

MR. HAMILTON TO THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Treasury Chambers, 17th May, 1859.

MY LORD,—

Adverting to your Lordship's letter of the 12th instant, relative to the proposed mail communication with Australia, *via* Panama, I am desired by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to state, that my Lords have caused the Board of Admiralty to be informed that they approve of the draft tender for this service, which was transmitted to your Lordship on the 5th instant, subject to the following alterations, namely, that:—

1. The blank left for the term of years should be filled up with the word "seven," which is the period for which my Lords propose that the contract shall be granted.

2. Tenders should be invited for a service subsidiary to that now existing between this country and Panama.

3. It should be intimated that, although 55 days is stated as the maximum time for performing the service to and from Melbourne, my Lords will be prepared to consider proposals embracing a shorter time of performance.

4. In clause 9, Melbourne should be substituted for Sydney, as the final port of arrival and departure.

I am to observe, that my Lords do not think it desirable to make Port Adelaide the final port instead of Melbourne. The question is one which principally affects the two great Colonies of New South Wales and Victoria, and neither Western nor South Australia will be called upon to make any pecuniary contribution for the service, unless these two Colonies should find it for their own advantage to enter into an arrangement with the Colony of New South Wales.

I am to add, that my Lords apprehend that such a limitation of time as that proposed by your Lordship in the concluding paragraph of your letter, would render the attainment of the object in view impracticable; and, moreover, it appears to my Lords to be scarcely fair to take the Marseilles route as the standard of time, instead of that by Southampton, because it has been stated that the great bulk of the Australian mails invariably take the latter route.

I have, &c.,

G. A. HAMILTON.

The Postmaster-General,
&c., &c., &c.

No. 15.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND MAILS.—PANAMA ROUTE.

TENDER for Steam Vessels for performing the Mail Service between Great Britain, Sydney, and Melbourne, via Panama and New Zealand.

Names of Vessels.	Tons by Register.	Where Lying.	Horse Power.	Draft of Water when ready for Sea.	Speed under Steam.	Number of Vessels proposed to be employed.	Day on which the Vessel will be ready.	
							For Survey.	Complete for Sea on the part of the Owners.
				Ft. In.	Knots per hour.			

1859.

SIR,—

We hereby offer to the Commissioners for executing the office of Lord High Admiral of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland the above-mentioned steam vessels for seven years certain, for conveying Her Majesty's mails monthly each way between Great Britain