

It has been impracticable to do anything respecting a Vancouver service, as the present contract between the Canadian-Australian Royal Mail Line and the Governments of Canada, New South Wales, and Queensland does not terminate until 1903. Advantage is taken of the service whenever circumstances are suitable. Since the steamers have again called at Fiji, mails for both America and the United Kingdom are forwarded regularly from Auckland, the Auckland-Fiji steamer being timed to reach Suva one or two days in advance of the departure of the contract vessel for Vancouver.

It has not been considered advisable to reopen negotiations for an intercolonial service connecting with the Federal mail-service at Sydney and Melbourne. Nothing will now be done until after the Premiers' Conference in London, which it is understood is to consider the whole question of ocean mail-services as affecting the Commonwealth and New Zealand.

RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS on Account of the SAN FRANCISCO, PENINSULAR and ORIENTAL, and ORIENT MAIL-SERVICES for the Year 1901.

<i>San Francisco Service.</i>										
DR.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Payments by weight—										
On mails from New Zealand		...	...	18,958	1	5				
On mails from the Australian States, Fiji, &c....		...	...	1,289	1	6				
(from 1st January to 30th June only)							20,247	2	11	
Interprovincial service, mail agents, &c.		...	...				5,582	6	4	
Transit charges	{ San Francisco to New York	...	...				4,300	7	5	
	{ New York to Queenstown	...	...				1,822	10	9	
									31,952	7 5
CR.										
Postages collected in the colony		...	...				13,569	5	9	
Contributions from non-contracting colonies		...	...				1,289	1	6	
									14,858	7 3
Net cost to the colony		...	...						£17,094	0 2

816,054 letters, 9,912 post-cards, 506,667 books, and 1,065,486 newspapers were received from, and 917,437 letters, 11,142 post-cards, 184,085 books, and 905,751 newspapers were despatched to, the United Kingdom *via* San Francisco. The average time within which mails were delivered by the San Francisco service was—From Auckland to London, 30·88 days, as against 30·85 days in 1900; and from London to Auckland, 30·94 days, as compared with 31·71 days in the previous year. The shortest delivery was made in 28 days.

Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Lines (Federal Mail-service).

DR.		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Payments to P. and O. and Orient lines							
Transit charges across Australia	...	3,604	12	10			
Transit charges across Europe	...	219	17	9			
Gratuities (to and from Australia)	...	468	5	7			
		1,756	9	8			
					6,049	5	10
CR.							
Postages collected in the colony	...	2,051	8	2			
Postages, &c., from London and foreign offices	...	1,323	16	4			
					3,375	4	6
Net cost to the colony	...				£2,674	1	4

The number of letters, post-cards, books, and newspapers conveyed from and to the United Kingdom by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient packets were: Received—745,357 letters, 9,052 post-cards, 403,396 books, and 1,657,104 newspapers; despatched—144,036 letters, 1,749 post-cards, 23,612 books, and 135,211 newspapers.

The maximum, minimum, and average number of days within which the mails were delivered at and from London and Auckland, Wellington, Dunedin, and Bluff during 1901 by the San Francisco service and by the Peninsular and Oriental and Orient Lines was:—

	San Francisco Service.				P. and O. Line.				Orient Line.		
	Max.	Min.	Average.		Max.	Min.	Average.		Max.	Min.	Average.
London to Auckland..	33	30	30·94	..	43	36	37·62	..	43	38	39·46
Auckland to London..	33	28	30·88	..	42	38	40·00	..	45	40	41·38
London to Wellington	35	31	32·24	..	41	36	39·00	..	42	39	39·92
Wellington to London	36	29	32·53	..	44	36	42·23	..	47	40	43·68
London to Dunedin ..	36	33	33·53	..	43	39	39·63	..	46	38	40·13
Dunedin to London ..	37	31	33·94	..	43	38	40·35	..	46	41	41·98
London to Bluff ..	37	34	34·28	..	42	38	38·88	..	45	37	39·38
Bluff to London ..	38	32	34·69	..	42	37	39·60	..	45	40	41·23