

As the Colony does not contribute to the subsidy paid to the West India Mail Steamers, it is not in a position to make a positive complaint on the above subject; but as the irregularities in question, if continued, will have a very unfortunate effect upon the mail service from Panama, subsidized by this Government and that of New South Wales, which the Imperial Government has evinced a disposition to encourage, I trust that you will address such representations to the Royal Mail Company as will ensure greater punctuality being observed in future.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN HALL,  
Postmaster General.

## No. 37.

Copy of a Letter from the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. JOHN HALL.  
General Post Office,

SIR,—

London, 24th July, 1868.

Referring to your letter of the 13th May, I beg to acquaint you that, by the terms of the contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, this department is unable to require the packets to go beyond a certain rate of speed; but there is reason to believe that by an arrangement which has been recently sanctioned an acceleration in the mail service to the Isthmus of Panama and New Zealand may be expected.

By this arrangement, which commenced with the packet from Southampton of the 2nd ultimo, the transfer at St. Thomas of the mails, &c., to a branch steamer has been discontinued, the Atlantic steamer going on to Colon. As an instance of the improvement which this alteration has already effected, I may state that the packet from this country of the 2nd ultimo, and that of the 2nd instant, both arrived at Colon before time, the latter four days, thus enabling a corresponding earlier despatch to be made to New Zealand of the packet from Panama.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,  
F. HILL.

## No. 38.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. HENRY HALLORAN to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

Colonial Secretary's Office,

SIR,—

Sydney, N.S.W., 9th September, 1868.

I have the honor to inform you, in reply to the third paragraph of your letter of the 14th July last, received on the 5th ultimo, that it is the desire of this Government, as was suggested at the time of the late Mr. Crosbie Ward's visit to Sydney, that the Postmaster-General of this Colony should be appointed agent of the Postmaster-General of New Zealand, for the purpose of giving effect to the provisions of the postal contract with the Panama New Zealand and Australian Royal Mail Company, especially to clauses 17, 19, and 20, and part of 12; and to request that the appointment may be made at your early convenience.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary of New Zealand.

HENRY HALLORAN,  
(for the Postmaster-General).

## No. 39.

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

Colonial Secretary's Office,

SIR,—

Sydney, 2nd July, 1868.

I have the honor to invite your attention to the circular despatch of the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 19th October, 1867, and its enclosures, with reference to the system of ocean mail services recommended in the Memorial to Her Majesty from the Representatives of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand assembled at the Melbourne Conference. It will be observed from the extract from the Report of the Postmaster-General, enclosed in the despatch of His Grace the Duke of Buckingham, that the interests of the whole of Australia and of New Zealand were considered in the inexplicable supposition that those interests were represented by a part of the inhabitants of Melbourne, who, in their opposition to the recommendations of the Conference of March, 1867, acted avowedly from a desire to secure certain local advantages to their own city and port. In the argument of His Grace the Duke of Montrose, little or no weight is given to the circumstance that all the six Colonies under Responsible Government were represented at the Conference by members of their respective Executive Councils; and these Representatives, having an intimate acquaintance with the conflicting interests that must be made to harmonize in any general agreement, arrived at an unanimous approval of the postal scheme submitted in their Memorial. At the same time the views of the merchants and traders of Melbourne, who, it is well known, mainly objected to the conclusions of the Conference because the Port of Melbourne was not made the terminus of the line of steamers *via* King George's Sound, are dwelt upon as showing a want of unanimity on the part of the Colonies, notwithstanding that the proceedings of the Conference were in each case ratified by executive and parliamentary authority.

2. In this position of the postal question, I am directed by His Excellency the Earl of Belmore to transmit for your information the accompanying copy of a Minute of the Postmaster-General of this Colony, which has been agreed to by the Executive Council, and will be transmitted by the next mail