

No. 8.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT to the GENERAL MANAGER P. N. Z. and A. R. M. Co.

General Post Office,

Wellington, 23rd March, 1868.

SIR,—

I am directed to forward to you for your information the enclosed copy of a letter addressed by the Hon. the Colonial Secretary of New Zealand to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, on the subject of the draft contract with the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company for the Panama service. Printed as No. 6 of this series.

The General Manager P.N.Z. and A.R.M. Co.,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT,
Secretary.

No. 9.

Copy of a Letter from the GENERAL MANAGER P.N.Z. and A.R.M. Co. to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

Panama, New Zealand, and Australian Royal Mail Company (Limited),

Sydney, Melbourne, and New Zealand,

SIR,—

Wellington, 3rd April, 1868.

I am obliged by receipt of your favour of 23rd ultimo, enclosing copy of letter from the Hon. the Colonial Secretary to the Hon. Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, on the subject of the above document. I respectfully remind you, that this service has been in operation nearly two years, and the want of it has been very embarrassing to my Directors in London. I must express my earnest hope that it may be forthcoming at your very earliest convenience. Panama Contract.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General,
Wellington.

I have, &c.,

H. B. BENSON,
General Manager.

No. 10.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New South Wales.

Colonial Secretary's Office,

Wellington, 14th July, 1868.

SIR,—

At the request of the Postmaster-General, I have the honor to enclose a copy of the Postal Contract with the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, signed by His Excellency the Governor in Council, and to state that, though it has not yet been formally executed by the Company, their seal being kept in their office in London, it has been agreed to and signed on their behalf by Captain Benson, their representative and general manager.

It will be seen that, in conformity with the agreement of the 1st of December, 1866, signed by yourself and the late Mr. Crosbie Ward, the contract has been "revised so as to embrace the same conditions as the agreement between New Zealand and New South Wales, and to enable the agreement between the Colonies to be strictly carried out."

I have to request you to be good enough to inform me whether, as was suggested at the time of Mr. Crosbie Ward's visit to Sydney, the Government of New South Wales desire that the Postmaster-General of that Colony should be appointed agent of the Postmaster-General of New Zealand, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of the contract, and especially to clauses 17, 19, and 20, and to part of clause 12.

As, from your letter of the 31st of March last, you appear to be under the impression that no copy of the draft contract (with the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company) was left with the New South Wales Government, the Postmaster-General requests me to state that Mr. Crosbie Ward, when about to proceed to Sydney, was specially instructed to consult with that Government on the subject of the contract in question, and that in his official reports he distinctly states that he had done so, and, in reference to the extract which I have quoted from the agreement between yourself and him, he writes as follows:—

"4. Contract to be revised: The Government of New South Wales has undertaken to do this; but Mr. Parkes was careful to guard his Government from being compromised by any alterations they might suggest. They were, he said, to be taken as friendly help towards the execution of the work. I had asked for this friendly help for myself, being apart from any legal advice on which I could rely, but it does not follow that the New Zealand Government should avail themselves of it, or await the recommendations of New South Wales, unless it is convenient so to do. The wording of the contract, as well as its execution, is on the responsibility of New Zealand."

In consequence of this intimation from Mr. Ward, repeated application was made by me to you on the subject, and until I received your letter of the 31st of March last, I was not aware of any doubt existing whether that draft contract had been left as reported by Mr. Ward, more especially as the Postmaster-General of this Colony, when in Sydney, in March, 1867, was assured that the particular documents referred to would be sent after him to New Zealand in a few days. I mention these circumstances, not with any view of continuing a discussion which would now serve no practical purpose, but to relieve this Government from responsibility for the unusual delay which has taken place in the completion of the contract, and which might have occasioned serious difficulties.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.