

until early on the Monday morning. It appears to me that a mail-steamer ought to be able, under such circumstances, to make the passage from Wellington to Sydney in four days; and, if that is so, these boats would have arrived in Sydney early upon the morning of the Friday following their departure from Wellington.

Trusting that you may be able to point out to the Board that they are exempt from the provisions of the Police Offences Act, and that they have a discretion in dealing with this matter, when I can assure you that your suggestions will meet with every careful consideration from the Board.

I am, &c.,

WILLIAM FERGUSON, Secretary.

The Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

### No. 300.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Wellington Harbour Board, Wellington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 11th January, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th instant in reference to mine of the 31st ultimo, in connection with the appeal to your Board to grant facilities for landing cargo from the Vancouver mail-steamers when they arrive here on Sundays.

It had been understood that your Board's by-law prohibiting the discharging of cargo on Sundays was framed irrespective of the provisions of "The Police Offences Act, 1884," with the intention of minimising Sunday labour; but it was thought that, under the exceptional circumstances mentioned by the New Zealand Shipping Company, the discharging of a Vancouver mail-steamer on a Sunday to enable her to continue her voyage might be regarded as a work of necessity. This, apparently, is the position taken up by the Auckland Harbour Board, which, I am informed, has not experienced, and does not anticipate, any difficulties under "The Police Offences Act, 1884."

From the accompanying statement [not printed] it will be seen that the San Francisco mail-steamers on twelve occasions have been discharged and coaled at Auckland on Sundays since 1886.

As desired, I have also to inform you that the "Aorangi," in April last, reached Sydney at 6.35 a.m. on Friday; the "Warrimoo," in May, at 11.20 p.m. on Saturday; and the "Miowera," in October, at 11.20 a.m. on Friday.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, Wellington Harbour Board, Wellington.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

### No. 301.

The DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Sydney, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington  
Postal and Electric Telegraph Department, General Post Office, Sydney,

21st January, 1899.

SIR,—

I am directed to inform you that representations have been made to this department by the managing agents in Sydney of the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail line that the steamers of that line are occasionally delayed at Vancouver by the late arrival of mails; consequently they arrive late at Wellington, which necessitates the discharge of cargo and other work being performed there after the ordinary Customs working-hours.

They therefore desire that facilities may be afforded by the Government of your colony which will enable the working of these steamers at Wellington to be expedited as much as possible at any time outside the ordinary Customs working-hours, so as to avoid delay in delivery of the mails in Sydney; and the Postmaster-General will be glad if their wishes in the matter can be complied with.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON, Deputy Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

### No. 302.

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

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 28th January, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st instant, stating that representations had been made to your department by the managing agents in Sydney of the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Steamship Company that the steamers of that line, when they arrive late, are occasionally delayed through being unable to discharge cargo after ordinary Customs working-hours.

In reply, I have to inform you that it is the Harbour Board, over which this department has no control, and not the Customs Department, that is concerned in the matter. There would be no trouble with the Customs, but the Harbour Board's by-laws prevent steamers discharging cargo at the wharf on Sunday, and the Board refuses to relax its regulations in favour of the Vancouver mail-steamers being unloaded when they arrive on that day. The Board has been approached on the matter, with the view of facilitating the transmission of the mails from Vancouver for Australia, but it is regretted that the desired permission to work the vessels on Sunday cannot be obtained.

I have, &c.,

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.

W. GRAY, Secretary.