

vices announce that the "Arawa," which left here on the 12th ultimo, arrived at Plymouth on the 21st instant—in forty days. Our last month's alternate mail by the Federal service, which left the Bluff on the 13th, and Melbourne on the 22nd ultimo, was timed to reach London on the 26th instant, so that there has been a considerable gain by sending bulk mails by the "Arawa." The "Ionic," leaving Lyttelton on the 6th proximo, will probably take another large mail. The Post Office continues to forward specially-addressed correspondence by any route or steamer; and the arrangements so far have been acceptable to the public.

I enclose copy of your cable of the 28th November, of mine of the 7th instant, and of your reply of the 22nd.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

I have, &c.,

J. BALLANCE.

No. 84.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.
SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 16th December, 1891.

On receipt of your letter of the 10th September last, stating that delay frequently occurs in the transfer from the mail packet to the train at New York of the mails from this country for New Zealand *via* San Francisco, I addressed a communication to the United States Post Office on the subject.

The Postmaster-General at Washington, although assuring me in his reply that for many months past the closed mails in question have been despatched from New York by the first available train after the arrival of the packet, states that, as an additional precaution against delay, arrangements have now been made by his Administration whereby they shall be transferred direct from the packet to the train without passing through the New York Post Office as heretofore. I may add that, with the view of facilitating this arrangement, this department has addressed to each of the British contract packet companies concerned a request that the mails for New Zealand which are placed on board the packet at Liverpool or Queenstown may be kept separate from the other mails on board.

I am, &c.,

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

ED. H. REA.

No. 85.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. CREIGHTON, the Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 8th February, 1892.

With reference to the passage in your letter of the 17th August last, in which you recommend that the London Post Office be moved to take steps to have the outward colonial mails more expeditiously transferred to the train at New York, I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of the reply to the letter which I wrote that office on the subject.

You will see that every precaution appears to be now provided for to insure the promptest despatch of the mails overland.

I have, &c.,

R. J. Creighton, Esq.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco, California.

No. 86.

Mr. GRAY to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 9th February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th December last, and to thank you for the action taken to facilitate the prompt transference of the colonial mails from the contract packets on their arrival at New York to the railway trains for San Francisco.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

For the Postmaster-General.

No. 87.

Mr. GRAY to Mr. CREIGHTON, Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 17th February, 1892.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th ultimo, enclosing correspondence with the Superintendent, Foreign Mails, Washington, on the subject of the overland-transit charges; also with the Hamburg American Packet Company, with further reference to the detention of the "Furst Bismarck," and the payment of \$40.

The alteration of the sailing-day of the steamers from San Francisco from Thursday to the following Friday will be made in the time-tables forthwith; and I have advised the Union Steamship Company of the change. It is very unfortunate that the change should be found necessary.

It is to be hoped that your further representations in the matter of the overland-transit charges may not be altogether in vain, and that the resolution which was to be submitted to Congress authorising the Postmaster-General to remit the charges will pass. I would, however, point out that Mr. Spreckels is under a misapprehension in supposing that any reduction in the transit charges will result in a corresponding increase in the payments to the contractors.