

New Zealand by the intercolonial trade. But when the steamers arrive here we find out that the correspondence which they would have brought has been held back in London to be sent *via* Vancouver. And, as a matter of fact, we do not think that the Vancouver mail has ever yet brought later English papers than have previously been in the colony by way of Suez. As a mail route, the Vancouver service has been hopelessly beaten, and it is impossible to expedite it in any way. Parliament must consider the subject during the present session, because both mail contracts terminate in March next. It is improbable, however, that any change will be made, so that persons in England will have to keep in mind that their letters may be delayed if they do not address them, in default of the San Francisco mail, *via* Suez."

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Enclosure 4 in No. 248.

The SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., 14th November, 1898.

Referring to my letter of the 3rd instant, and to your letter of the 9th instant, I am directed by the Agent-General to inform you that he has now received the statement relating to the arrival of the mails in New Zealand, copy of which I herewith transmit; and in reference thereto his Government desire him to represent that the Vancouver mail-service, being only recently established, has no doubt been irregular, and if no improvement takes place in three or four months' time his Government will consider whether all correspondence posted during the week after the despatch of the San Francisco mail shall not be forwarded by the Federal mail-service.

Meanwhile the Agent-General has been desired to express the urgent wish of his Government that no change be made on this side at present, it being already in the power of those wishing to send their letters, &c., by the Federal service to do so by specially superscribing them.

The Secretary, General Post Office, E.C.

I am, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY.

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Sub-enclosure to Enclosure 4 in No. 248.

[See Enclosure in No. 231.]

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Enclosure 5 in No. 248.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 25th November, 1898.

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 14th instant, replying to letters from this office, in which the question was raised of modifying the existing arrangement whereby the correspondence from this country for New Zealand is sent exclusively *via* San Francisco and *via* Vancouver, except when specially directed by the senders for transmission by another route.

The table prepared at the General Post Office, Wellington, of which you forwarded a copy, fully confirms the opinion formed here in regard to the unsatisfactory working of the Canadian-Australian service, and, in the circumstances, the Postmaster-General, while regretting his inability to accede to the wishes of the New Zealand Government, feels that, in the interests of the public, he has no alternative but to decide that correspondence for the colony posted in this country up to the Friday following a despatch *via* San Francisco shall not be kept back and included in the next despatch *via* Vancouver, but shall be forwarded *via* Suez. He has therefore given directions accordingly.

I am to add that, if in the course of the next three or four months the working of the Canadian-Australian service should show the advantages originally expected, the Postmaster-General will be happy to ask the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to reconsider the question of reverting to the arrangement which is now being modified.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I am, &c.,

S. WALPOLE.

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Enclosure 6 in No. 248.

The SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, Westminster, S.W., 29th November, 1898.

I am directed by the Agent-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 25th instant, and to express his regret that the Postmaster-General has not seen his way to accede to the wishes of his Government that no change be made on this side—at all events, for the present—as regards despatching the mails by the Vancouver route.

I am also directed to inquire at what date the proposed alteration by which the letters hitherto retained for the mail *via* Vancouver are to be forwarded by the Federal service will commence.

The Secretary, General Post Office, E.C.

I am, &c.,

WALTER KENNAWAY.