

I can hardly help thinking the case is overstated. It is an unfortunate fact that at the particular time on which the London correspondent has animadverted a series of mishaps at this end did interfere with the regular receipt of mails in London, but an extraordinary coincidence of such mishaps can hardly be taken as a proof of the correspondent's assertions. The R.M.S. "Makura" was scheduled to leave Auckland for Vancouver on the 11th April last, but did not actually leave until 11 p.m. on the 12th. The vessel had reached Auckland from Sydney at 3 a.m. on the latter date, the late arrival being due to exceptionally heavy weather. It was on this voyage also between Sydney and Auckland that a fire broke out in the mail-room of the vessel. The "Makura" arrived at Vancouver two days late, and the mail reached London five days late—on the 17th instead of the 12th May—the explanation of the delay from the point of debarkation being no doubt due to missing connection with a fast steamer on the Atlantic.

The despatch of the 4th April from Wellington by the R.M.S. "Warrimoo" failed to connect at Sydney on the 8th, arriving next day, and in consequence the mails were six days late in reaching London. The "Warrimoo" experienced heavy weather on one day of her voyage, but the contractors explained that the failure was due to the poor quality of the coal supplied for the voyage, although they had done their best to get better. Under the circumstances it appeared not necessary to impose the penalty provided for the late arrival at Sydney.

The "Warrimoo" has been withdrawn from the Sydney run.

The failure to connect with the mail-train at Sydney is always notified through the New Zealand Press.

I need hardly say that I exceedingly regret the derangement of the time-table in however small a degree, not to mention the seriousness of the derangement here recorded, and my concern is not lessened by the serious consequences which the London correspondent reports. But over long sea distances and over considerable periods of time some irregularity must be contemplated. The remedy for the mishaps recounted—namely, the non-receipt of advices of goods shipped in cargo-carrying steamers—would appear to be the posting of such documents as much before the despatch of the cargoes as possible.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES,
Postmaster-General.

The President, Canterbury Chamber of Commerce, Christchurch.

No. 156.

The SECRETARY, Chamber of Commerce, Palmerston North, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Palmerston North Chamber of Commerce,

SIR,—

Palmerston North, N.Z., 9th July, 1913.

By direction of my Chamber, I forward you herewith copy of a letter [see Enclosure 2 in No. 152] received by Mellsop, Elliott, and Co., Palmerston North, from Messrs. Gilbert Anderson and Co., London, with reference to the irregular manner in which New Zealand mails are being delivered in London.

You will note that specified dates have been given, in order to make it possible to ascertain whether the complaint is well founded or not.

If the statements made are correct, it is evident that a very serious cause for investigation is shown.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

G. HIRSCH, Secretary.

No. 157.

Messrs. MELLISOP, ELLIOTT, AND CO., Palmerston North, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

Palmerston North, New Zealand, 9th July, 1913.

We enclose letter we have received from London [see Enclosure 2 in No. 152] with reference to the irregular manner in which the New Zealand mails are being delivered in London.

You will note that specified dates have been given, so that it should be possible to ascertain whether the complaint is well founded or not.

If the statements made by Messrs. Gilbert Anderson and Co. are correct, it is evident that a very serious cause for investigation is shown.

We have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

MELLISOP, ELLIOTT, AND CO.

No. 158.

The Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the HIGH COMMISSIONER.

SIR,—

Prime Minister's Office, Wellington, 15th July, 1913.

I beg to refer to your memorandum of the 16th May last, forwarding copy of a letter from Messrs. Gilbert Anderson and Co. relating to the irregular arrival of New Zealand mails in London.

I much regret that the arrival of New Zealand mails in London occasionally is erratic. Within the last few months a series of mishaps has interfered with the regular delivery of mails