

that the Federal mails reach Auckland from six to eight days ahead of the Vancouver mails which left London the following week. As stated in my telegram, if no improvement in the deliveries by way of Vancouver results in three or four months' time, I will consider whether all London correspondence posted within a week after the despatch of the San Francisco mail should not be sent by the Federal steamer. This, however, is contingent on the continuance of Wednesday as the day of departure of the Union Steam Ship Company's steamer from Sydney for Auckland. As you are aware, these steamers are not under contract, and the time-table may be liable to change.

A copy of the statement referred to in my telegram of the 6th instant, which was posted by the last mail, is now forwarded herewith.

I have, &c.,

W. C. WALKER, for the Premier.

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

Enclosure in No. 231.

STATEMENT showing the Dates of Arrival of London Correspondence posted during the Week following the Departure of the San Francisco Mail—(1) If sent by Federal Packets; and (2) if held over for Despatch *via* Vancouver.

Date of Despatch from London.	Dates of Arrival if sent by Federal Packet.			Dates of Arrival if held over for Subsequent Vancouver Mail.			Gain of Time through Despatch by Federal Route.		
	Auckland.	Wellington.	Invercargill.	Auckland.	Wellington.	Invercargill.	Auckland.	Wellington.	Invercargill.
1898.	1898.	1898.	1898.	1898.	1898.	1898.	Number of days.	Number of days.	Number of days.
April 15 ..	May 23 ..	May 25 ..	May 28 ..	May 31 ..	May 29 ..	June 1 ..	8	4	4
May 13 ..	June 20 ..	June 20 ..	June 22 ..	June 27 ..	June 25 ..	June 27 ..	7	5	5
June 10 ..	July 18 ..	July 17 ..	July 18 ..	July 25 ..	July 23 ..	July 26 ..	7	6	8
July 8 ..	Aug. 15 ..	Aug. 16 ..	Aug. 19 ..	Aug. 23 ..	Aug. 22 ..	Aug. 24 ..	8	6	5
Aug. 5 ..	Sept. 12 ..	Sept. 13 ..	Sept. 16 ..	Sept. 18 ..	Sept. 17 ..	Sept. 19 ..	6	4	3

General Post Office, Wellington, 29th September, 1898.

No. 232.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 19th October, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 18th ultimo, reporting the late arrival of the "Miowera" at Vancouver, and that the mails consequently missed despatch by the fast steamer which left New York on the following Tuesday.

The report of the Mail-agent shows that the late arrival of the "Miowera" was due to her detention for thirty hours off the coast just before reaching Victoria owing to dense fog.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary

H. Stephenson Smith, Esq., Resident Agent for New Zealand, San Francisco.

No. 233.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th October, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd August last, in reply to mine of the 28th April, with reference to the Pacific sea-rates now collected by your department on the correspondence from Great Britain, &c., for this colony conveyed by the Vancouver mail-service since this department became a party to the contract, and to express the Postmaster-General's regret that you do not see your way to relinquish the sea-rates in question in favour of the contractors.

I am to remind you that at the time it was decided this colony should subsidise the service it was not anticipated that your department would claim the sea-rates on the New Zealand mails from London, as these mails would not have been forwarded by the Vancouver service but for the fact of the colony becoming a party to the contract. On the assumption, therefore, that the sea-rates would be paid over to the contractors, as in the case of the San Francisco service, the resolutions of the House of Representatives, authorising the Government to contract for a mail-service *via* Vancouver, provided that the payments and contributions from non-contracting countries were receivable by the contractors. The resolutions were duly forwarded to and tacitly accepted by your office.

I am also to point out that you have misapprehended the relation of the United States to the San Francisco service. That country for years has been the principal contributor towards the