

No. 58.

The CANADIAN TRADE COMMISSIONER, Auckland, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.
 Department of Trade and Commerce, Canada, Trade Commissioner Service,
 Auckland, New Zealand, 12th August, 1913.

SIR,—

I have the honour to acknowledge receipt of your favour of the 9th August relating to the irregular despatch of mail-steamers from Auckland to Vancouver.

These matters being outside my Department I have usually communicated with Ottawa in duplicate, and when the question of the sailing-date was under discussion in 1911, Dr. Coulter wrote to the Deputy Minister of Trade and Commerce at Ottawa, in which he said that I had made out a strong case with regard to the delay in sailing, and my hands should be strengthened in every way possible, a copy of which letter was sent to me. I therefore arranged with Sir Joseph Ward, at that time Postmaster-General, and everything was concluded satisfactorily.

I have no specific instructions from the Post Office Department to represent them in the matter under discussion, but I have sent to Dr. Coulter copies of the whole correspondence, and indicated to him that it would save time if he authorized me to deal with this specific subject as he did on a previous occasion.

I do not apprehend there will be the slightest difficulty in making arrangements suitable to all parties, and my communications with you were addressed as Trade Commissioner, and not as representing the Post Office Department specifically, because whatever is done by me must have the sanction of that Department; but to save time I inaugurated the correspondence with you. I shall no doubt hear from Dr. Coulter in due course.

I have, &c.,

W. A. BEDDOE,

Canadian Trade Commissioner.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

[Vanc. Misc. 13/77.]

No. 59.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 13th August, 1913.

I have the honour to bring under your notice that the irregular despatch of the Vancouver mail-steamers from Auckland is the cause of inconvenience to both the public and this Department. Each one of the six last trips has been commenced on the day following the due date, the time of departure ranging from 5.15 a.m. to 11 p.m.

The postponement of the despatch of the vessel on the day of departure from hour to hour interferes with the arrangements made in the Post Office for the despatch of the mail. If the vessel were to sail always at the same time the mail would be closed always at the same hour, and the making of satisfactory arrangements for its despatch thus facilitated. The postponement of the closing of the mails at the last moment for an hour or two cannot be of any advantage to the general public, and the irregular despatches must be inconvenient to the business community. It is desirable that the advertised time of closing the mail should be adhered to; but if this is to be done, clearly the constant postponement of the time of departure of the steamers must cease.

The inconvenience caused to business people by the present arrangement is strongly represented to this Department by the Canadian Trade Commissioner. He states that merchants have to stay up all night, as they do not know at what hour they may have to complete their documents. He suggests that the steamers arrive in Auckland sufficiently early to enable them to sail promptly at noon on Saturdays. Presumably the Commissioner writes as the representative of the important interests committed to him as Trade Commissioner.

This Department, in giving permission for the time of departure from Auckland to be postponed at your company's discretion, provided there was no reason to apprehend that Vancouver would not be reached on the due date, did not anticipate that the despatch of the steamers would be so very irregular as it has proved, and I shall now be glad to learn what your company proposes to do to remedy the present unsatisfactory arrangement.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

The General Manager, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.

Vanc. Misc. 13/75-6.]

No. 60.

The GENERAL MANAGER, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited),

SIR,—

Dunedin, 14th August, 1913.

With reference to your letter [No. 54] *re* Vancouver mail-service, I beg to advise that on the occasion referred to the "Makura" unfortunately did not succeed in getting pratique at Suva on the 8th ultimo, and was thus detained there until noon next day. We have not yet received the commander's report, but apparently the conditions attending the voyage from Suva were not favourable to making up lost time, as we had expected.

The reason for the delayed sailing from Auckland was that an unusually large shipment of cold-storage cargo had to be taken aboard, and the shippers' arrangements for delivering it to the ship were not complete for rapid handling. The experience thus gained has led to a great improvement, and the steamers will have no difficulty in getting good despatch in future. Had the "Makura" left Auckland two hours or an hour earlier she would have obtained pratique at and sailed from Suva on the time-table date.

I have, &c.,

R. McK. McLENNAN,

For General Manager.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Vanc. Misc. 13/88.]