

the 10th instant, His Excellency now transmits, for the information of the Assembly, Copies of the Minutes of Proceedings of the Executive Council upon the subject.

2. In accordance with the opinion expressed by the Council, the Governor General invites the Legislative Assembly to appropriate any sum not exceeding £50,000 a year, for a period of either seven or ten years, for the establishment of a Steam Postal Communication with England by way of Panama.

Government House,
Sydney, 27th August, 1858.

PROCEEDINGS of the Executive Council with respect to an Address from the Legislative Assembly relative to Steam Postal Communication with England.

Extract from Minute No. 58-32, dated 9th August, 1858.

Present :—

His Excellency the Governor General,
The Honorable the Vice-President of the Council,
The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer,
The Honorable the Solicitor General,
The Honorable the Secretary for Lands and Public Works.

His Excellency the Governor General lays before the Council an Address which has been presented to him by the Honorable the Speaker, embodying certain Resolutions adopted by the Legislative Assembly, on the 6th instant, with reference to the existing Steam Postal Communication with England via India, and a proposed communication via Panama; and, in deference to the wish expressed in the concluding paragraph of this Address, His Excellency now submits the subject for the consideration of the Council.

2. The Council accordingly proceed to consider the several matters touched upon in the Address, a copy of which is hereto annexed; and, after a lengthened deliberation, advise that His Excellency should, by the Mail which will leave Sydney on the 11th instant, forward a copy of the Resolutions to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, and especially urge upon the attention of Her Majesty's Government the principle affirmed in the 6th Resolution, viz., "That in any future contract for the Mail Service, it is not for the interests of New South Wales that the Imperial Government should make any arrangement binding on this Colony without previous reference thereto."

3. Having further deliberated, the Council defer their decision as to what other steps it would be expedient to adopt in the matter until their next meeting.

EDWARD C. MEREWETHER,
Clerk of the Council.

PROCEEDINGS of the Executive Council with respect to Steam Postal Communication with England.

Extract from Minute No. 58-33, dated 16th August, 1858.

Present :—

His Excellency the Governor General,
The Honorable the Vice-President of the Council,
The Honorable the Attorney General,
The Honorable the Colonial Treasurer,
The Honorable the Secretary for Lands and Public Works.

Upon the invitation of His Excellency the Governor General, the Council resume the consideration of the question of Steam Postal Communication with India, submitted to them at their last meeting, and then only partially proceeded with.

2. On the present occasion the Council have before them, in addition to the Resolution adopted by the Legislative Assembly on the 6th instant, a Minute in which His Excellency explains his own views upon the subject; and having again given to the consideration of the question, that full and earnest attention which its importance demands, the Council desire that the result of their deliberations be recorded as follows :—

1st. They are clearly of opinion that the Steam Postal Communication with England via India has been conducted under the existing contract with the European and Australian Steam Navigation Company in a most unsatisfactory manner. But, in dealing with the question with reference to the future, it is proper to consider whether the conditions of that contract were such as could be fulfilled with any degree of regularity. It may be urged, it is true, that the practicability of the undertaking was a matter for the consideration of the parties who engaged to perform it, and they, it may be fairly presumed, proportioned the amount of their demand upon the Government to the character of the work they had to do; but in such a wide scheme as that, which was grafted upon the original proposition, it is evident that there were many risks to be run, upon which it was difficult, if not impossible to calculate.