

The mails were therefore retained on board the "Etruria" until she reached her dock, and when they were finally brought ashore the four bags in question were inadvertently taken to the Post-office in New York with the mails for New York City, and when they were discovered at that office it was too late to despatch them by the train which conveyed to San Francisco the other bags destined for despatch per the steamer "Alameda." They were, however, forwarded by the next opportunity, but arrived at San Francisco too late for despatch per said steamer.

I have, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,

Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 115.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 25th January, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, enclosing memoranda from various divisions of the United States railway mail-service, relative to the cause of detention of a portion of the mail for the colonies in October last.

I hope there will be no more delays to the mails in reaching San Francisco. The "Alameda," however, was detained on her recent voyage for a few hours in respect to two missing bags from London to Apia, supposed to contain despatches from Berlin for the German war-vessels at Samoa, but she had to leave without the mails, as their whereabouts could not be located.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq.,

Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

No. 116.

The SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL Wellington.

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

1st February, 1899.

SIR,—

I have the honour, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to inform you that the Postmaster, San Francisco, has been instructed to hereafter make up and despatch mails for the Australasian Colonies by means of steamers sailing from San Francisco for Honolulu in cases in which said steamers are due to arrive at Honolulu in time to connect with the steamers sailing from Vancouver for said colonies *via* Honolulu.

Correspondence sent from San Francisco to Vancouver for despatch per the steamers in question must leave San Francisco four days before the steamer sails from Vancouver. But a steamer leaving San Francisco the same day that the steamer leaves Vancouver, or possibly a day later, should reach Honolulu in advance of the steamer from Vancouver, so that the foregoing arrangement will be a substantial improvement in the service between the United States and the colonies.

It is possible that mails from the colonies for San Francisco may sometimes be transferred at Honolulu with advantage from a steamer sailing for Vancouver to a steamer sailing for San Francisco, and in that case the Postmaster-General would be glad if you would authorise your Mail-agents on the steamers to make such transfers.

I am, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS,

Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

[Read here No. 265.]

No. 117.

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

SIR,—

Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 4th February, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your two communications dated the 29th and 30th December last [see Nos. 253 and 111], the former referring to the discrepancy reported in the number of bags received at Minneapolis *ex* "Aorangi" on the 7th November, also advising me that instructions have been given to the Vancouver Mail Agents to advise of the dates of departure of the mails east-bound; and the latter referring to the action of the captain of the "Etruria" in delaying delivery of mails at New York in October last, also permitting me to use my discretion in the detention of the mail-steamers at this port upon occasions on which portions of the United States mails fail to connect at the same time as the colonial-British mails arrive,