

No. 26.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Tasmania.
SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 24th October, 1866.

Referring to your letter noted in the margin, requesting information as to the arrangements made for forwarding correspondence from Tasmania by the Panama Mail Steamers, I am directed by the Hon. the Postmaster-General to refer you to the Postmaster-General, New South Wales, through whose office, under existing arrangements, all such correspondence from those Colonies which do not contribute to the cost of the Service must pass.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Tasmania.

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT.

No. 27.

Copy of a Letter from Mr. S. H. LAMBTON to Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Sydney, 3rd November, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your communication dated the 24th ultimo (F. 66), enclosing copy of letter addressed by you to the Hon. the Postmaster-General of Tasmania, on the subject of mail conveyance *via* Panama.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON,

Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington, New Zealand

No. 28.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JAMES McCULLOCH to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 18th October, 1866.

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Papers, 1866,
page 23.

I have the honor, by direction of His Excellency the Hon. Sir J. H. T. Manners Sutton, to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of the 13th August last, enclosing copy of letter addressed by you to the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales on the subject of the Panama Steam Postal Service, in which you refer to the importance of some understanding being arrived at as to the proportion of the subsidy to be contributed by the Colonies interested in the question, respectively, and suggest that delegates be appointed by the Governments concerned to meet at Wellington for the purpose of discussing the question.

In reply, I have the honor to state, with reference to the first question, that the views of this Government have already been fully explained in a letter to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales, a copy of which I now beg to enclose for your information.

I have also the honor to state, with respect to the proposed meeting of delegates, that no objection is felt to such a measure. Indeed, in my letter to you of the 9th February last, it was suggested that such a meeting should take place with the view to the whole question of Steam Postal Communication with the United Kingdom being fully considered.

It, however, appears desirable that one of the Australian Colonies should be appointed as the place for the assembling and deliberations of the delegates; and, that as representatives are shortly expected from the several Colonies at the Inter-Colonial Exhibition to be held at Melbourne, this would be a favourable opportunity for carrying out the purpose.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Wellington,
New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

JAMES McCULLOCH.

Enclosure in No. 28.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. JAMES McCULLOCH to the Hon. H. PARKES.

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 10th October, 1866.

Adverting to the correspondence that has taken place respecting Steam Postal Communication by the Suez and Panama routes, I have the honor to inform you, by direction of His Excellency Sir J. H. T. Manners Sutton, that this Government having attentively considered the subject, are most desirous that such arrangements should be entered into by the Colonies interested in the question as will place the service on a permanent and equitable footing.

It appears to the Cabinet of Victoria that, as a Postal Service for the whole of the Australian Colonies, there cannot be a question that the line *via* Point de Galle, is, and must always remain superior to that *via* Panama, and that it is hardly necessary, in confirmation of this view, to point to the recent performances of the steamers employed on the respective routes.

The news of the "Bombay" with August mails, *via* Suez, having arrived at Adelaide, was received yesterday almost simultaneously with the news of the arrival of the "Ruahine" at Sydney, with the August mails, *via* Panama.

By the former vessel, telegraphic intelligence of the European affairs up to the 11th September, came to hand in thirty days, and her mails of the 26th August will be delivered this day in Melbourne, and not later than the 13th instant, in Sydney. The latter vessel it is believed brought out mails only to the 2nd August.

No doubt the example given, by way of illustration, presents what may be exceptional features, and a similar combination of circumstances may not arise again; but it must, it is thought, be admitted, that the voyages made by both lines since the Panama Contract first commenced, exhibit in a striking manner the advantages both to New South Wales and Victoria of the old over the new service.

Holding these views, the Government of Victoria—although animated by the desire of dealing with the question in a spirit of concession—would not feel justified in recommending that this Colony should contribute towards the maintenance of the Panama Service, which would be of comparatively