

which was mentioned as having been arranged by your Government to commence in June next year, has for the present been abandoned.

The latest Press advices which have reached this office indicate that, although the negotiations with Messrs. Petersen, Tate, and Co. have fallen through, there is a prospect of another firm accepting the terms offered by Canada; and, as the establishing of a fast Atlantic service would largely influence the Postmaster-General in respect of the continuance of the subsidy to the mail-service across the Pacific from Wellington to Vancouver, I should be obliged if you would inform me what is the present position in the matter.

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Ottawa.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 241.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGER, New Zealand Shipping Company, Wellington.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 21st November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant [not printed], forwarding copy of a report by Captain Hay on the causes of the delay to the R.M.S. "Warrimoo" on her recent voyage. Such delays are extremely unfortunate, in view of the fact that even a few hours' late arrival at Vancouver means that the mails are not forwarded from there by Thursday's train, and therefore miss the fast Atlantic steamer from New York for Great Britain on the Wednesday. As there is no other fast steamer until the Saturday, the mails are consequently delayed in their arrival at London two, if not three, days.

I trust that hereafter it may be possible to minimise the delays southward also, and that circumstances may not be so unfavourable in future.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

The Manager, New Zealand Shipping Company (Limited), Wellington.

No. 242.

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

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 23rd November, 1898.

In accordance with the request in your letter of the 30th September last, I have pleasure in forwarding herewith a table [not printed], showing the number of days occupied in the transmission to Melbourne, Bluff, Christchurch, Wellington, and Auckland of mails by the steamers of the Peninsular and Oriental line from the beginning of the current year up to the present time.

It is regretted that the dates of arrival of the mail at Sydney are not available without reference to that office. In but few instances, however, would the time from Melbourne to Sydney exceed one day.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, for the Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

No. 243.

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

SIR,— Post Office Department, Canada, Ottawa, 23rd November, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th September last [No. 13, F.-6B, 1898], giving an extract from a report made by Mr. H. Stephenson Smith, Resident Agent for New Zealand in San Francisco, to the effect that through mails from Vancouver, in which are included mails from New Zealand, are forwarded in the ordinary express car, where they are mixed up with other express matter; Mr. Smith adding that, as the mails in question are in the charge of the railway, and not in that of the officials of this department, it does not appear who would be responsible if on arrival at Moose Jaw a bag or bags should be missing.

In drawing attention to this report, you mention that you were given to understand that the New Zealand mails would be in charge of a railway mail-officer in transit through Canada.

In reply, I am to say that, while this department is obliged, in consequence of the too limited accommodation provided in the regular postal car, to obtain conveyance for through mails in the express car, the mails in question are understood to be under its supervision, and are checked in and out of the car by officers of the postal service.

I am to add that this department would be happy to adopt any further practicable measures which might tend to the greater safety of your mails while in transit through Canada; and, if you would send a waybill to accompany those which have to be transferred to the United States postal service at Portal, a receipt for such mails would be obtained thereon from a United States postal officer, and the bill would be returned to your office by the first mail.

I have, &c.,

R. M. COULTER, Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand.