

explained the situation, the substitution of the steamer "Umbria" for the "Lucania" upon the Atlantic rendering no action necessary at present. I have not therefore held any communication with the Washington authorities in regard to any change in departure. I have also to acknowledge with thanks the receipt of several copies of the contract for the San Francisco mail-service for the period from November, 1894, to November, 1897.

W. Gray, Esq.,
Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

(No. 13.)

The RESIDENT AGENT FOR NEW ZEALAND, San Francisco, to the Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

San Francisco, 5th March, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 23rd of January, with enclosures, having reference to the question of despatching the contract steamer from this port on Wednesday should circumstances warrant that course. I am pleased to note that Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers are willing to effect this change. You will, however, have learned from my previous communications that at present no advantage has been derived from the establishment of the fast express service. Close attention to the matter, however, will be given, and if the New York departure indicates an early delivery at this end I will endeavour to secure the advantage of a Wednesday departure.

W. Gray, Esq.,
Secretary to the General Post Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent.

(No. 14.)

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),
Dunedin, 10th March, 1896.

SIR,—

Referring to your favour of the 20th December on the subject of an accelerated train-service between Chicago and San Francisco, as mentioned at the time, we passed on a copy of your remarks to Messrs. J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company, and by the last mail we received their reply, as follows: "Mail-service: We note the suggestion of the Secretary of the General Post Office that the day of sailing from here be changed to Wednesday. The same suggestion was made to us by the Resident Agent for New Zealand here. We talked over the matter with him, but nothing was done, for the reason that we found that the mails were not likely to get here before Thursday, as they are now carried across the Atlantic by a slower steamer, the 'Umbria,' in consequence of which they have not reached here until Friday, this month or last; besides which, we understand that the accelerated train-service will only continue during the winter months. Of course, if it should be continued longer, and quicker time should be made across the Atlantic, we will take up the matter again, but at present we do not consider it advisable to make any change in the schedule." From which you will gather that they do not consider it advisable meantime to make any change in the sailing-day from San Francisco.

W. Gray, Esq.,
Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
T. W. WHITSON,
For Acting General Manager.

(No. 15.)

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office,
Wellington, 19th March, 1896.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, enclosing the reply of the J. D. Spreckels and Brothers Company to the representations which you conveyed to them on my letter of the 20th December last, in the matter of an accelerated train-service between Chicago and San Francisco. I notice that the Messrs. Spreckels deprecate any change from the present day of sailing from San Francisco.

Since I wrote you the Agent-General has been also written to, and asked again to represent to the London Post Office the disabilities attached to the use of the slower class of steamers for the conveyance of the colonial mails to New York; and I hope it may yet be possible, as a result of the Agent-General's action, to announce that the mails will leave San Francisco a day earlier than at present.

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company
of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

I have, &c.,
W. GRAY, Secretary.

(No. 16.)

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

SIR,—

San Francisco, 31st March, 1896.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 5th of February, referring to the midnight despatch of mail-steamers from this port when necessary, and