

port. Your inquiries are as follows, viz.: (1.) At what time of the day are mails delivered? (2.) By what train are they despatched to New York? (3.) What time is occupied on the overland journey to New York? (4.) What are the names of the vessels, and what line do they connect with at New York? (5.) What day and hour do steamers leave New York, and do they sail for Queenstown or Southampton? (6.) What is the average time occupied in crossing the Atlantic?

In regard to 1 to 3, the "Mariposa" nearly always arrives at this port early in the morning—on the last trip she arrived at daylight. The mails leave here on such occasions at 10.40 a.m. by the Overland Limited by the Southern Pacific railroad. They are due in New York on the fourth morning at 9.30 a.m.—say, in three days and twenty-three hours.

4: This of course depends upon the arrival at New York. Steamers leave that port for Great Britain every day except Mondays and Fridays—the North German Lloyd's on Tuesdays, the Cunard and White Star on Wednesdays, the North German Lloyd's and French line on Thursdays, the Cunard, White Star, Hamburg-American, and the American line on Saturdays.

5: Nearly all the steamers leave New York before noon on the day of sailing, and nearly all of them sail for Plymouth or Queenstown. See the list enclosed [not printed].

6: The time occupied in crossing the Atlantic is largely dependent upon the weather experienced. The Cunard steamers "Lusitania" and "Mauretania" usually take something less than five days, the other steamers of this line six days, the White Star steamers from six to seven days, the others five and a half to seven days according to which steamer may be sailing when the mails arrive. The Cunard Steam Ship Company have now put on a fast steamer calling at Fishguard, Wales, which saves about twelve hours to London.

I enclose you a schedule [not printed] of the arrivals here by the "Mariposa," from which you will see that the day of arrival here changes every trip. Any arrival here in time for the Tuesday's 10.40 a.m. train would catch the Saturday's steamers from New York; after that the mails could not go until Tuesday at the earliest; so you see it is essential that early arrivals here should be made. There is another mail train leaving here at 9 p.m., but this train takes five days to reach New York, so it is not much better than the next morning's train. I also enclose you a schedule [not printed] of the steamers leaving New York each day. This is the official schedule issued by the Postal Department at Washington. I would say that the hour mentioned as the hour for despatch means the closing hour for mails. You can figure about two hours later for the actual departure of the steamers.

Canadian-Pacific Line: I am not in a position to give the information required in respect of this service, except that the mails leave Vancouver at 3.15 p.m., arrive Moose Jaw—where they go south by the Soo line—at 3.45 p.m. on the second day; they reach Chicago at 7 a.m. on the fourth day and New York about midday on the fifth day. In this connection I would say that it is stated that the new line from Seattle by the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul railroad will establish a fast train from Seattle in July next that will make New York in eighty-two hours, which, if connections can be made from Vancouver to Seattle, will enable the mails *via* Vancouver to reach New York in three days and about fifteen hours. This will be an important matter in connection with the transit of mails *via* Vancouver; and it will probably result in a marked decrease in the time occupied by the Southern Pacific railroad from this port as a competition consideration, as it will give a faster connection with eastern points from the Puget Sound country than now can be given from this city. I will look further into this matter, and report at a later date [not received]. As it is now, given the "Mauretania" on the Atlantic and no delays *en route*, a nine days' transit from San Francisco to London is both possible and accomplished.

I have, &c.,

H. STEPHENSON SMITH,
Resident Agent for New Zealand.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.
[P.O. 09/4193(3).]

No. 20.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 25th November, 1909.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 21st ultimo, forwarding particulars of mail matter despatched from Australian offices during the month of May last to connect with the mail contract steamers from Wellington to San Francisco *via* Tahiti.

The statement attached hereto for your acceptance shows the weights of mail matter despatched from Australia for onward conveyance from Wellington to San Francisco by the subsidised steamers *via* Tahiti during the year 1909, based on the weights of mail matter forwarded during May last to connect with the contract steamer from Wellington on the 27th idem. It will be seen that the amount due to New Zealand is £716 7s. 11d.

I have, &c.,

D. ROBERTSON, Secretary.

The Secretary, Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne.
[P.O. 09/311.]