

We would suggest the possibility of arranging that the mail should not arrive in London towards the end of the week in which the San Francisco mail is to leave London. Great inconvenience has been caused of late by the frequency with which the Vancouver mail has been delivered on the eve of the departure of the outgoing San Francisco mail.

Might we also suggest that, if the opportunity arise in the course of the negotiations to discuss the date and hour of departure, efforts be made to avoid the San Francisco mail leaving London on Saturday afternoons. As you are aware, it is almost imperative for merchants to keep their letters open until the last moment, and, accordingly, the departure of the mails on Saturday afternoons means the spoiling of the much-needed Saturday half-holiday for those who are actively engaged in business correspondence with New Zealand.

Yours, &c.,

W. WEDDEL AND Co.

The Agent General for New Zealand, 13, Victoria Street, S.W.

No. 132.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 16th April, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communications of the 1st, 2nd, 9th, and 10th March [see Nos. 121, 65, 123, and 124].

In reply, I would state that the late change in respect of the Canadian service will prevent the later connection at Honolulu contemplated. As regards the new arrangement for the later despatch of mails from Auckland, the first mail under the new schedule arrived here on time, was forwarded to New York same day, and duly made the connection at that port with the "St. Louis" as anticipated, and left for Southampton on the 12th instant. I am not yet advised of their arrival at destination.

In regard to your inquiry as to the delay of the homeward mails *ex* "Mariposa" from New York in January, my advices are to the effect that these mails left New York on the 18th of that month per the steamers "St. Louis" and "Germanic." This date would be Wednesday, and not Thursday and Friday as your communication would indicate, the arrival on the other side being the 26th of that month.

I have made application through our Congressman for a copy of the Hanna-Payne Shipping Bill, and hope to be enabled to forward a copy thereof by the next steamer. [See No. 113.]

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 133.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, Cal., 16th April, 1899.

I have the honour to report that I received a telegram on the 29th ultimo from the Postmaster, New York, informing me that New Zealand mails *ex* "Majestic" were *en route* to San Francisco. Next day I received a communication from the Railway Mail-service Department to the same effect, with the added information that the Washington authorities had sent these mails on to San Francisco in response to a request from the British Post Office, who had also urged that they should be despatched from this port without delay.

I concluded that these mails were those intended to have been despatched by the Canadian route prior to receipt of information as to discontinuation of the subsidy by the New Zealand Government.

After consulting with the postal authorities at this port, and appreciating the serious delay that would occur if these mails were detained for the departure of the "Mariposa" on the 19th April, and also finding that the mails could be despatched from this port to Honolulu per the "Australia" on the 5th April, there connecting with "Warrimoo," with a possible further connection at Fiji, I deemed it wise to send the following cable [see No. 128], and on the 2nd instant received the following reply [see No. 129].

By some as yet unexplained error at Chicago, however, these mails were despatched to Vancouver. Therefore, under the instructions contained in your cable, I telegraphed the Mail-agent at Vancouver to return the mails here for despatch per "Mariposa." This was done, and the mails are here now awaiting the departure of that steamer on Wednesday evening. I trust that my action is in accordance with your desires.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 134.

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

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 12th May, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th ultimo, stating that the mails by the R.M.S. "Mariposa," which left Auckland on Monday, the 20th March (the