

close it is important that the officer in charge of the United States mail-service at that point, who is anxious to secure prompt transmission of such mails through his district, should know when they leave Vancouver, to enable him to make arrangements for their connection at Minneapolis. I should, therefore, feel obliged if you would arrange to advise that officer of the day and the hour of departure of the Australasian mails from Vancouver on the Canadian Pacific Railroad.

The Postmaster, Vancouver, B.C.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 13.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 13th September, 1898.

I have the honour to inform you that Mr. H. Stephenson Smith, Resident Agent for this colony in San Francisco, who left Vancouver on the 14th July last for New York with the Australasian mails, reports as follows: "I find also that it is the present practice to forward the through mails from Vancouver in the ordinary express-car, where the mails are mixed with the other express matter; and as those mails are not in the charge of the Canadian postal officials, but in that of the railroad, it does not appear who would be responsible if on arrival at Moose Jaw a bag or bags should be missing. I would suggest that all these through mails should be sent through in 'closed' cars, and under the charge of the Canadian mail officers, when, if arrangements could be effected in regard to the prior despatch of the 'Soo' line train from Moose Jaw, this car could be at once switched on to the connecting line, and its departure thus be expedited."

As you will no doubt remember, your office advised this department [No. 55, F.-6, Sess. II., 1897] that the mails would be in charge of a railway mail officer in transit through Canada. I shall, therefore, feel obliged, assuming Mr. Smith is correctly informed of the present practice, if you will cause such arrangements to be made as you may consider advisable to give effect to his suggestion.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,
Secretary.

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Ottawa, Canada.

No. 14.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 13th September, 1898.

Adverting to my letter of the 22nd June last [No. 38, F.-6A, 1898] on the subject of the Vancouver mail-service, I have the honour to inform you that the Resident Agent for this colony in San Francisco has now reported on the arrangements for the transport of the mails from Australasia, which he accompanied, across Canada and the United States of America. I enclose an extract [not printed] from the report for your information.

You will observe that Mr. Smith is of opinion that the serious delays hitherto in the through transit of the mails by the Vancouver route are attributable more to the slow-steamer connection on the Atlantic than to detention on the overland journey. I would, therefore, ask you to be so good as to look into the question of the possibility of arranging for faster steamers leaving New York with the homeward mails, and to inform me what action, if any, can be taken in this direction. Now that the American-Spanish war is over, swifter vessels should be available; and I shall be glad, in order to insure connection with such steamers, if you can also offer any suggestion for a change in the sailing-day for consideration when the time comes for preparing a new time-table under any renewed service.

I have, &c.,

W. C. WALKER,
For the Premier.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves,
Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 15.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 21st September, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo, concerning the delay to the homeward mails from the Australasian Colonies, per the "Aorangi," *via* Vancouver, in May last.

It was reported that the "Aurania," by which the mails in question were despatched from New York, was delayed two days there on account of the submarine mines in the bay; and this department is now endeavouring to learn definitely whether such was the case.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Ottawa.

No. 16.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN MAILS, Washington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 21st September, 1898.

I have the honour to inform you that it has been reported that the homeward Australasian mails, which arrived at Vancouver by the "Aorangi" in May last, one day before schedule time, were delayed at New York through the detention of the "Aurania" there for two days owing to