francisco on the 15th, I have the honour to transcribe for your information the following extract from the report of the General Superintendent of the Railway Mail-service relative to said detention: viz., "It is to be regretted that any irregularity occurred in the transmission of the final despatch of the British-Australian mail leaving New York the 10th instant, but, owing to railroad detentions between that city and Chicago, the train did not reach Chicago the a.m. of the 12th until too late to make a complete transfer of all mails for despatch to the west, the result being that a portion of the British-Australian mail (as indicated by Agent Creighton) was unavoidably delayed at Chicago. As understood at this office, the failure at Chicago would simply result in a delay of about three hours in the arrival at San Francisco."

I have, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,

Acting-Superintendent Foreign Mails.

Robert J. Creighton, Esq.,
Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

No. 68.

Mr. GRAY to the ACTING RESIDENT AGENT for New Zealand, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 9th February, 1889.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th ultimo, the points of which are duly noted. The detention of the "Zealandia" until Tuesday afternoon, through the use of a slow steamer for the Atlantic passage, and the missing of connection with the proper train at Chicago (for a portion of the mail), as explained in the letter which you enclosed from the Superintendent of Foreign Mails, is to be regretted; but I note your remark that the "Aurania" would resume running on the next voyage, and no doubt there will be no further delay.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

C. R. Buckland, Esq., Acting Resident Agent for New Zealand,
San Francisco, California.

No. 69.

Mr. LAMBTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 21st February, 1889.

With reference to your letter, dated the 25th ultimo, relative to the increased contribution (\$46,000 per annum) from the United States Post Office from the 18th November last towards the cost of the Pacific mail-service, and stating that the contractors' agents, Messrs. Spreckels Brothers, claim \$20,000 as the sum they are entitled to for the carriage of the American mails, and to your further letter of the 26th idem, covering copy of one from Mr. John D. Spreckels, I have the honour to inform you that it is not perceived how the contractors are entitled to the sum named.

I may remind you that up to November, 1888 (*vide* my letter of the 4th May, 1888), the United States Government was paying at the rate of £4,000 per annum for the conveyance of its mails by the Pacific mail-service, and from a communication received from the United States (*vide* page 2 of printed parliamentary papers, "Pacific Mail-services," received from you) it was understood that £3,200 of this amount represented certain gratuities previously paid by the United States to the contractors for the carriage of American mail-matter. It was therefore decided by the Sydney and Wellington Post Offices to allow contractors to retain the £3,200 referred to, and to divide the balance of £800 equally between the Colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand and the contractors in terms of the 10th clause of the contract with the Union Steamship Company—£266 13s. 4d. per annum each. In accordance with this decision the contractors have since been