

The Administration of the United States has now agreed to submit the question to your office, provided that after further consideration it is not found to be prevented by statute from paying the rates fixed by the Convention. If the Administration of the United States refers the matter to you I should be obliged by your conveying your decision to this Administration as soon as possible.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary.

The Director, International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, Berne.

[P.O. 11-430(5).]

No. 17.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the CHAIRMAN, Wellington Harbour Board, Wellington.

SIR,—

Postmaster-General's Office, Wellington, 3rd November, 1913.

In reference to our interview of the 9th ultimo, on the subject of harbour and port dues from which ocean mail-steamers claim exemption by specific contract with the Postmaster-General, I have the honour to refer you to the decision of the Court of Appeal given on the 28th ultimo, whereby the appeal of the Union Steam Ship Company against the decision of the Chief Justice that the steamers of the company were liable to your Board for port and harbour dues was dismissed.

The opinion of the Board is thus affirmed.

I have, &c.,

R. HEATON RHODES,

Postmaster-General.

The Chairman, Wellington Harbour Board, Wellington.

[Wn.-S.F. 13/77.]

No. 18.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 10th November, 1913.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd ultimo, respecting a proposed alteration from Wednesday to Saturday of the day of departure from London of the mails for this Dominion sent via San Francisco.

In view of your statement of the position it is not proposed to make any change in the existing arrangements at present.

An arrangement has been made with the Union Steam Ship Company for an extension of the New Zealand-San Francisco service, which expired last month, at the same intervals until the end of March next. The arrangement is made partly as a result of labour troubles, and will enable the company to confirm the allotment of space for freight. It will not interfere with the making of a new contract to come into force before the 31st March next if desired.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS,

For the Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

[P. & T. 36/16.]

No. 19.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGING DIRECTOR, Union Steam Ship Company, Dunedin.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 10th November, 1913.

I have the honour to refer to a proposal made by you about three months ago—that the day of departure from London of mails for this Dominion sent via San Francisco be altered from Wednesday to Saturday, with a view of increasing their volume. The matter was referred to the London Post Office, and I am now in receipt of a reply from which it appears that it is impracticable to increase the volume of mail-matter in the way proposed. At present, although the main despatch is on the Wednesday, whenever the Cunard steamer sailing from Liverpool on the Saturday following is either the "Lusitania" or the "Mauretania," a supplementary mail is sent by that vessel. The opportunities to do this will be more frequent when another fast steamer is provided as is proposed. The advantage of this faster despatch would be lost by an alteration in the day of departure from London, and a corresponding alteration in the day of sailing from San Francisco. If no alteration were made in the day of sailing from San Francisco the time from London would be either reduced by three days or increased by four days. If the former case, the connection, when the Saturday sailing from Liverpool was performed by a slower steamer, would be insecure; and in the latter case the time of transit via San Francisco would be rendered greater than that via Suez. As no advantage would accrue from the change of the day of despatch from London, it is not proposed to disturb existing arrangements at present.

I have, &c.,

W. R. MORRIS, Secretary

The Managing Director, Union Steam Ship Company of New Zealand (Limited), Dunedin.