

THE PANAMA MAIL SERVICE.

9 E.—No. 1.

No. 14.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 19th December, 1866.

With reference to my letter of the 17th September last, transmitting to you a copy of a report which had been addressed to this office by the British Post Office Agent at Panama, relative to the manner in which the mails forwarded by the line of New Zealand mail packets to Panama had been made up, I regret the necessity of forwarding to you the enclosed copy of a further report which has been received from the Agent, on the same subject.

Seeing that the Memorandum which had been prepared with much care by the Agent at Panama, for the guidance of the New Zealand Post Office, was handed by him to Mr. Elliott so long ago as in July last, two months previously to the date of my former letter, I entertained the expectation that the suggestions of Mr. Bidwell would have reached New Zealand, and been acted upon, before the despatch of the mail to which that gentleman's further report relates.

The practice of making up closed mails for places served from Panama to which prepayment of postage is required, instead of sending the correspondence in the mail for Panama, gives rise to much unnecessary trouble to the Agent, and I trust that, before this letter reaches you, instruction will have been given for the preparation of the mails in accordance with the terms of the Memorandum referred to.

The Postmaster-General, &c., Wellington.

I have, &c.,
F. HILL.

Enclosure in No. 14.

SIR,— British Packet Office, Panama, 22nd November, 1866.

With reference to my letter No. 38, of the 27th of July, I have the honor to report to you that the mails brought by the New Zealand packets still arrive without accountable Letter Bills, and that much unnecessary work is consequently entailed upon this office.

2. I enclose one of three copies of Letter Bills which it is now necessary to prepare on the arrival of each packet, one copy being retained here and one returned to the Colonies. If Letter Bills with acknowledgment forms in duplicate were used, this work would not be necessary.

3. The mails are also still received in the same irregular manner as at first, the correspondence with exception of that for England being put into Panama bags, and closed mails being made up for places to which it is necessary to pay postage.

4. I beg leave to refer you to the Memorandum of suggestions which I gave to Mr. Elliott Elliott, the Secretary of the General Post Office at New Zealand, which, if carried out, would very much facilitate the despatch of these mails.

John Tilley, Esq., Secretary to the General Post Office.

I have, &c.,
CHARLES J. BIDWELL.

No. 15.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. ELLIOTT ELLIOTT, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 7th March, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 71,596, of the 19th December last, relative to the manner in which the mails forwarded from New Zealand *via* Panama, had been made up; and to inform you that proper Letter Bills have accompanied the mails despatched since November last, and instructions have been given to the Mail Agents to have the mails circulated in accordance with directions received from the London Office, so that it is hoped you will have no further cause to complain of irregularity in this matter.

I have at the same time to point out to you that no acknowledgment has been received at this office of the mail despatched from New Zealand to the United Kingdom *via* Panama since the mails of the 9th September and 6th October last.

The Secretary, General Post Office,
London.

I have, &c.,
G. ELLIOTT ELLIOTT,
for the Postmaster-General.

No. 16.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 1st February, 1867.

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to inform you that, in compliance with the request No. 10 of this contained in your letter of the 16th October last, His Grace has caused a notice to be issued to the Series public in this country, stating that in future all correspondence from the United Kingdom for New Zealand will be forwarded *via* Panama, unless specially addressed to be sent by another route.

His Grace has further given directions that upon every newspaper, not exceeding four ounces in weight, sent from the United Kingdom to New Zealand, *via* Panama, a rate of threepence may in future be collected on behalf of the Colony, in addition to the Imperial rate of one penny; and that the rate on books, &c., may be the same as upon those sent *via* Suez and Southampton.

It will, of course, take some little time to make the increase of postage on newspapers generally known, and you will, therefore, no doubt receive by this and by the next following mail, many newspapers paid at the lower rate, for which no credit can be given to your office.