

Enclosure in No. 49.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 27th March, 1867.

In carrying out the agreement at present arranged between the Governments of New Zealand and New South Wales, with regard to mails forwarded from Colonies which do not contribute to the subsidy paid to the Panama and New Zealand Mail Company, it is found that considerable inconvenience and delay in the despatch of every mail would be incurred, if an attempt is made to ascertain the liability of the respective Colonies by counting the postages.

It is also impossible and inexpedient for the Government of New South Wales to fix a postage rate for letters transmitted from other Colonies on such a basis as would protect this Department from positive loss for their carriage by the Panama Mail Steamer.

If the Governments of the non-acting Colonies decline to pay a fixed sum for the privilege of transmitting mails by this opportunity, the only alternative will be to charge for the carriage of these mails by weight.

I propose therefore to impose a charge of twenty shillings per pound on the gross weight of all mails forwarded for transmission by the Panama Mail Steamers from non-contracting Colonies, under which arrangement it should be optional with these Colonies to forward these mails through Sydney, as at present, or direct to Wellington in New Zealand by any opportunity which may appear expedient to them; it being understood that under this arrangement each Colony would keep its own accounts with the Imperial Government.

It will be desirable that the Governments of these respective Colonies should be informed, through the usual official channels, of this arrangement, and that copies of all communications from the Imperial Post Office be forwarded as early as possible to them.

The Government of New Zealand should also be requested to communicate the above arrangements to the London Post Office, in order that direct mails may, in future, be made up for each of these Colonies, with the exception of Western Australia, which will remain as at present.

I have, &c.,

J. DOCKER.

No. 50.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. H. PARKES.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 9th April, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 65, of the 1st instant, transmitting a copy of the Minute of the Executive Council of New South Wales, defining the rules under which the mails of Colonies, not contributing to the Panama Mail Service, will be charged for transmission by the steamers of that service.

In reply I have the honor to state that the New Zealand Government concurs in these Rules, and I enclose for your information a copy of a Memorandum from the Hon. the Postmaster-General of this Colony, agreed to by this Government.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

E. W. STAFFORD.

Enclosure in No. 50.

Memorandum by the Hon. JOHN HALL.

REFERRING to the rates defined in the enclosure to Mr. Parkes' letter of the 1st instant, for charging the mails of Colonies not contributing to the Panama Mail Service, I would observe that time did not admit of the Imperial Post Office being communicated with by the Panama Mail of the 8th instant, but a request will be sent by the next opportunity that correspondence from London to Panama for the non-contracting Colonies may be sent in closed mails for those Colonies, and that they may be allowed to send closed mails in return. If this cannot be allowed, the correspondence in question may circulate through the Marine Post Office on board the Panama Steamers, and be then made into closed mails. The proposed charge for conveyance, viz., twenty shillings per pound gross, though high, does not seem to me more than the circumstances warrant.

With regard to the remaining proposal contained in the minute enclosed in Mr. Parkes' letter, viz., that the non-contracting Colonies should be allowed to send and receive their closed mails direct to and from Wellington, although I think the arrangement a very desirable one generally, I doubt the expediency, looking to the state of the negotiations on this subject with the Colony of Victoria, of adopting it at this particular moment. This is a question, however, which it appears to me should be left for the decision of New South Wales.

JOHN HALL.

No. 51.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JOHN HALL to the Hon. J. DOCKER.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 12th April, 1867.

Printed as Nos.
17 and 18 in this
series.

In forwarding to you the enclosed copy of a letter from the Secretary, General Post Office, London, and my reply thereto, I have the honor to state that, as the course proposed by Mr. Hill will save much trouble in the preparation of mails for despatch to and from Australia and New Zealand, *via* Panama, I trust that it will be acceded to by you.

As only one copy of the Letter Bill was enclosed in Mr. Hill's letter, I am unable to send you that copy, but you will be able to obtain the necessary forms for the printer from the Letter Bills accompanying the mail by the "Mataura."

I shall feel obliged by being informed whether a similar communication has been received by you