

about 5.15 a.m. to-day, and was despatched by the New York Central train leaving New York at 10.30 a.m. This will be equivalent to a connection leaving New York at 9 p.m. to-night for San Francisco, and the mail will not reach there in ordinary course until next Saturday at noon. It happens that the advance instalment of this mail arrived by the steamship "Adriatic" this morning also, and the New York Post Office forwarded it, together with the final instalment, by the New York Central road. The advance instalment amounted to 111 bags, and the final instalment to 129 bags."

"It is learned since the above was written that only a portion of the mail went forward by New York and Chicago Railway Post Office, 10.30 a.m. The bulk of the mail will leave on the 9 p.m. train to-night, New York and Chicago Railway Post Office."

The delay at Chicago of a portion of the British-Australian closed mails for despatch per the steamer "Alameda" in December last is now being investigated, and the result of the investigation will be communicated to you as soon as it is known.

I am, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,
Superintendent, Foreign Mails.

Mr. R. J. Creighton,
Agent of the New Zealand Government,
No. 327, Market Street, San Francisco, California.

No. 52.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. CREIGHTON, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th March, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th ultimo, with enclosures thereto—namely, correspondence with Washington on the subjects of the employment of the "Monowai" in the San Francisco Service, and the departure of the steamers from San Francisco on Thursday. I note the points of your letter.

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I am, &c.,

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

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 53.

Mr. GRAY to the SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th March, 1891.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th January last, informing me on the subjects of the contribution from your department towards the cost of the renewed San Francisco mail-service (1890-91), and the payment for the conveyance by the service of correspondence from Canada and other places sent in transit through the United States. I am obliged to you for the information, which has been noted.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, for the Postmaster-General.

The Superintendent of Foreign Mails, Post Office Department, Washington, D.C.

No. 54.

Mr. GRAY to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steamship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 31st March, 1891.

I have the honour to enclose herewith, for your information, a copy of the order dated the 9th January last, made by the Postmaster-General of the United States, for a payment at the rate of \$60,000 per annum to the Oceanic Steamship Company for the conveyance of United States mails by the San Francisco mail-service during 1891.

I have, &c.,

The Managing Director, Union Steamship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 55.

Mr. R. J. CREIGHTON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 6th March, 1891.

I have the honour to report that the Ocean Postage Subsidy Bill, having been passed by Congress and signed by the President, is now law. The Bill, as finally passed, was a compromise measure, and does not include any provision for American shipping apart from payment for carrying the ocean mail. At least, I gather this from the synopsis of the Bill telegraphed to the local press.

The law provides for four classes of steamships: First class, iron or steel, 8,000 tons and upwards, 20 knots, \$4 per mile; second class, iron or steel, 5,000 tons and upwards, 16 knots, \$2 per mile; third class, iron or steel, 2,500 tons and upwards, 14 knots, \$1 per mile; fourth class, iron, steel, or wood, 1,500 tons and upwards, 12 knots, 66 $\frac{2}{3}$ cents per mile, for each outward voyage. Ships of the first, second, and third classes are to be constructed with particular reference to prompt and economical conversion into auxiliary naval cruisers on plans approved by