

As regards the Home arrival, it was proposed to alter this office's time-table to show Friday as the day on which the mail reached London, but seeing that Saturday is the usual day of arrival—though, unfortunately, the mail has lately not always been delivered on that day—it has been kept as the due day.

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Sydney.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

No. 47.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to Mr. DUNNET, Auckland.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 28th January, 1902.

REGRET unable to forward you draft contract before you leave for the Islands.

No. 48.

Mr. DUNNET, Auckland, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Auckland, 28th January, 1902.

THANKS for wire. Am leaving to-night. Hope you will have *pro forma* contract ready for "Sonoma" on the 1st February. Have written to Spreckels saying it would go forward with her.

No. 49.

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

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),

SIR,—

Auckland, 3rd February, 1902.

Mail contract: We advised Messrs. the J. D. Spreckels and Bros. Company, San Francisco, that we were unable to send them draft of the contract by the "Sonoma," which left here on the 1st instant. We trust that you will be able to let us have it previous to the "Ventura's" leaving here on the 22nd instant. We should consider it a favour to be in receipt of it a day or two prior to the "Ventura's" sailing, so that a copy could be made for file in this office.

Yours, &c.,

HENDERSON AND MACFARLANE.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

No. 50.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to MESSRS. HENDERSON and MACFARLANE Auckland.

GENTLEMEN,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 15th February, 1902.

I have now the honour to forward rough draft of proposed mail-contract between the Postmaster-General and the J. D. Spreckels and Bros. Company, and I shall be obliged if you will, after perusal, send it to Mr. J. D. Spreckels by the outgoing mail.

I am not acquainted with the exact terms of the contract between Mr. Spreckels and the United States Post Office, and therefore am unable to determine in what respect the resolutions approved by our House of Representatives last session may be at variance with the contract, as alleged by Mr. Spreckels. The draft I now send you, it will be observed, follows the agreement made with the Union Steam Ship Company in August, 1895, with the addition of the clause fixing passenger and freight rates, from the renewed agreement of April, 1899, and the clause exempting the contract vessels from payment of harbour and dock dues and other harbour rates at the Port of Auckland.

Mr. Spreckels, no doubt, will be prepared to fix the tariff at rates, if not actually lower, certainly not higher than those adopted by the Union Steam Ship Company. In any case, the rates to and from Auckland should not be higher than the Sydney rates; and in this connection I have to direct your attention to the accompanying extract from a letter written by the Secretary of the Wellington Chamber of Commerce in December last, which I hope may receive Mr. Spreckels's earnest and favourable consideration.

After perusing the draft contract, you may perhaps favour me with your views.

I have, &c.,

Messrs. Henderson and Macfarlane,
General Agents for New Zealand, Oceanic Steamship Company,
Auckland.

W. GRAY, Secretary.