

Government quite agrees that the repeated late deliveries of the colonial mails in London despatched by way of America make it inadvisable that you should press for a full recognition of the San Francisco route at present. However, as soon as the service is running smoothly and regularly, I should be glad if you would again approach the London Post Office and ask that effect be given to the request contained in my cable of the 19th March last, copy of which was forwarded with my letter of the 20th idem [not printed]. The recent delays, although most vexatious, have, as you are now aware, been unavoidable owing to the repeated accidents to the machinery of the mail-steamers. The inconvenience and loss to the public through the irregular arrivals at London are fully recognised, and it is hoped that the time-table will hereafter be more strictly observed—that is, after the present despatch of the "Sonoma," which should have left Sydney on the 30th ultimo, but will be detained until the 9th instant to permit of extensive repairs being made to her machinery owing to two accidents on the downward voyage. To meet this delay all accumulated mail-matter was forwarded to Australia to be sent by the Federal mail which was to leave Sydney yesterday and Melbourne to-day.

I note your suggestion that the time-table should provide for a Wednesday or Thursday arrival in London, but, as you probably know, the J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company have declined to enter into any mail-service contract with this colony until they have had experience of the running of the new steamers, and have given Government to understand that the time-table, which was framed by the company, would not be altered. The need for a change had, however, been represented to the company, and when the time comes for discussing the terms of a contract this matter will not be lost sight of.

I attach copy of the statements for January and February last rendered to the London Post Office, showing the times of arrival of mails from the United Kingdom by the San Francisco and Suez routes. Copies of future statements will be sent you regularly.

I have, &c.,

JAS. MCGOWAN, for the Premier.

P.S.—I am sending you the following cablegram to-day [No. 76].

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

No. 166.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 11th May, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd ultimo, enclosing further correspondence in connection with the question of utilising the San Francisco route two weeks out of three for correspondence for the North Island of New Zealand.

In reply, I would refer you to my letter of the 8th instant, dealing fully with the matter.

I have, &c.,

JAS. MCGOWAN, for the Premier.

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

No. 167.

MESSRS. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),
Auckland, 15th May, 1901.

SIR,—

We have to thank you for your telegram of 13th instant [not printed], advising the "Sierra" left San Francisco on the 9th instant at 11 a.m. We have to confirm our telegram of yesterday's date [not printed] to you passing on advice from Sydney that the "Mariposa" would take the "Sonoma's" run from San Francisco, leaving that port on the 30th instant at 10 a.m. We advised you in the same telegram that our San Francisco office inform us that hereafter their steamers will leave San Francisco on Thursday morning at 10 o'clock, instead of Wednesday night as heretofore, arriving here on time-table date.

Yours, &c.,

HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 168.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to Messrs. HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE, Auckland.

GENTLEMEN,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 17th May, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, covering time-table of the Oceanic Steamship Company, showing that the mails *via* San Francisco are due in London on the Friday previous to the Saturday given in the Post and Telegraph Guide.

Under the present conditions, the department does not consider it worth while to make any alteration in its time-table. It is doubtful whether the mails will be delivered in London on the Friday.

I have, &c.,

Messrs. Henderson and Macfarlane, Auckland,

W. GRAY, Secretary.