

Enclosure in No 35.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 14th November, 1894.

Referring to my letter of the 22nd ultimo, in which you were informed that an inquiry had been addressed to the United States Post Office respecting the arrival in this country of the mail from New Zealand, *via* San Francisco, in two portions on the 4th ultimo, I beg leave to state that a reply has now been received, from which it appears that the irregularity was caused by the mistake of an officer in the United States railway postal service, by whom part only instead of the whole of the mail was transferred to the proper train at Albany, New York.

The United States Post Office expresses its regret for this unfortunate occurrence, which, it states, has been seriously noticed.

I am, &c.,

Sir W. B. Perceval, K.C.M.G.

H. BUXTON FORMAN.

No. 36.

The RESIDENT AGENT, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 13th December, 1894.

Again reverting to my communication of the 18th August, and your reply thereto of the 4th October, in reference to the question of the sailing-day of the steamers conveying the outward mails from this port, I would say that my communication was intended to obtain from you an instruction as to the course to pursue in case the fast transmission of the Atlantic should land the mails at this port on Wednesday, prior to the advertised date of sailing. Their arrival in the summer season on that day could be pretty well assured on receipt of the telegram of departure from New York.

It would therefore seem advisable that I should be instructed whether I am to endeavour to secure the departure of the steamer immediately on the arrival of the mail on these special occasions or whether the time-table date must in all cases be adhered to.

The arrival of the steamers in New York lately, even during the winter season, has only escaped the Friday's despatch from that port by from one to three hours, and therefore the case cited above is liable to occur at any time.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

W Gray, Esq.,

Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington, New Zealand.

No. 37

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the RESIDENT AGENT, San Francisco.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 17th January, 1895.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th ultimo, asking whether, in the event of the mails for the colonies arriving at San Francisco on the Wednesday prior to the advertised date of departure, the steamers should be despatched on that day.

I think that, even under the circumstances you mention, Thursday should be adhered to as the sailing-day from San Francisco; but if on any occasion the mails arrive at San Francisco on the Wednesday the steamers should be despatched early the following day.

I have, &c.,

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,

W GRAY, Secretary

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

No. 38.

The RESIDENT AGENT, San Francisco, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, California, 5th March, 1895.

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your communications of the 7th [not printed] and the 17th January last, the former communication informing me of the continuation of existing arrangements for mail-service between this port and the colonies, subject to the continuation of the contribution of £4,000 from the New South Wales Government, and the latter indicating that it is your opinion that, even in the event of the outward colonial mails reaching this port on the Wednesday prior to the advertised date of the steamer's departure, the contractors should not be asked to proceed any sooner than an early hour on the Thursday.

I had some conversation with the representative of Messrs. Spreckels and Co. with reference to the latter question, who states that they are, of course, desirous of doing anything in their power to expedite the transmission of the mails, but at present their steamers are advertised in the East and Europe to leave at 2 p.m. on Thursday and they think they might be liable for damages should they leave at any hour earlier than that advertised. I have suggested to them the advisability of making their advertisement read, "9 a.m." instead of "2 p.m.," as they could always defer the departure without incurring any penalty on account of breach of faith with their patrons, and I think this course will be adopted.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent.

W Gray, Esq.,

Secretary Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.