

lines. He asked if it would be possible to have those Australian mails reach New York in time to go out Saturday noon on the great steamship "Campania" for Liverpool. It meant great extra speed somewhere; but there might be a chance to do it. Crane immediately wired to W. B. Jerome, general agent at Chicago of the New York Central lines, tersely putting the proposition before him. Jerome got into hurried communication with the Lake Shore people. . . . Back came the reply to Crane in San Francisco: they would do as he had suggested. They would receive the oncoming mail at Chicago and fling it into a waiting special and force the running-rate until they should overhaul the regular flier, no matter how far it might be in advance.

"At 8.30 o'clock yesterday morning the mail-train sped out of Chicago on its swift trip toward New York. At 9 o'clock the Australian mail had not yet arrived from the West. At 10 o'clock it came in. . . . Special mail-wagons were at the station ready to tear across town with it to the Lake Shore starting-point. There it was flung into the cars of the special charger, and in another moment the great engine was getting off the mark and away on the long sprint of the new relay. One of the largest and fastest locomotives in the New York Central's service had been selected for the effort. Then the New York Central officials waited anxiously for the telegrams of progress. It was an unseen but thoroughly understood race. . . . Here in San Francisco, Carleton C. Crane was as eager as the officials in Chicago and in New York, for he had suggested the plan. . . . As Pacific Coast agent of the New York Central lines he was naturally familiar with its chain of roads—a wonderful system of 12,000 miles, made up of Michigan Central, the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern, the Big Four route, the Boston and Albany, the Pittsburg and Lake Erie, and the Lake Erie and Western Railroads.

"We have caught up on that first big lead," said Crane delightedly. This was accomplished at Toledo, a distance of 244 miles without a stoppage of any kind, the mail transferred, and arrived in New York three minutes ahead of time, or twenty-four days and fifteen minutes from Sydney. As the 'Campania' left New York at noon yesterday, the mail will reach London on the 13th September—less than thirty days from Sydney, and less than twenty-six days from New Zealand."

No. 117.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.,

23rd October, 1901.

SIR,—

I duly received your cablegram (copy enclosed) of the 9th instant, relating to the San Francisco mail-service. The contents of the cablegram were at once communicated to the Imperial Post Office; and a letter in reply received to-day states that instructions have been given for mails from this country for New Zealand to be forwarded in the usual way, as you request, pending the settlement of the question of the renewal of the contract for the mail-service between New Zealand and San Francisco.

Copies of my letter to the Imperial Post Office, and of the reply from that office, are enclosed.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

W. P. REEVES.

[For Enclosure 1 see No. 15.]

Enclosure 2 in No. 117.

The SECRETARY to the AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

13, Victoria Street, S.W., 10th October, 1901.

I am directed by the Agent-General to inform you that he has received a cablegram from his Government stating that the question of renewal of the contract for the mail-service between New Zealand and San Francisco will be submitted to the New Zealand Parliament next week, and instructing him to request you in the meantime to continue to send the mails by that route as usual.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office.

WALTER KENNAWAY.

Enclosure 3 in No. 117.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, E.C., 22nd October, 1901.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, stating that the question of the renewal of the contract for the mail-service between New Zealand and San Francisco is about to be submitted to the Colonial Parliament, and requesting that in the meantime mails from this country for New Zealand may be forwarded by that route in the usual manner.

In reply I am to inform you that the necessary instructions have been given in the matter.

I am, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

H. BUXTON FORMAN.