

No. 16.

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

SIR,— Resident Agency for New Zealand, San Francisco, 1st November, 1905.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your communications of the 26th and 29th September last [29th, two—one not printed].

I note that it is not considered feasible to put forward the departures of the steamers from Auckland for five hours in order to effect a Monday's arrival at and departure from the port of Honolulu, for the reason that it would not be possible to make the coastal connection so early. As regards the earlier departure from Sydney, the contractors do not seem to anticipate any difficulty in that respect. In respect to the pushing of the steamers when it is found that a late arrival at this port is probable, I am of the opinion that it will be futile to expect that method of insuring an early arrival.

As regards the explanation of the serious delay occasioned to the through mails destined to the colonies upon the occasion of the detention of the "Ventura" last trip, I am not at present in possession of any report from the United States postal officials regarding the matter.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,

Resident Agent for New Zealand.

To the Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[Agr. 05/53.]

No. 17.

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

Oceanic Steamship Company (American and Australian Line),

Auckland, 8th December, 1905.

SIR,—

Referring to the mails which left here by the "Ventura," voyage 27, on the 6th October, our General Passenger Agent at San Francisco writes me under date of the 2nd November, as follows:—

"The mails of the 'Ventura' caught the Tuesday morning's train, and although delay was made in reaching Omaha of four hours and Chicago about three hours, the letter mail was forwarded by the 'Umbria' on Saturday last. The letter mail went from Chicago on the Twentieth Century Limited, and reached New York at 9 a.m., the 'Umbria' sailing at 2 p.m. The newspaper mail was taken by the 'Kaiser Wilhelm der Grosse,' which would get to London on the Monday evening instead of the previous Saturday evening. If the New Zealand people had an agent in Chicago to see to the transfer, no doubt all the newspaper mails, as well as the letter mails, could have been transferred at Chicago."

The above speaks for itself, and I pass it on to you, thinking the last sentence in the paragraph may be of interest.

Yours, &c.,

V. A. SPROUL, for General Agents for New Zealand

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

[Inc. 05/40.]

No. 18.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to Mr. V. A. SPROUL, Oceanic Steamship Company, Auckland.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 13th December, 1905.

I am in receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, covering extract from a communication sent by your company's General Passenger Agent at San Francisco, in which he expresses the opinion that if this Department had had an agent at Chicago the onward transit to New York of the newspaper portion of the Colonial mails *ex* "Ventura" would have been expedited.

In reply, I beg to thank you for your letter. I question, however, whether the appointment of an agent at Chicago would be helpful, as the railway authorities would without doubt not brook any interference with the conveyance of the mails.

Yours, &c.,

W. GRAY, Secretary.

V. A. Sproul, Esq., Oceanic Steamship Company, Auckland.

No. 19.

The HIGH COMMISSIONER to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

(Telegram.)

London, 13th December, 1905.

REPORTED three hundred bags Australian mails *via* San Francisco burnt. Imperial Post Office, however, informs me no British mails destroyed.

[Inc. 06/21.]