

The occurrence is regretted, but appears to have been due to an unavoidable accident for which the railroad company should not, in the opinion of this department, be held strictly accountable. No effort will be spared, however, to prevent any delay in the United States service to the mails exchanged between Great Britain and the Australasian Colonies *via* the United States; but in the long railway transit between New York and San Francisco delays will sometimes occur notwithstanding every effort is made to prevent them.

It may be well to add that the irregularity in question was explained to the Resident Agent for New Zealand at San Francisco by the Superintendent of the Railway Mail-service of this department at Chicago in a letter dated the 28th December last.

I have, &c.,

N. M. BROOKS, Superintendent of Foreign Mails.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 145.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 19th March, 1901.

BRINDISI leaving London week before Frisco reaching North Island one two days after succeeding Frisco. Request Post Office send North Island mails Brindisi only first week after Frisco: South Island as now.

No. 146.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 28th March, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 28th February [not printed] announcing that you had requested the Washington authorities to detain the steamer at San Francisco for the Australasian mails in cases where accidents or delays may occur.

I herewith enclose some correspondence [extract from letter below] in connection with the misconnection last steamer of a bag of letters delayed or missent by the United States Postal Department at New York or Chicago. I did not receive any report of this matter until the enclosed reports reached here from Chicago. Mr. Lindsay has opened this bag, and finds it to contain registered packets. He will no doubt make a full report of the matter to you.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH, Resident Agent.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 146.

(Extract.)

Chicago, 6th March, 1901.

In connection with the consignment of British-Australian mails received at Chicago on the morning of the 4th March, and forwarded *via* Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy train No. 13 of that date, the transfer clerk at the Dearborn Station in this city reports the receipt of one sack of letter-mail from London, addressed to New Zealand, from Port Huron and Chicago train No. 3, due at 9.55 p.m. on the 4th March.

It is evident that the sack in question was missent from New York City. It was forwarded from Chicago *via* Chicago and Council Bluffs train No. 7, 5th March, and will undoubtedly miss the steamer connection at San Francisco, California.

No. 147.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SUPERINTENDENT of FOREIGN MAILS, Washington.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 1st April, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 15th February last, in connection with the detention of the mail-steamers at San Francisco to await the British closed mails for New Zealand and the Australian States, whenever that course may be necessary to secure the prompt despatch of mails which may have been delayed *en route* to San Francisco.

I note how far the powers of your department extend in the matter, and beg to thank you for the consideration shown.

I have, &c.,

The Superintendent,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

Office of Foreign Mails, Post Office Department, Washington, D.C.