

E.—No. 2.

PAPERS

RELATIVE TO

THE POSTAL CONFERENCE

HELD IN MELBOURNE,

MARCH, 1867.

PRESENTED TO BOTH HOUSES OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, BY COMMAND OF
HIS EXCELLENCY.

WELLINGTON.

—
1867.

PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE MELBOURNE POSTAL CONFERENCE.

No. 1.

Copy of a Despatch from the Right Hon. Earl of CARNARVON to Governor Sir
GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 22nd September, 1866.

I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Board of Treasury enclosing a Minute of their Lordships' upon the subject of the postal communications between this country and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies.

I also annex a copy of the Report referred to by their Lordships from the Select Committee on East India communications which has been laid before Parliament, and of the Report addressed to the Postmaster-General by Captain Tyler, R.E., of his recent inspection of the railways and ports of Italy with reference to the use of the Italian route for the conveyance of the Eastern mails.

I request that you will lay these Papers before your Responsible Advisers, in order that they may make known their wishes and views on the several questions raised in their Lordships' Minute, so far as they affect the arrangements to be made for the conduct and maintenance of the Postal Service between this country and the Australian Colonies.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c.

CARNARVON.

Enclosure in No. 1.

Mr. HUNT to Sir F. G. ROGERS, Bart.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 6th September, 1866.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit herewith, for the information of the Earl of Carnarvon, copy of a Minute of their Lordships dated 4th instant, upon the subject of the postal communications between this country and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies, and I am to request that you will move His Lordship to cause the communications therein suggested to be made to the Governments of the several Colonies adverted to therein.

I am, &c.,

Sir F. Rogers, Bart.

GEORGE WARD HUNT.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure in No. 1.

Copy of TREASURY MINUTE, dated 4th September, 1866.

My Lords have before them the Report of the Select Committee of the House of Commons appointed during the last session of Parliament, "to inquire into the practical working of the present system of telegraphic and postal communication between this country and the East Indies, and who are instructed to extend their inquiry to China, Japan, Australia, and Mauritius;" and also a Report from the Postmaster-General dated 9th August (made in pursuance of directions contained in their Minute of the 2nd August), on the whole subject of the postal communication between this country and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies.

The following are the services by which at the present time the postal communication between this country and the East Indies, China, Japan, the Australian Colonies, and the Mauritius is maintained.

They consist, firstly, of four services per calendar month between this country and Alexandria, *via* Marseilles, with four corresponding services *via* Southampton;

Secondly, of four services through Egypt in connection with the foregoing, between Alexandria and Suez;

Thirdly, of two services per calendar month between Suez and Bombay;

Fourthly, of two services per calendar month between Suez and Galle, with in each case a packet between Galle and Calcutta, and another between Bombay and Galle, and onwards to China and Japan;

Fifthly, of one service per calendar month between Galle and Sydney (touching at King George's Sound and Melbourne, and with branches to South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland, and New Zealand); and

Sixthly, of one service per calendar month (maintained at the sole expense of the Mauritius Government) between Galle and Port Louis.

Except the branches in Australia and the packet between Galle and Mauritius, the above services, so far as they are sea services, are performed by the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, and at the following annual cost:—

Services to India and China and so much of the Australian service as lies between this country and Galle	£230,125
Australian service between Galle and Sydney	119,500
	<hr/>
	£349,625

To this sum must be added £19,550 for the branches in Australia, £12,000 for conveyance through Egypt, and £14,765 for miscellaneous expenses, but nothing at present for the service between China and Japan, that service having hitherto been performed by the Peninsular and Oriental Company gratuitously.

It thus appears that, exclusively of the expense of conveying a portion of the mails between Dover and Calais, and through France (for the latter of which an additional charge is made in the rate of postage) and exclusively of the expense of the inland service at each end, the present cost of the conveyance of the Indian, China, and Australian Mails, and of the Mauritius Mails (between this country and Galle) is nearly £396,000 per annum.

If from this sum be deducted the estimated amount of sea postage (about £236,000 per annum) it will be seen that the services in question are attended with an annual loss of £160,000, of which it may be roughly said one half is borne by India and the different Colonies concerned, and the other half by the mother country.

With the exception of Australia, the contracts under which the services are performed are terminable at any time on one year's notice; and on a notice of two years the Australian contract may also be terminated.

The postage on letters *via* Southampton, between India and this country, and Australia and this country, is sixpence the half-ounce letter; and it has, with a view of diminishing the great loss before referred to occasioned by the expense of the packet service, been proposed at different times to the Government of India, and to those of the Australian Colonies, to double the postage on letters, but those Governments have hitherto, with the exception of New South Wales, declined to accede to the proposals made.

My Lords now proceed to consider the recommendation of the Select Committee with regard to the establishment of a weekly communication with India *via* Bombay, and the discontinuance thereupon of the separate postal service between this country and Madras and Calcutta.

Adverting to the facilities which will be afforded by the early completion of the main lines of railway communication between the port of Bombay and Calcutta, Madras, the North-western Provinces, and the Punjaub, my Lords entirely concur in the opinion with the Select Committee that Bombay should be the port of arrival and departure of the mails to and from India, and that the time has arrived for the establishment of a weekly service to and from that country, and they will, on learning from the Secretary of State for India in Council that His Lordship concurs in these views, take the necessary steps for carrying them into effect.

Before, however, a final decision is arrived at, it may be well to consider whether, with a view of obtaining the best route through Europe towards Alexandria and Suez, and thereby expediting the conveyance of the mails between this country and India, it may not be advisable to substitute the port of Brindisi in the South of Italy for the port of Marseilles, from which port the mail *via* France is now sent.

It appears from the able Report of Captain Tyler, of the Royal Engineers, to the Postmaster-General, which my Lords have perused with much interest, that if the Brindisi route were made use of instead of that by Marseilles, there would be a saving in the time occupied in the conveyance of the mails between this country and Alexandria of thirty-five and a quarter hours previous to the construction of the Mount Cenis Summit Railway, of thirty-nine and a half hours after the construction of that railway, and forty-two and a half hours after the completion of the permanent tunnel line from St. Michel to Susa.

The great saving of time thus effected affords in the opinion of my Lords a conclusive reason for the adoption of the port of Brindisi as the port of communication with Alexandria instead of Marseilles, the more so as it appears that the Italian Government are willing and anxious to make every necessary arrangement for facilitating the conveyance of the British Mails through Italy.

It will be therefore necessary to give notice to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company of the intention of the Government to put an end to the contracts at present existing for the conveyance four times a month of the mails between Southampton and Alexandria, and Marseilles and Alexandria, and to call for tenders for a weekly service between Southampton and Alexandria, and Brindisi and Alexandria. It will also be necessary to give notice for the discontinuance of the two services per calendar month between Suez and Bombay, and of the two services per calendar month between Suez and Galle with in each case, the packet between Galle and Calcutta, and the other packet between Bombay and Galle, and from thence to China.

With regard to the conveyance of mails to China and Japan, my Lords are of opinion that the service to be constituted for the conveyance of the Indian mails should be made use of as far as Aden, and with this view it will be necessary, instead of the mails for these countries being despatched twice a month as at present, that the service should be converted into one, once every fortnight, and tenders will therefore have to be called for a fortnightly service between Aden and Japan, touching at Galle, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Shanghai, the parties tendering to state for what additional subsidy they would be willing to continue the service from Aden to Suez.

As respects the time to be allowed in each instance for the performance of the new service, the Postmaster-General proposes to act on the plan which has for some time been in use, viz., to ascertain what would be the charge, both at the present rate of sailing and at a higher rate, so as to enable this

Board to decide whether or not the increased speed would warrant the increased expense, my Lords, adverting to the recommendation of the Select Committee, "that the time table should be based on a prescribed speed of not less than eleven nautical miles per hour on the voyage between Marseilles and Alexandria, and ten miles per hour between Suez and Bombay; but that the tenders be required to state also terms in each case for higher rates of speed, of not less than one additional half-mile per hour," are of opinion that the proposed course of proceeding by the Duke of Montrose should be adopted.

As it is probable that the expense of the proposed weekly service to and from Bombay, and the fortnightly service to and from China and Japan, will considerably exceed the amount of the postage which will be received on the correspondence forwarded by these services, it is necessary that some arrangement should be made as to how the excess in these cases is to be met.

With regard to the India service there can be no question but that, as at present, it should be made good in equal proportions by the Indian and Home Governments, but with respect to the China service, adverting to the opinion expressed by the Select Committee, that "the arrangements under which India now defrays a moiety of the net cost of the China service, after deducting the postal receipts, will not under the proposed arrangements be equitable as regards that Government, and should be modified;" it is necessary to consider what modification it will be expedient to make. The contract packet from Bombay to Galle, and thence on to China, by which line my Lords presume the correspondence between India and China has been hitherto conveyed being about to be discontinued, it appears to my Lords that it will be necessary for the India Government itself to provide fortnightly the means of conveying the correspondence between India and China, at any rate as far as Singapore, in which case the only claim which could fairly be made on the Indian Government on account of the China mail service, would be for the conveyance of its correspondence between Singapore and China and Japan by the contract packet from Point de Galle.

It is reasonable to expect that great expense will be imposed by these services on the British and Indian exchequer, and my Lords propose to reserve for future consideration whether it would be expedient to reduce such expense by raising the postage of letters between this country and India, and they propose in the meantime to call the attention of the Secretary of State for India to this question.

The large and important island of Ceylon has hitherto not contributed towards the loss incurred by the packet service by which its correspondence with this country has been conveyed, my Lords are of opinion that the time has now arrived when it may fairly be called upon to contribute towards the loss in question in proportion to its correspondence, at any rate so long as the postage on letters to and from Ceylon continues at the moderate rate of sixpence the half-ounce letter, and my Lords would be glad if the Secretary of State for the Colonies will make an intimation to this effect to the Government of that island.

With respect to the postal communication *via* Suez with the Australian Colonies: It is at present a monthly service, the mails being despatched to Alexandria on the 20th of each month *via* Southampton, and on the 26th *via* Marseilles. From Suez the mails are conveyed as far as Point de Galle by the Calcutta packet corresponding with that leaving Southampton on the 20th of the month, and from Point de Galle they are carried by vessels of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, under a contract recently entered into with that Company, but which is terminable on a notice of twenty-four months being given by either party.

Various complaints having reached this Board from the Australian Colonies of the manner in which the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company have hitherto carried on the service, and the Colony of New South Wales having gone so far as to give notice of their intention to withdraw from their share in the contract, it appears to my Lords (although they do not think there are sufficient grounds for these complaints, and are of opinion that on the whole the service has been well performed,) that it would be advisable also to serve notice on the Company, that, at the termination of twenty-four months, the present contract for the conveyance of the mails between Point de Galle and Sydney will be discontinued.

As the mails to India will hereafter be carried weekly instead of four times a month, and those to China fortnightly instead of twice a month, it will be necessary, unless a service expressly for the conveyance of the Australian mails between this country and Alexandria, and Brindisi and Alexandria, is provided, that the Australian mail service should also be altered from a service once a month to a service once every four weeks, so as to render the packets conveying the India and China mails to Alexandria, and the China mails to Point de Galle, available for the conveyance of the Australian mails as far as Point de Galle. It is true that it might be possible to make use of the vessels of the Messageries Impériales, which are under contract with the French Government for the conveyance of mails monthly between France and China, for the carriage of the Australian mails as far as Point de Galle, but my Lords are given to understand that the expense of making use of these vessels would amount to very considerably more than the extra expense which would be incurred by the conversion of the service to those Colonies from a monthly to a service once every four weeks.

It now becomes necessary to consider in what manner the service between Point de Galle and the Australian Colonies is to be provided for on the discontinuance of the present contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company. My Lords would be glad if the Australian Colonies would themselves in combination undertake to provide this service, in which case they would as at present, be prepared on behalf of the Imperial Government to defray one half of the reasonable cost of such service; and they would suggest that the Secretary of State for the Colonies should communicate with the different Colonial Governments with a view to such an arrangement being carried out. If, however, the several Colonial Governments should find it impossible to come to a common understanding on the subject, and to adopt a practical arrangement, the Home Government will not refuse to undertake to make the necessary contract for providing the service between Point de Galle and Sydney: it must be, however, on the distinct understanding that they shall agree each and all to whatever arrangements the Home Government may consider most conducive to the interests of the mother country and of the Colonies collectively. My Lords, however, would much prefer that the Colonies themselves should, in combination, make the contract or contracts for the service in question.

As regards the services between this country and Mauritius, my Lords regret that the future fortnightly service to Galle will not work in altogether with the monthly service which the Colonial Government has organized between Mauritius and Galle.

My Lords, however, trust that the Colonial authorities will be able to make arrangements which will obviate this inconvenience.

It now remains merely to recapitulate the steps which will require to be taken.

Firstly. Notice will have to be given to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company of the intention of Her Majesty's Government to put an end, at the proper periods, to all the contracts they have with that Company for the conveyance of the mails both on this side and on the other side of the Isthmus of Suez; and

Secondly. Tenders will have to be called for the several services adverted to in this Minute, such services being divided into five parts (parties tendering to be at liberty to tender for any one or more of such services), viz. :—

1st. A weekly service between Brindisi and Alexandria.

2nd. A weekly service between Southampton and Alexandria.

3rd. A weekly service between Suez and Bombay.

4th. A fortnightly service between Aden and Japan, touching at Galle, Penang, Singapore, Hong Kong, and Shanghai.

The parties tendering for this service to state for what additional subsidy they will be prepared to extend the service to Suez.

5th. A service as at present from Galle to Sydney, with a provision that the contract for this service may be accepted either by the Home Government or the Colonies.

Adverting to the opinion expressed by the Select Committee "that in consideration of the outlay which must necessarily be incurred in the construction of new vessels or adapting those now employed for the efficient performance of the future service to India, it is expedient that the new contracts shall be for a term of years certain, subject to a subsequent notice of two years on either side," my Lords would propose that so far as respects the first four services above adverted to, the tenders should be for a term of six years certain, and thenceforth subject to a notice of two years at the end of the first four or any subsequent year.

As regards the fifth service, however, viz., that between Galle and Sydney, although the necessary twenty-four months' notice should immediately be given to the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the discontinuance of the present contract, it appears to my Lords that it would be inexpedient to call at once for tenders for a new service, or to fix a period for such service until they have before them the views of the respective Colonies on this subject, which my Lords trust the Earl of Carnarvon will take the earliest opportunity of eliciting.

NOTE.—By the terms of the present contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, they are bound to provide a communication once every four weeks for an additional subsidy of £10,000 a-year.

Sub-Enclosure 2 to Enclosure in No. 1.

Copy of Report from Captain TYLER, R.E., to HER MAJESTY'S POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

MY LORD DUKE,—

1 Whitehall, 19th July, 1866.

I have now the honor to report, for your Grace's information, that in compliance with the instructions which I received in February last from Lord Stanley, of Alderley, I have, during the months of May and June, examined the railways and ports of Italy, and inspected the works of the tunnel of the Alps and of the Mont Cenis Railway; and have also placed myself in communication with the public officers and the chief officers of the railway companies in France and Italy on the subject of the conveyance through Italy of the Eastern mails.

Under existing circumstances, the fast mails between Great Britain and the East must necessarily pass through Egypt, and it is only requisite to determine at present the best route through Europe towards Alexandria and Suez. The fast route now employed, measuring 853 English miles from London to Marseilles, and 1460 nautical miles from Marseilles to Alexandria, is in point of distance nearly the shortest that can be adopted; but inasmuch as it is practicable to travel more than twice as fast on land where good railways are available as by sea, and with less risk of delay from stress of weather, it becomes advantageous to decrease the sea passage as far as possible, when this can be done without too heavy a cost, in order to effect a saving of time. When the railway down the east coast of Italy was opened for traffic in May, 1865, it became obvious that it would be possible at no very distant date to substitute some port in the south of Italy for the port of Marseilles as the point of departure for Egypt, and I took the opportunity in June of that year to refer to the subject in my report to the Board of Trade on the experimental railway then constructed on the Mont Cenis.

Of the Italian ports to which railway communication has up to this time been extended, the nearest to Egypt is Brindisi, which is 1504 English miles from London by the Mont Cenis route, and 822 nautical miles from Alexandria, thus affording a decrease of 638 nautical (734 English) miles in the sea passage, and an increase of 651 English miles in the land passage. The distance between Valetta and Alexandria being the same within a few miles as that between Brindisi and Alexandria, it may be said indeed as far as the sea is concerned, that the voyage from Marseilles to Malta would be avoided by the adoption of Brindisi as the terminus for the land journey, while the total distance from London to Alexandria would be eighty-three English miles shorter by the Brindisi route than by the Marseilles route.

There are other ports in the south of Italy, such as Otranto and Gallipoli, which are each thirty-seven nautical miles nearer to Alexandria than Brindisi, while Taranto and Reggio (in the Straits of Messina) are practically at the same distance from Alexandria as Brindisi and Malta.

The Meridional Railway of Italy is already working to Lecce, thirty-nine kilometres south of Brindisi, but the works have been suspended upon the line to Otranto, which is forty-five kilometres further; and it is a question whether that portion will now be completed for some time to come.

Looking to the relative importance of the two places, it is probable that the branch from Lecce to Gallipoli (which is twenty kilometres long), from its probable junction with the Otranto line, will be made before the portion to Otranto; but the studies have not been definitely made for the Gallipoli branch.

The port of Otranto (the ancient Hydruntum), of which I enclose a diagram with soundings marked upon it, contains 420,000 superficial metres of water, with depths varying from two to thirteen metres. But it possesses no protection for bad weather from a north-easterly direction, and no accommodation or facilities for a mail packet station. It could only be fitted for that purpose by the expenditure of a large sum of money, and the Italian Government have no idea of devoting money to its improvement. I did not even consider it worth while to visit Otranto, though I made a personal inspection of all the other Italian ports to which I have referred, as well as those of Naples and Genoa.

The port of Gallipoli has greater natural advantages, and is more used for purposes of commerce. Oil is shipped here in great quantities. The promontory on which the town is built affords shelter on either side of it according to the direction of the wind. But little money has yet been expended to turn its natural advantages to account, and the only project for its improvement is indicated in the accompanying diagram, on which also the soundings are shown. The existing mole is to be extended to a total length of 300 metres, and this will afford a superficial area in the northern harbour of 90,000 metres of water, varying in depth from one and a half to eleven fathoms.

In the direction of Taranto, the Meridional Railway has not yet been opened for traffic further than Gioja, which is fifty-three kilometres from the main line at Bari; but the portion between Gioja and Taranto (sixty-three kilometres long) is under construction, and is expected to be ready for traffic in two years. The town of Taranto (the ancient Tarentum) separates the outer harbour, which contains 36,000,000 superficial metres of water, from the *mare piccolo* (little sea) or *seno interno* (internal bay), containing 19,000,000; the depth of water varying in the greater part of the former from eight to thirty-six metres, and of the latter from six to thirteen metres. There is at present no means of communication by large vessels from one to the other, as will be seen by the enclosed diagram.

The northern channel is spanned by a masonry viaduct, which forms the principal means of communication with the town, and the southern channel (also crossed by a masonry bridge) is very shallow, having, in fact, been excavated originally by Ferdinand the First of Arragon, as a ditch only to the fortress which it bounds. There are projects for widening and deepening this south channel, to allow of the passage of the largest vessels into what will then become the internal harbour; but no money has yet been voted for the purpose, or indeed for any works for the improvement of the harbour, although it is much used for the Italian men of war, and is indeed the chief naval station of the south of Italy.* Considering the extent of the harbour, its great natural advantages in a military as well as in a naval point of view, and the extent and position of the *seno interno*, it is no matter of surprise that Taranto should have been selected for a military port; and, looking to their relative situations, the Italian Government appear to have wisely determined upon making Taranto their principal military, and Brindisi their principal commercial southern port. I may here add that they would not be willing, if for this reason alone, to see the Egyptian mail steamers running to Taranto.

There are however other reasons against the adoption of Taranto as a mail station. The distance indeed by sea from Alexandria to Taranto is, as I have stated, nearly equal to that to Brindisi, and the distance by land is only five kilometres longer by Taranto than by Brindisi, while the anchorage is good at both ports; but the weather is frequently bad, and the sea rough at the entrance (sixty-six miles across) to the Gulf of Taranto, much of the land is low at the sides of the gulf, a misty atmosphere is frequently experienced with southerly winds in winter, the lights are not at present so good as those at Brindisi, and generally in bad weather Brindisi is an easier port to make than Taranto—considerations which are of great importance in the case of mail packets timed to run at high speed, and expected as far as possible to be punctual in all weathers. Besides the want of a railway, there is no dock or landing pier at Taranto, and the hotel accommodation in the town is very limited and indifferent.

The railway from Taranto to Reggio, 448 kilometres (278 English miles) in length has been commenced; but the works are now suspended, and there appears to be little probability of its completion for some time to come. The total distance from London to Reggio would be 453 kilometres (281 English miles) further than from London to Brindisi. Reggio has the advantage of being on the straight course of a steamer proceeding by the Straits of Bonifacio and the Straits of Messina from Marseilles to Alexandria, but it is merely an open roadstead without protection, particularly from southerly gales; and though the anchorage is good, the postal steamers of the Italian Government are frequently unable to communicate with the shore during the winter, and are obliged to take the mails into the harbour of Messina.

There have been four projects for forming a port at Reggio: (1) opposite the town for small craft now abandoned; (2) north of the town by diverting the course of a small river; (3) south of the town by excavation, which would involve a considerable outlay, and does not meet with approval; (4) 300 metres long by 150 metres wide at Pentimele, 2000 metres north of Reggio, to be connected with the railway station; but as the station is on the south of the town, and the town is situated on a hill sloping abruptly to the sea, this connection would not be easily made. The Government is bound to provide a port by the time that the railway is completed, and proposes to expend 4,200,000 francs for the purpose; but many years will probably elapse before it is carried out. There is no idea of forming a dry dock at Reggio, there being one in course of construction at Messina, 100 metres long, which is to be completed in five years.

The width of the Straits of Messina is here about 13,000 yards, and the numerous currents through them, which, with the liability to heavy gusts of wind, were so alarming to the ancients, have formed an interesting subject of study and report by an Italian commission, as well as by Admiral Smyth and others. Their effect upon the large steamers of the present day is, however, comparatively unimportant.

* The construction of some magazines on the shore of the *mare interno* has, however, been authorized.

It will thus be seen that it would not be practicable to adopt Reggio as a port of communication for the eastern mails, at all events for many years to come, as well for the want of a port as for the want of a railway; and that even when the railway and the port shall have been completed, the land journey would be increased (by the only route which can now be contemplated) by 281 miles, while the length of the sea passage would be about the same as by Brindisi.

Naples would appear to be in some respects a more desirable place of call for steamers running between Marseilles and Alexandria than Reggio. But the sea voyage between Naples and Alexandria would be increased by 180 nautical miles, or eighteen hours, as compared with the sea passage *via* Brindisi; and there is as yet no complete means of railway communication between Naples and the north of Italy. The shortest route to Naples will be *via* Genoa and Rome, by which the distance from Susa to Naples is 996 kilometres, as against 1152 from Brindisi, showing a saving of 156 kilometres or ninety-six English miles. But there are two breaks in the railway communication of this route—the first from Genoa to Spezzia, for eighty-seven kilometres, where the railway works are now suspended, and the second from Nunciatella to Civita Vecchia, for fifty-eight kilometres, where the railway is under construction, though not apparently with much activity. Another route *via* Ancona and Foggia, measures 1117 kilometres from Susa to Naples, showing a saving of thirty-five kilometres (twenty-one English miles) over the land route by Brindisi. There are other routes to Naples, such as that *via* Bologna, Pistoja, Pisa, Livorno, which is, measured from Susa, 1165 kilometres in length, or thirteen kilometres further than to Brindisi. And on this line there is only the break above mentioned between Civita Vecchia and Nunciatella. There are also routes by Firenze, and Torricella, with a break to Foligno; and by Firenze, Empoli, Siena, Orvieto, with a break to Orte. But they do not offer any advantages for a mail route at present.

There is no landing-stage, or pier, or dry dock in the Porto Grande, which is the commercial port at Naples; but there is a dock seventy-five metres long in the “Porto Militaire.” The existing quays in the Porto Grande are small, but plans are being prepared for their extension, as indicated in red lines on the accompanying chart. It is proposed to construct a new quay, 600 metres long, with a pier 150 metres long by fifty metres wide, and these may be commenced in 1867. There will be seven metres of water at the head of the pier, and the same depth will probably be obtained alongside of the quay. The anchorage is tolerably good, and there are plenty of buoys. The pier of the “Porto Militaire” is being extended, as shown in red on the chart, of which 300 metres are to be completed this year, and 500 metres more are to be completed in 1871.

When railway communication is completed to Naples *via* Foggia, or, still more, when it is complete *via* Genoa and Rome, and when the Roman territory shall belong to or be available for through transit to the Italians, Naples may become an important place of call for steamers running between Marseilles and Alexandria; but the Naples route can never successfully compete with the Brindisi route, in consequence of the extra length of the sea passage; and it is impossible to contemplate the employment of Naples at present as the port for the eastern mails.

The harbour of Brindisi, which it becomes my duty next to describe, is composed, as will be seen by the accompanying tracing, of an outer port, 2,000 metres long by 1000 metres wide, connected by a channel 260 metres long and sixty metres wide, with two inner arms; of these, the western arm is 1500 metres long and 250 metres wide, and the eastern arm is 1100 metres long and 200 metres wide. Of the numerous soundings noted on the tracing, the figures marked with one line were taken in 1864, those marked with two lines in January, 1866, and those unmarked by lines in May, 1866.

Brindisi (the well-known Brundisium) was formerly in much repute, and was commonly used by the Romans in crossing to Dyrachium, on their way to Greece, as being the best harbour on the west coast of the Adriatic; but the town declined after the Prince of Taranto destroyed the entrance to the inner arms by sinking ships in the channel, to keep his enemies out, in the fifteenth century; and the recent operations appear to have been the first serious attempt made to remove the accumulation of sand and silt, &c. that followed upon these obstructions.

There is now a clear depth of more than six metres, or nineteen and a half feet, through the channel, into the western arm; and this depth is, I understand, to be increased to eight metres, or upwards of twenty-six feet. The approach to the harbour is well lighted, and the anchorage is good. The contract steamers of the Italian Government (the Adriatico Orientale Company) have now ceased to run to Trieste and Ancona, and they ply between Brindisi and Alexandria only. Three of them were in the harbour while I was at Brindisi, in May last, one in the outer harbour, and two within a few yards of the quays of the town; they are about 267 feet long by twenty-four feet beam, and are less than 1000 tons measurement; they draw fifteen feet of water when fully loaded, but they were not drawing at that time more than thirteen feet six inches to fourteen feet of water; and with this draught they had no difficulty in going to their coaling hulk in the western arm.

The ordinary rise and fall of the tide does not exceed 0·5 of a metre, or rather more than a foot and a half; and there is not therefore the same facility for docking vessels in the Mediterranean as in this country. There is, for this reason, a greater tendency to use *scali d'alaggio*, or hauling slips. The Italian Government have granted a concession for such a slip (L M in drawing) for vessels up to 2000 tons burthen, and it is to be constructed in two years, from April 1866, at the inner extremity of the western arm. Contracts were signed in June also for the other works, shown in red upon the drawing, including—

(1.) A quay (I K), 500 metres long, “near the Forte di Terra,” at a cost of 580,000 francs, to be finished in thirty months.

(2.) A boundary wall for the “Canal d'Ingresso,” or channel between the outer harbour and the inner arms, at a cost of 550,000 francs, to be finished in thirty months.

(3.) A breakwater (A B) 380 metres long, for closing the “Bocca di Puglia,” between the mainland and the island of St. Andrea; a mole (C D) 260 metres long projecting to the east from the Forte di Mare; a retaining wall (E F), 950 metres long, on the Costa Morena; all to be finished in three years, at a cost of 1,700,000 francs. There are, further in course of construction (at N O) 260 metres of quays, destined for the goods station of the railway: and the general excavation of the harbour, to a depth of 7½ metres, is being proceeded with. At P and Q (near which there is a fountain of good

water) there are to be a site for the deposit of coal and a coaling stage; and there is a project for constructing (at R), at the extremity of the eastern arm, a graving-dock, 120 metres long; but this has not yet been decided upon.

The littoral current runs south at this part of the coast, at the rate of, say, quarter knot per hour varying, of course, according to wind and tide. The closing of the Bocca di Puglia and the mole on the south-east of the Forte di Mare, are important, as well for the protection of the excellent anchorage which exists south of that fort, as for the prevention of the deposit brought into the harbour by this littoral current. But all that is required in order that mail steamers may conveniently ply to the port is to push forward the excavations by dredging, so as to enable those steamers, of whatever Company, to run into a convenient landing stage to be constructed inside the channel leading to the inner arms. The Italian Government express their readiness, if the British Government should determine to forward their mails by the Brindisi route, to provide such accommodation, if necessary, by the Spring of 1867; either at No. which they are preparing for the railway goods station, or at some other point in the internal port to which they would construct a branch railway, so as, in any case, to provide a means of transferring the mails without delay from the railway to the steamer, and *vice versa*.

Under all the circumstances of the case, I am of opinion that the harbour of Brindisi will be better adapted for a mail port than any other harbour in the south of Italy, and there appears to me to be no reason why good temporary accommodation should not be afforded by next Spring, as proposed, pending the completion of the permanent works above described. The Italian Government wished, however, that the alternative of the two places of landing should, while I was in Italy, be left undecided. The hotel accommodation of Brindisi is at present very limited and of an inferior description; but, from what I have heard from various quarters, I can have little doubt that better hotels will readily be supplied, by private or joint stock enterprise, as soon as the question of route is settled, as would no doubt be the case in regard to any part that might be selected.

I shall next proceed to refer to the land route by which the port of Brindisi may be approached.

The mail trains would of course run to Paris, and as far as Macon, over the same railways, as at present, but would diverge at Macon from the Marseilles line and take the line to Amberien, Culoz, Chambéry and St. Michel; the distance from Macon to St. Michel being 146 miles. In addition to owning the line to Culoz, the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean Company have lately acquired also that to St. Michel.

There is a double line of way as far as Culoz, but a single line, doubled at the station, from that place to St. Michel. The gradients are steep and the curves sharp in places, especially between Amberien and Culoz. The steepest gradient near St. Michel is one in forty-three, and the sharpest curve between Culoz and St. Michel has a radius of 400 metres. The permanent way is laid with rails of different sections, some with, some without, chairs, and weighing from thirty-four to thirty-six kilogrammes per metre. The chairs or rails are secured by trenails, spikes, or dog spikes, to transverse sleepers. The joints of the rails are all fished between Culoz and St. Michel's, but the fishing has not yet been completed from Macon to Culoz. There are nine single line tunnels, making a total of 3151 metres, between Culoz and St. Michel. There is no night service as yet on this line, so as to provide for a train leaving Paris in the morning for Italy, the only through train now leaving Paris at 8.40 p.m.

The journey from Macon to St. Michel is now performed by the "direct" trains in six hours and five minutes. This time might be shortened by one hour for a mail train, and the construction of a new curve at Amberien would prevent the necessity which at present exists for running into that station and out again. But I shall, in my calculations of time, continue to allow six hours five minutes for this journey.

The service by horses and mules from St Michel over the Mont Cenis to Susa can be performed, during the summer season, with as much regularity as any other part of the route, but it is uncertain during the winter. The past winter was a mild one, and the service was performed with comparatively little interruption; but in looking through the returns with which the Italian Government have been so good as to furnish me, of the running of the Courier to Susa for the last six winters, I find that in January 1863 the delays were both frequent and serious, in consequence of storms on the Mont Cenis.

The courier that left St. Michel on the 20th of that month did not reach Susa until the 22nd., as much as forty-eight hours twenty-five minutes having been occupied in the passage. On the 11th of March of the same year, fourteen hours thirty minutes are recorded; but the courier made the journey either on sledges or by diligence during the other five winters, in times varying from seven hours thirty minutes as a minimum, to twelve hours and thirty-five minutes as a maximum. I have been informed that the Italian Government would willingly undertake the conveyance of twenty passengers and their luggage, besides mails up to ten or twelve tons in weight, in eight hours between St. Michel and Susa, besides delays at these places of altogether two hours and twenty minutes, made up of one hour and forty minutes at one end, and forty minutes at the other end.

With regard to the summit railway over the Mont Cenis from St. Michel to Susa, I find that since my report of the 12th June of last year, the trials on the experimental portion of line have been completed to the satisfaction of the French and Italian Governments, and that concessions were granted for the construction of the railway (subject to the approval of the detailed plans) by the French Government on the 4th November, and by the Italian Government on the 12th December. That year was thus unfortunately lost for the works; and, indeed, the Spring of 1866 has been principally occupied in preliminary arrangements, and in preparing plans, sections, and cross-sections, on a scale of one in 500 for the two Governments. These plans had been authorized for fifty kilometres, while for the remaining twenty-seven kilometres they had been prepared and were awaiting authorization when I left St. Michel.

I observed in returning from Italy that tunnels and embankments for the rectification of the sharpest curves had been commenced, and were in active progress in six places on the Italian side of the mountain, and I learnt that two others were to be immediately commenced, the whole to be completed in, say, three months. The deviation along Napoleon's Road on that side, to avoid the well-known "escalier," was also to be commenced at once, and the masonry-covered ways, as a protection

against the drift snow and avalanches which have caused that road to be abandoned, were to be finished as well as other tunnels or masonry-covered ways within the next few months, though it was not intended that the timber-covered ways which are to protect the railway from lighter drifts or falling snow, should be constructed till next summer. The rails on the Italian side (twenty-seven kilometres) have been contracted for in England, and 3,000 tons (of rails, chairs, fish-plates, &c.) are to be delivered by the contractors, Messrs Brogden and Company, between the 12th July and the end of September.

On the French side of the mountain, comprising forty kilometres from Lanslebourg to St. Michel, and 10 kilometres from Lanslebourg to the summit, three bridges near St. Michel were far advanced, and were to be finished in six weeks.

A viaduct and two bridges near Fort Lessaillon were in progress, and were to be finished in two months. The deviations on this side are numerous, to avoid villages or sharp turns in the road. That at St. Michel was far advanced, and was to be completed in a few weeks. Those at Modane and Vernet were to be commenced shortly, and to be finished in little more than a month. That at Termignon, the heaviest piece of work on the French side, was on the point of commencement; and it was hoped that it might be completed in two months. That at Lanslebourg was to be commenced shortly, and completed in two months.

Of four deviations between Lanslebourg and the summit, one was finished and three were in progress, and a less important one, near Lanslebourg, was not commenced. All these were to be finished in two months. The widening and levelling of the road in places, the rebuilding of retaining walls and abutments of bridges, were partly completed and partly in progress, and were expected to be finished in two months. The contract for the rails, chairs, &c., for the French side had been undertaken by the Terre Noire Company, of Lyons, under the obligation to deliver 1000 tons a month from the 1st July.

Out of 80,000 sleepers, 50,000 had been purchased and 30,000 cut. Ballast was provided for 20,000 lineal metres, equal to twenty kilometres of permanent way, extending from St. Michel to four kilometres beyond Modane; and fifteen to twenty kilometres of fencing had been prepared for erection, and were at once to be put up.

The precise details had been fixed upon, after much careful consideration, for the engines, they have been contracted for, and are to be delivered, the first in December next, and the whole (twelve in number) by the 1st April, 1867. The tenders for the carriages were still under consideration. No. 2 engine has been strengthened in some of its parts since my visit of last year; and I tried some further experiments with it on the experimental line, both in ascending with a load, and in stopping suddenly, on a signal being given, in the descent.

I see no reason to alter the favourable opinion I have already expressed in regard to the principle involved, but every reason on the contrary to believe that it will be worked out to a successful issue. I have heard from Mr. Fell since leaving the mountain in a letter, dated 13th July, that he had been again with two of the directors of the company over the works, and that they had found them making good progress on the French side, but had thought it desirable to change the contractors on the Italian side, with a view to increased activity and to insure their completion this year. The new contractors have undertaken this obligation, and are to employ at least 1250 men on that side.

The printed prospectus of the company refers to the 1st May, 1867, as the date on which this railway is to be opened throughout from St. Michel to Susa for public traffic, and the calculations of the directors have been based upon that supposition; but to this end, the line and works from Lanslebourg to Molaret (27 kilometres over the mountain) must be completed before the mountain is covered with snow in the autumn of this year; and it cannot be doubted that every exertion will be made to complete and open the line, inasmuch as the profit of the company depends upon its early employment. They cannot count upon any paying traffic after the completion of the grand tunnel and the permanent line; and, indeed, their concessions hold good only up to the opening of that line for traffic.

In the original programme prepared for the French and Italian Governments, four hours and thirty minutes were allowed for the mail and express trains by the summit railway from St. Michel to Susa; but subsequent experiments have shown that this journey might be made in four hours. I shall still however allow four hours and a half for it, and I shall add three-quarters of an hour at each end for the transfer of mails and passengers, on account of the break of gauge; the gauge of the Mont Cenis railway being 3' 7 $\frac{3}{8}$ "', while that of the French and Italian railways is 4' 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ ". I enclose plans of the arrangements proposed for running the summit railway into the stations at St. Michel and Susa. There would be cranes on the platform for transferring the mails across it from the one line to the other, and under these circumstances half-an-hour ought to be ample for the transfer; but I have preferred to allow a good margin, as above, so as to be well within the mark in my estimate of time.

Through the favour of the Italian Government I walked into the headings at both ends of the Grand Tunnel, and I found that very considerable progress had been made during the previous year, in spite of the numerous difficulties which had been encountered.

At the Modane (French) end, hard quartz rock had been found at 2,094·10 metres from the entrance on the 13th June, 1865, and the heading had been driven through that rock for 198·90 metres up to the 9th May, 1866, making a total advance at that end, from the 9th May, 1865, of 302·75 metres, and from the commencement of the works, in the year 1857, of 2,293 metres.

At the Bardonnèche (Italian) end, the heading was progressing more rapidly, through the same schistose rock which has been found at that end from the commencement; 772 metres had been pierced between the 9th May, 1865, and the 9th May, 1866, making a total advancement for that end of 3,361·50 metres.

The total progress at both ends for the year ending 9th May, 1866, was thus 1,074·75 metres, and the total amount pierced, with the heading, was 5,654·50 metres (about 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles), out of 12,220 metres (about 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ miles), leaving 6,565·50 metres (about 4 miles) to be pierced.

The greatest progress that was made in any one year by manual labour was 257·57 metres, in 1858, at the Bardonnèche end; while the progress by machinery has increased as follows:—

YEAR.	Bardonneche.	Modane.	—
1861 	170	... ...	193 by hand labour.
1862 	380	... ...	243 ditto.
1863 	426	376	
1864 	621·20	466·65	
1865 	765·30	458·40	

And the above figures for 1865 were in spite of a severe attack of cholera at Bardonnèche during the months of November and September, which seriously retarded the works at that end and, indirectly also, those at the Modane end; in spite of two accidental explosions, which tended greatly to alarm the workmen—one at the face of the excavation, and the other outside the tunnel; and in spite of the quartz rock encountered during the latter half of the year at the Modane end.

The cholera, indeed, retarded the full-sized excavation and the masonry lining at the Bardonnèche end much more than the heading, and much ground has to be made up in this respect.

Two extra water wheels are however being constructed at that end, in addition to the five already at work, for the improvement of the ventilation; and, this being provided, there is no reason why, if money and labourers be forthcoming in sufficient quantity, this backward condition of the permanent work should not be made up.

The question as to when the tunnel is likely to be completed depends principally upon (1) the thickness of the quartz, (2) the thickness and quality of the rock which is interposed between the quartz and the schistose rock of Bardonnèche, and (3) the supply of money and labour. Unfortunately 400 men, and amongst them some of the best workmen, were leaving the tunnel works for the army whilst I was on the spot; and the financial condition of Italy, at present most unsatisfactory, must depend upon the duration of the present war. As quartz rock does not lie in strata with parallel sides, there can be no good reason for believing that the thickness of it, 500 metres, which has been observed on the surface of the mountain, will also be found at the level of the tunnel; and the question of its extent at that level must remain an element of uncertainty until it has been completely bored through.

The rock which succeeds it has been called compact limestone, and its thickness has been stated at 2500 metres; but the engineers of the tunnel believe it to be gypsum, more easy to work than the schist of Bardonnèche, or the anthracite rock of Modane, and 300 metres thick. Supposing an average distance of 800 metres a year to be pierced for the next five years at the Bardonnèche end, and an average of 513·1 metres a year to be pierced during the same period from the Modane end, then the headings would be driven through so as to meet each other in five years from May, 1866, or by May, 1871, and the permanent tunnel might be completed, say, by the end of that year. But there are also the approaches to the tunnel to be constructed on the Italian side by the Italian Government, and on the French side by Victor Emanuel, now the Paris, Lyons, and Mediterranean Railway Company. These approaches, comprising other tunnels and heavy works, and being altogether about thirty-five miles long, have not been yet commenced. The shortest time, looking at the matter solely in an engineering point of view, in which the permanent line can be completed, will be therefore, as far as can be foreseen, towards the end of 1871; and it is impossible to calculate at present upon the future financial condition of Italy, and the effect it may have upon the progress of the works.

After the construction of the whole permanent line, the tunnel route will be an immense advantage to the mail traffic as well as to all other traffic between France and Italy, inasmuch as the break of gauge, and therefore change of vehicles and consequent inconvenience and delay, which must be incurred in the use of the summit line at St. Michael and Susa will be avoided. The gradients will indeed be very steep, even on the tunnel line, there being a rising gradient from the French side, half way through the grand tunnel of one in forty-five and a-half, and the steepest gradient on the line being one in twenty-eight.

But it may reasonably be expected in a few years, and not long after 1871, mail trains will run through from Calais to Brindisi for 1,390 miles, without break of gauge, in about fifty-four hours.

The railway from Susa, *via* Turin, Alessandria, and Piacenza, to Bologna, forms part of the system of the Ferrovie dell' Alta Italia; out of 387 kilometres between Susa and Bologna, 253 are laid with a single, and 134 with a double line of rails, there being ninety miles of double line between Turin and Alessandria, and forty-four (out of 147) between Piacenza and Bologna. Of the gradients, two and a half kilometres are between one in seventy and one in 100, and thirty-nine kilometres are between one in 100 and one in 200, and the remainder are less steep than one in 200. Of the curves there is one with a radius of 500 metres, 819 metres long, between Piacenza and Bologna; and there are only two others, with a total length of 834 metres, which have radii of less than 600 metres; the permanent way differs in different parts of the line, and altogether 281 kilometres, out of 387, have the joints of the rails fished; dog-spikes only are used to secure the flat-bottomed rails (where these are employed) to the sleepers, as commonly on the Continent, though I observe that through-bolts are now being employed in place of them on the *Chemin-de-fer du Nord* of France. The fences are inefficient in many parts of the line, and an iron chain attached to two posts, or a swinging bar frequently takes the place of gates.

It is not the practice to use either chock-blocks for the security of vehicles standing on the sidings, or indicators for the facing points, on the single line as in England.

The Company offer to run a mail train from Susa to Bologna in seven hours forty-five minutes, including forty minutes of stoppages at the various stations, which is ten minutes less than the "direct" trains of the summer service; and from Bologna to Susa (the greater rise being in that direction) in eight hours and eight minutes, including the same total amount of stoppages. I shall

adopt the latter figures, with ten minutes added for stoppage at Bologna, in circulating the time for the whole journey.

The portion of the Strada Ferrata Meridionale, or Meridional Railway of Italy, which lies between Bologna and Brindisi, is 763 kilometres long, and is laid with a single line throughout. It was opened for traffic from Ancona to Bologna in 1861, from Ancona to Pescara in 1863, to Foggia in April, 1864, to Trani in August, 1864, to Bari in February, 1865, to Brindisi in May, 1865; and, in continuation to Lecce in January, 1866. There are excellent station buildings at forty-seven intermediate stations, mostly finished, but some in progress. There are crossing places and sidings at all of these stations, with a minimum length of 500 metres, and there are more than enough for all the traffic that can at present be expected. Good masonry houses (*case cantonieri*) have been constructed as in other parts of Italy, about a kilometre apart, for nearly the whole length of the line. There are four rooms in each for the accommodation of the platelayers and "guardians," and these men are, therefore, most of them always on the spot, and ready by day or night in case of need.

Out of the whole distance of 763 kilometres, 645 kilometres are quite straight. The sharpest curves, six in number, and of a total length of 4,080 metres, have radii of 400 metres. There are two curves of 450 metres radius, together 250 metres long, and there are thirteen and a-half kilometres of curves with radii of 500 metres, but the majority have radii of upwards of 600 metres. The steepest gradient is one in sixty-seven for a short distance south of Ancona. There is no other gradient steeper than one in 100, and the greater part of the line (and that part more particularly between Foggia and Brindisi) may be considered, as regards curves and gradients, to be a first-rate running line. The permanent way is laid with rails of a flat-bottomed section, in lengths of five and a-half or six metres, weighing thirty-seven kilogrammes per metre. The joints of the rails are fished throughout. The sleepers are laid transversely, about a metre apart on an average, from centre to centre, and are of oak, except for 188 kilometres between Monopoli and Lecce, where they are partly of oak and partly of beech. The rails are secured to the sleepers by means of dog spikes only, as in other parts of Italy and of the Continent generally. Such a fastening is not considered sufficient in this country, but these spikes have a far better hold in oak sleepers than in the fir or other sleepers of soft wood which we employ, and none of the curves are sharp on this line.

The bridges and viaducts generally appear to have been carefully and substantially constructed in brickwork, masonry, and iron. Of the bridges at Ninna, Massignano, Mero, Trivolo, Sangro, Orente, Asinello, Sinarca and Fortore, which are still in wood; that at Sangro, being more substantial than the others, will probably remain in its present condition for several years, while those at Ninna, Massignano, and Orente, will be replaced by permanent bridges in two years, and the remainder within twelve months.

Much expense has been incurred since the line was first opened, and no necessary expense seems to have been spared in making the line secure against encroachments of the sea as at Vasto, or on soft ground, or in regard to the cuttings and embankments.

There are as yet no fences over a great part of the line, even where roads run near, or by the side of the railway; and, except at the most important level-crossings there are no gates, a swinging bar or chain on two posts, being used, under the charge of a servant of the company, in place of them. But the absence of gates and substantial fences which is so frequently observable on the Continent does not appear, in spite of occasional accidents, to have been attended hitherto with the same bad results as in England, partly in consequence of the system which largely prevails of watching the beasts at pasture, and partly because they are most easily kept within bounds.

No fast service of trains has yet been run over this line, as there has not been traffic to justify the extra expense they involve; but the company undertake to run the whole distance from Bologna to Brindisi in eighteen and a-half hours, including altogether one hour and twenty-two minutes of stoppages at seventeen intermediate stations, with mail trains. They have now ninety-three locomotive engines, besides eighty-four under construction; and 329 passenger carriages, besides 219 under construction.

In working this great length of single line, the telegraph only is employed to secure the safety of the trains, when they are not "in orario," that is to say, not running according to the printed time tables. Morse's instruments, by which all the messages are printed on slips of paper in dots and dashes, are those most in use; and they are worked under a good system by responsible men. There is at least a "direct" and an "omnibus" instrument at every station, and there are also instruments for practice at some of the stations. Any deviations from the usual crossing places of the trains are arranged between the station masters upon these instruments, and written instructions are given in such cases to the *capo-conduttori* (head-guards) of the trains. All the *employes* at the stations are taught to work the instruments, and to understand them by the ear, as well as to read the printed slips. Special trains are now run over the line when required for royal and other trains at very short notice, and that which was placed at my disposal afforded an excellent illustration of the system. The company undertake willingly to run an "Indian mail" train special over the line at any time of the day or night, within two hours after the arrival of the steamer from Egypt, in eighteen and a half hours; and they do not at all object to any disarrangement of their ordinary traffic, which may be necessary for that purpose.

The outward mail from London might be expected to run through to Brindisi at stated times, and there would be no occasion for a special irregular service in that direction; but the homeward mail could not, as I took occasion to point out, be timed to any particular hour at Brindisi. And the Italian Government, as well as the railway companies, offer, therefore, to send the homeward mail through by a special train to St. Michel, so that no delay need occur in Italian territory. After the Egyptian steamer had been signalled off Brindisi the telegraph would to this end be employed to give notice of the hour at which the Eastern mail train would leave each station to St. Michel, and even to Calais and London. I am authorized further to state that the Italian Government would be willing to perform this service according to the times proposed by the railway companies, that is to say, in eighteen and a half hours between Brindisi and Bologna, in seven hours forty-five minutes one way, and eight hours five minutes the other way, between Bologna and Susa, with eight hours for the passage of the Mont Cenis, besides altogether two

hours and twenty minutes delay at Susa and St. Michel, at the rate of 0·75 lire or seventy-five centimes per ounce of letters, and the same per kilogramme (or 0·33975 lire per English pound) of printed papers. These terms, which are very considerably less in proportion to the distance than is paid by Her Majesty's Government for the passage of the mails through France, appear to me to be exceedingly moderate.

The Italian Government would also be willing to undertake the sea service from Brindisi to Alexandria with their contract steamers of the Adriatico-Orientale Company, either on a similar system of charges, or for a lump sum within specified weights. The figures that were at first given to me for the sea service were 0·50 lire (fifty centimes) for each English ounce of letters, and the same for each kilogramme of printed matter, but I was subsequently informed that if the British Government had really an idea of entrusting the sea service to the Italian Government, and were inclined to make a positive offer for it, either a tariff of 0·30 lire (thirty centimes) for each ounce of letters and each kilogramme of printed papers, or a lump sum of 3000 lire per voyage for weights of mails not exceeding twelve tons as a maximum or four tons as an average going and returning, might probably be accepted. This charge was considered to correspond to nearly eleven lire per league of voyage, or a third of what the Italian Government pay to the contractors, Messrs. Palmer and Co., for the mail steamers from Brindisi to Alexandria.

In comparing the route *via* Marseilles with that *via* Brindisi to Egypt, as regards the time occupied, it will only be necessary, as both routes go together to Macon, to make that station the common point of departure.

The following may be taken as the time occupied by the existing route :

	Hours.	min.
From Macon to Marseilles	10	43
Transfer mails at Marseilles	2	0
Marseilles to Alexandria, 1460 nautical miles, including four hours detention at Malta	150	0
Macon to Alexandria	162	43

And the following would be the time for the Brindisi route, if the passage were made by horses and mules over Mount Cenis.

	Hours.	min.
Macon to St. Michel	6	5
Delay at St. Michel	1	40
Passage of Mont Cenis to Susa	8	0
Delay Susa	0	40
Susa to Bologna	8	8
Delay at Bologna	0	10
Bologna to Brindisi	18	30
Transfer mails at Brindisi	2	0
Brindisi to Alexandria, 822 nautical miles	82	15
Macon to Alexandria	127	28

For the Brindisi route by the summit railway over the Mont Cenis, when that shall have been completed, the time would be—

	Hours.	min.
Macon to St. Michel	6	5
Delay at St. Michel	0	45
St. Michel to Susa	4	30
Delay at Susa	0	45
Susa to Bologna	8	8
Delay at Bologna	0	10
Bologna to Brindisi	18	30
Transfer mails to steamer at Brindisi	2	0
Brindisi to Alexandria, 822 nautical miles	82	15
	123	8

Again, when the tunnel through the Alps and the permanent line in connection with it are complete, the delays at St. Michel and Susa will be avoided, and the journey between these places may be performed without break of gauge or change of vehicles, including stoppages, in three hours. There will, therefore, be an advantage of thirty-five and a quarter hours in favour of the Brindisi route previous to the construction of the Mont Cenis Summit Railway, of thirty-nine and a-half hours after the construction of that railway, and of forty-two and a half hours after the completion of the permanent tunnel line from St. Michel to Susa.

In communicating with the Italian Government and with the officers of the Italian railways, I have pointed out that, in laying out the periods of time on which the above calculations have been made, it was desirable to fix, not the shortest time in which the journeys could be performed, but such rates of speed as would admit of punctuality. And I believe that in the above figures a sufficient margin has been left to cover any accidental delays that may occur to a moderate extent on so long a journey. I am of opinion, further, that the time may be kept with greater certainty *via* Brindisi than *via* Marseilles, because—(1) land transit generally may be performed more punctually than sea transit—(2) the sea passage would be less stormy and more certain, inasmuch as the worst part of it, across the Gulf of Lyons, would be avoided—(3) there would be a special railway service through Italy.

But in order that all the advantages of this route might be realized, it would be desirable that arrangements should be made by which the special service from the East should be continued also through France.

Some further time might also be saved in both directions if the mail trains could be timed to run through from Calais, stopping, say, one hour only at Paris, and making use of the railway which connects the Northern and Mediterranean lines together for avoiding a change of vehicles in that city.

With reference to these subjects I am happy to be able to inform your Grace of the cordial promise of general co-operation which I received at Paris from M. Vandal, the Director-General of the French Posts. I had the advantage of conferring with M. Vandal, both in going to and returning from Italy; and when I informed him on the latter occasion of the result of my journey, of the amount of time that could be saved, and the price at which the Italian Government were willing to perform the service, M. Vandal replied at once that the question was virtually decided. He observed that such an improved means of communications would advance the important interests of the French Empire in connection with the East, as well as our own; and he begged me to assure Her Majesty's Government of his readiness to afford every assistance in furthering this object.

Under all the circumstances of the case, I am of opinion that the route *via* Brindisi may properly be adopted for the Eastern mail service, as affording greater advantages at the present time than any other route; and further, that it might be brought into operation by the 1st June, 1867. It is probable that the Mont Cenis Railway will be opened for traffic before that time, and even if such should not be the case, there would still be no difficulty as regards the passage of the mountain by horses and mules until the autumn; and I cannot doubt that the summit railway will be complete and working, at all events, before the following winter.

It will thus be possible next year to convey the Eastern mails between London and Alexandria punctually, and without difficulty, in 150½ hours, and at some time after 1871, when the permanent line between St. Michael and Susa is at work in 147½ hours. The longest portion of the journey that can be made at present, or next year, without change of vehicle, is from Susa to Brindisi, 716 miles, or twenty-seven hours; but it may be expected, when the tunnel line is completed after 1871, that mails and passengers will travel, without change of vehicles between Calais and Brindisi, 1,391 miles in fifty-four hours, or, if the arrangement above referred to, of using the connecting railway at Paris, be adopted, in fifty-two or fifty-three hours. In either case it is exceedingly desirable that sleeping carriages with proper conveniences should be provided for the journey. I have not failed to represent this want to the Italian Government and railway companies, and I am happy to be able to inform your Grace that the Italian Government undertakes to convey the passengers in special carriages of this description at fares not exceeding, for each, fifteen centimes per kilometre. In the meantime, the mails must necessarily be transferred, if not at Paris, at all events from the 4' 8½" to the 3' 7¾" gauge, and *vice versa* at St. Michael and Susa; and with a view to this being more easily effected, as well as to facilitate the transfers on the remainder of the whole route, I would venture to suggest some improvements might be made in the system of packing them.

The average number of boxes of wood or iron forwarded by the mail of the 26th of each month, through France to the East, is now 325, with a gross weight of nine tons fourteen cwt. two qrs. twenty-one lbs., and a gross cubic content of 1,178 feet; and each of these boxes is now thrown down with great violence, perhaps on stone or iron, whenever a transfer is made: 1st, from the "left" at the General Post Office to the Post Office van; 2nd, from Post Office van to the railway station in London; 3rd, from the train to the steamer at Dover, and so on. I understand that the attempt has already been made to substitute bags for boxes, but that it was given up, when the cholera was raging last year in Egypt, because the bags were supposed to harbour infection more readily than the boxes. But I apprehend that this objection might be got over if the bags were enclosed in watertight wooden chests of larger dimensions. The places of transfer being always the same, these chests might be moved by cranes, from the General Post Office to the street, from the street to the railway, from the railway pier to the steamer, and so on. And the hatchways of the steamers employed might be fitted to receive them without any difficulty, whatever the precise form and size decided upon. A great saving would thus be effected, in the weight, the cost, and the wear and tear of the cases, as well as in the time consumed in making the cases up, in making lists of them during the transfers, and in transferring them. And there would probably be less risk of loss. A truck on the Mont Cenis Summit Railway would not, of course, take so many of these large chests as one of the ordinary railways.

As I have intimated at the commencement of this Report, the question to be now solved is solely that of communication through Europe to the East of the Mediterranean. But in saying so much concerning the postal routes to the East, I would ask your Grace's permission to touch also upon the still more important saving of time and distance that may be obtained hereafter, by avoiding the passage of the Red Sea, where a railway shall be constructed from the coast of the Mediterranean along the Euphrates Valley to the Persian Gulf. By this route many hundred miles of distance, and many days of time, might be saved between London and Bombay, which will become within the next two years (when the railways to Madras and Calcutta are completed) the principal port of India. The navigation by the Persian Gulf to Bombay be far preferable to that, *via* Suez and the Red Sea to Bombay; and even that amount of navigation may ultimately be avoided by the connection together of Bagdad and Bombay by railway. But in the meantime the Euphrates Valley scheme has been for many years almost in abeyance. The mere guarantee of the Turkish Government has not been found sufficient even to render the construction of the first portion from the coast to Aleppo practicable; and the financial state of that empire renders progress now all but impossible. But I have so strong a conviction of the important bearing, that the construction of such a railway would have, commercially and strategically, upon the British empire, that I could not but take this opportunity of recommending the subject to the serious consideration of Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) H. W. TYLER,
Captain, Royal Engineers.

His Grace the Duke of Montrose, Postmaster-General, &c.

No. 2.

Copy of a Despatch from Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., to the Right Hon. the Earl of CARNARVON.

(No. 5.)

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 11th January, 1867.

In reply to your Lordship's Circular dated 22nd September last, enclosing a Minute from the Board of Treasury upon the subject of the Postal Communications between Great Britain and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies, I have the honor to report that in obedience to your request I have laid the papers before my Responsible Advisers, who state that a Conference of Delegates from the several Australian Colonies is about to be held to discuss the course which it may be advisable for these Colonies to adopt, on the subject of Steam Postal Communication with the United Kingdom, and that as soon as this has been done, the views of the New Zealand Government will be communicated to your Lordship.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon, &c.

G. GREY.

No. 3.

Copy of a Despatch from the Right Hon. the Earl of CARNARVON to Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 20th November, 1866.

With reference to my Circular Despatch of the 22nd September last, I have the honor to transmit to you, for your information, the accompanying copy of a further letter from the Board of Treasury, respecting the Postal Communications between this country and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir George Grey, K.C.B., &c.

CARNARVON.

Enclosure in No. 3.

Mr. G. W. HUNT to Sir F. ROGERS.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 14th November, 1866.

With reference to the Minute of this Board, dated the 4th September last, upon the subject of the Postal Communications between this Country and the East Indies, China, Japan, and the Australian Colonies, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to acquaint you, for the information of the Earl of Carnarvon, that, after communication with the Postmaster-General, my Lords have authorized His Grace to defer giving the notices to the Peninsular and Oriental Company for the termination of their contracts until the result of the communication is known, which His Grace will at once open with the Italian Government, through the Foreign Office, as to the establishment of the proposed new route *via* Brindisi.

I am however to add, that they have reason to believe that the statements contained in Captain Tyler's Report will meet with the cordial adherence of that Government.

As regards the Australian Service, I am to state that my Lords have also authorized the postponement of the notice for the cessation of the service between Galle and Sydney until the replies shall have been received from the Colonies to their Lordship's recent Minute, in order that the notice may be given simultaneously with the invitation for tenders for the new service, thereby affording to the competing contractors more time for maturing their arrangements than they would otherwise have, if the notice were given at once, and the invitation for tenders delayed, as was at first contemplated.

I have, &c.,

Sir F. Rogers, Bart., &c.

GEORGE WARD HUNT.

No. 4.

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

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 26th November, 1866.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury having intimated by Minute dated the 4th September, 1866, the intention of the Imperial Government to direct that the necessary steps should be taken for terminating the existing contracts for the conveyance of Mails between Great Britain and India, and Point de Galle and Sydney: and their Lordships having also expressed a strong desire that any new contract for the branch service by which the Australian Mails may be forwarded, should be under the joint control of the Colonies interested in the service, I have the honor by direction of His Excellency Sir J. H. T. Manners Sutton, to state that this intelligence appears to the Government of Victoria to afford an additional reason, to those already urged in the correspondence that has taken place on the subject, in favour of a meeting of delegates from the several Colonies for the full discussion of all matters connected with Steam Postal Communication, in order that the whole question may be settled on equitable grounds for the common good.

I have therefore the honor to suggest that such a meeting should be arranged to take place on an early date, and that the gentlemen who may be appointed to the duty may be invested with full powers, as it is of the highest importance that the decision of the Colonies on the question remitted to them by Lord Carnarvon should be arrived at and communicated with the least possible delay.

I would also suggest that Melbourne would, on account of its central position, be the most eligible place of meeting.

A similar communication has been addressed to the Governments of New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland, and Western Australia.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, &c., New Zealand.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

No. 5.

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

SIR,— New Zealand, Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 17th December, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ultimo, and in reply, to state that this Government accedes to the proposal contained therein, that a Conference of Delegates from the several Australasian Colonies should take place at Melbourne, for the full discussion of all matters connected with Steam Postal Communication, with a view to their settlement on equitable grounds.

Mr. Crosbie Ward, a Member of the New Zealand Legislature, at present in Australia, has accordingly been accredited to represent this Government in the Conference.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

I have, &c.,
E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 6.

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

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, New South Wales,
11th December, 1866.

Referring to your letter of November 5th, enclosing communication from the Chief Secretary of Victoria on the subject of Postal Communication, I have now the honor to transmit for your information a copy of a letter addressed to the Victorian Government in reply to a proposal for a Conference of Representatives from the several Colonies, to consider the whole question with a view to a satisfactory settlement.

2. If the Government of New Zealand should decide to send Representatives to such Conference, I should be glad to be informed of such decision at your earliest convenience.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary of
New Zealand, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
HENRY PARKES.

Enclosure in No. 6.

SIR,— Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 10th December, 1866.

Acknowledging the receipt of your letters of October 10th and November 26th, on the subject of Steam Postal Communication between these Colonies and England, I am now desired by His Excellency Sir John Young to inform you of the views of this Government on the questions submitted by you.

2. In your letter of October 10th, you say that the Government of Victoria, having attentively considered the subject, is most desirous that the through service by way of Suez and Panama should be placed on a permanent and equitable footing; although you express your opinion, that as a direct postal route for the whole of the Australian Colonies, the line connecting with the Peninsular and Oriental Company's Steamers at Point de Galle, will always present superior advantages. Holding this view, you inform the Government of New South Wales that, while desirous of dealing with the question in a spirit of concession, you would not feel justified in recommending that Victoria should contribute towards the maintenance of the Panama Service, on the same principle that regulates the payments made in liquidation of the Colonial moiety of the subsidy to the Peninsular and Oriental Company. In the event of this Colony continuing to be a party to the maintenance of the service *via* Galle, you express your willingness, however, to consider in a fair and impartial manner any proposal for the payment by Victoria of a fixed annual sum for the privilege of forwarding and receiving mails *via* Panama.

3. In your letter of November 26th, you bring under the notice of this Government the recent Minute of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury; more especially that portion of the Minute which expresses a strong desire that the Colonies themselves, in combination, should undertake to provide for the Postal Service between Australia and Galle for the future, and you urge that this intelligence affords another reason, in addition to those advanced in a former correspondence, in favour of a meeting of Delegates from the several Colonies for the full discussion of all matters connected with Ocean Postal Communication. You suggest that a Postal Conference such as you recommend should be held without further delay, and that the Representatives appointed by the several Colonies should be invested with full powers; as it is of the highest importance that the whole question, as affected by Inter-colonial interests, and by the purport of Lord Carnarvon's Despatch, should be settled on equitable grounds for the common good.

4. On the importance of maintaining the through service, now that it has been successfully established, and the expediency of settling the whole question of Ocean Mail Communication in equitable regard to the interests of all the Colonies, and on a basis that shall afford some prospect of satisfaction and permanence, this Government cordially concurs in your views as now communicated, and it reciprocates the desire you express for the formation of friendly relations in all matters of Inter-colonial interest. No special objection is seen to the mode of arriving at a settlement proposed by you, and as the Government of New Zealand is also anxious for a conference of the Colonies on the subject, this Colony will be prepared to accredit Representatives to any such Conference in the month of February next, to be held either in Melbourne or Sydney, as a majority of the Colonies becoming parties to it shall determine.

5. In approaching the discussions of the special points on which opinions are likely to differ, in arriving at any general agreement for the establishment of a complete and satisfactory Ocean Steam Postal Service, the extent to which this Government is committed to the maintenance of communication *via* Panama, must necessarily influence its deliberations, and still more so, it is presumed, the deliberations of the New Zealand Government. On the other hand, the Government of Queensland

will probably look mainly to its newly established route through Torres Straits. For these reasons it appears the more desirable that the whole group of British communities in this part of the world should be represented at any such Postal Conference as you suggest and invite, in order that the remoter as well as the more immediate advantages to be derived from each separate line of communication, both singly and forming a part of a system, may be considered thoroughly, and from opposite stand points.

6. In reply to the observations contained in your letter of October 10th, on the relative merits of the Suez and Panama routes, I may mention that the mails despatched from Sydney *via* Panama on the 15th June were delivered at Southampton on the 12th August, while the Southampton part of the mails, *via* Suez, which left here on the 24th June, was not delivered before the 25th August, giving a saving of four days in favour of Panama. In the same manner the delivery of the July mails by the respective services at Southampton, gave a saving of two days in favour of Panama—the one having arrived on the 11th and the other on the 22nd September. It is submitted however that the postal advantages of this service ought to be viewed in the light of the facilities which it affords for communicating with the Nations of the American Continent, and that the Postal advantages alone ought not to determine its value to the Australian Colonies.

7. In conclusion, I have the honor to assure you that this Government is by no means insensible to the value of the line of communication in the furtherance of which the Colony of Victoria is said to be most interested, and it will be prepared to join in any new contract for providing an efficient service between these Colonies and Point de Galle, on such conditions as shall ensure a just regard to all interests.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary of Victoria, Melbourne.

I have, &c.,

HENRY PARKES.

No. 7.

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

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 31st December, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter No. 122, of the 11th instant, transmitting a copy of a letter which you had addressed to the Government of Victoria, on the subject of a proposal made by that Government for a Conference of Representatives from the several Colonies to consider the whole question of postal communication between Australasia and Great Britain, with a view to a satisfactory settlement.

The Government of New Zealand is prepared to send Representatives to the proposed Conference whenever the time and place of meeting has been determined.

I have, &c.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 8.

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

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 31st December, 1866.

In my letter No. 413, of the 17th instant, I stated that the New Zealand Government agreed to a proposed Conference to discuss the whole question of Steam Postal Communication, and that Mr. Crosbie Ward had been accredited to represent this Government at that Conference.

When I wrote that letter I was under the impression that the Conference was to be held forthwith, and that Mr. Ward was at the time in Australia; but a few days after my letter was despatched Mr. Ward returned to New Zealand, and I learned from the Colonial Secretary of New South Wales, that the Conference would probably not take place before February next.

Although the exact arrangement contemplated in that letter cannot therefore be carried into effect, I desire to state that whenever the time and place of meeting of the Conference has been determined, this Government will be prepared to send Representatives to it on the part of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. Chief Secretary, Victoria.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 9.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 30th January, 1867.

I have the honor to inform you that the Government of New Zealand has been invited by the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales to send Representatives to a Conference of Delegates from the several Australian Colonies, for the discussion and determination of all matters connected with postal communication between those Colonies and Great Britain, and that the New Zealand Government has acceded to the proposal. So far as this Government is at present informed, the Conference will be held in the City of Melbourne, in the month of February next, and the delegates to be appointed will be invested with full powers to act on behalf of their respective Governments.

Understanding that you are willing to undertake the task of representing, in conjunction with Mr. Crosbie Ward, the Colony of New Zealand, at the Conference in question, I have the honor to inform you that the Government will be glad to obtain for the Colony the advantage of your services as one of its Representatives; and I enclose a warrant duly accrediting you in that capacity.

With regard to the extent of your powers to bind the Colony by any specific agreement, I am to state that while the Government is of course unable to promise the assent of the Legislature to any measures to which such assent may be indispensable, yet, looking to the great importance of fixed and definite results being arrived at by the Conference, and to the confidence which they repose in the

discretion and judgment of yourself and your colleague, they are willing themselves to be bound by any agreement to which you may jointly become parties; and they will use their best endeavours to obtain the assent of the Legislature to such agreement if such a course should be found necessary.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. John Hall, &c.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 10.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to CROSBIE WARD, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 29th January, 1867.

I have the honor to inform you that the Government of New Zealand has been invited by the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales to send Representatives to a Conference of Delegates from the several Australian Colonies for the discussion and determination of all matters connected with postal communication between those Colonies and Great Britain, and that the New Zealand Government has acceded to the proposal. So far as the Government is at present informed, the Conference will be held in the City of Melbourne, in the month of February next, and the delegates to be appointed will be invested with full powers to act on behalf of their respective Governments.

Understanding that you are willing to undertake the task of representing, in conjunction with the Postmaster-General, the Colony of New Zealand at the Conference in question, I have the honor to inform you that the Government will be glad to obtain for the Colony the advantage of your services as one of its Representatives, and I enclose a warrant duly accrediting you in that capacity.

Under the circumstances under which the proposed Conference is about to be held, and having regard to the impossibility of providing by specific written instructions for the many unforeseen contingencies which it is possible may arise during its sitting, it is considered that rather than attempt to guide you by such instructions, it will be better that you should be placed in possession of the views of the Government by the Postmaster-General, with whom the whole question has been fully discussed by the Cabinet; and this course will accordingly be adopted.

With regard to the extent of your powers to bind the Colony by any specific agreement, I am to state that while the Government is of course unable to promise the assent of the Legislature to any measures to which such assent may be indispensable, yet, looking to the great importance of fixed and definite results being arrived at by the Conference, and to the confidence which they repose in the discretion and judgment of yourself and your colleague, they are willing themselves to be bound by any agreement to which you may jointly become parties; and they will use their best endeavours to obtain the assent of the Legislature to such agreement if such a course should be found necessary.

I have, &c.,

Crosbie Ward, Esq., M.G.A., Lyttelton.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 11.

G. GREY, Governor.

His Excellency the Governor of the Colony of New Zealand in pursuance and exercise of all powers and authorities him in this behalf enabling, doth hereby appoint

The Hon. JOHN HALL, Esq., Postmaster-General of New Zealand, and a Member of the Executive Council of the said Colony; and

CROSBIE WARD, Esq., a Member of the House of Representatives of New Zealand, to be Representatives of the Colony of New Zealand at a Conference of Representatives of Australian Colonies to be held in the month of February, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, at Melbourne, in the Colony of Victoria, for the full discussion of all matters connected with Ocean Postal Communication.

Given under the hand of His Excellency Sir George Grey, Knight Commander of the Most Honorable Order of the Bath, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over Her Majesty's Colony of New Zealand and its Dependencies, at Christchurch, and issued under the Seal of the Colony, this fifth day of February, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 12.

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

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, New South Wales, 18th January, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge your letter of December 31st, informing me that the Government of New Zealand will be prepared to send Representatives to the Postal Conference of the Australian Colonies whenever the time and place of meeting have been determined.

2. By reference to my letter of December 10th to the Chief Secretary of Victoria, a copy of which was enclosed to you with my communication of December 11th, it will be seen that the month of February was named by this Government for holding the Conference, and that the choice of Melbourne or Sydney as the place of meeting was left for the decision of the other Colonies. It was hoped that New Zealand would have intimated her wishes in this respect to the Governments of Victoria and New South Wales.

3. On receipt of your letter, now under reply, I telegraphed to Mr. McCulloch, and have received answer as follows:—"No day named. The delay in communicating with New Zealand will prevent the naming of an earlier day than the 25th or 26th of next month." This telegram also informs me that Tasmania and South Australia will send delegates, but that no final decision had been received from Queensland.

4. It appears to me that it rests with your Government to fix definitely the time of meeting, which cannot now be earlier than the end of February.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
HENRY PARKES.

No. 13.

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

New Zealand, Colonial Secretary's Office,
Wellington, 11th February, 1867.

SIR,—

Referring to the correspondence which has taken place upon the subject of the Conference which is appointed to be holden in Melbourne for the discussion and determination of all matters connected with postal communication between the Australian Colonies and Great Britain, I have now the honor to inform you that the Hon. John Hall, Member of the Executive Council and Postmaster-General of New Zealand, and Mr. Crosbie Ward, Member of the House of Representatives, and formerly Postmaster-General of the Colony, have been appointed to act as delegates to represent the Colony of New Zealand at the Conference, and hold a commission under the hand of His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B., and the Seal of the Colony, empowering them, or either of them, to act on behalf of this Government.

Mr. Hall and Mr. Crosbie Ward will proceed to Melbourne by the mail steamer leaving Dunedin on the 18th, and arriving at Melbourne on the 25th instant.

The Hon. Chief Secretary, Victoria.

I have, &c.,
E. W. STAFFORD.
[Similar letter to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.]

No. 14.

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

Victoria, Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 1st February, 1867.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo (December) intimating the willingness of your Government to send Representatives to a Postal Conference whenever the time and place of meeting shall have been fixed.

I have now to inform you, that, with the concurrence of the Delegates from New South Wales and South Australia, at present in Melbourne, it has been decided to hold the Conference in Melbourne on the 4th March next.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary,
New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
J. MOORE,
(for Chief Secretary.)

No. 15.

Copy of REPORT made by Representatives of New Zealand at the Postal Conference to the Colonial Secretary of New Zealand.

SIR,—

Melbourne, 26th March, 1867.

We have the honor to report to you the result of the proceedings of the Conference of Delegates from the Governments of the several Australasian Colonies, on the subject of Ocean Postal Communication, at which Conference we were authorized to represent the Government of New Zealand.

The Conference met in Melbourne on the 4th instant, and was attended by Delegates from all the Australasian Colonies (excepting Western Australia,) who undertook that their Governments would be bound by such resolutions of the Conference as they themselves might individually assent to.

The Conference considered:—firstly, “The permanent arrangement which it may be desirable, with the concurrence of the Imperial Government, to adopt for maintaining and improving the Postal Communication between the United Kingdom and the Colonies in question;” and, secondly, “The contribution to the cost of the existing Sydney and Panama Service, which, pending the coming into operation of the permanent arrangement above referred to, should be made by the Colonies who are not parties to this contract.”

Upon the first branch of the subject, the Representatives from each Colony began by submitting to the Conference their several views of the most satisfactory scheme for a postal service. After a protracted discussion of the various proposals so made, the following arrangement was at length unanimously adopted; namely—That three lines of Postal Communication between Australasia and Great Britain should be established—1, by Melbourne, South Australia, and Galle or Mauritius; 2, by New Zealand and Panama; 3, by Brisbane, Torres Straits, and Singapore. The Australian terminus of all three lines would be at Sydney. It was agreed to provide in addition all the branch services which required to complete the communication with the principal Colonial Ports.

The total cost of the whole of these services was estimated, on reliable data, not to exceed £400,000 a year. For reasons explained in the resolutions of the Conference, it was assumed that the Imperial Government will agree to bear one-half the cost of the new services, as is the case with the one now in operation. The remainder, as the Colonial moiety, was apportioned as follows:—

To Victoria	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
„ New South Wales	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
„ New Zealand	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
„ Queensland	...	...	...	...	One-seventh.
„ South Australia	...	...	...	...	One-twelfth.
„ Tasmania	...	...	...	...	One-fiftieth.

The Colony of Western Australia not being represented at the Conference, it was deemed advisable to leave the contribution of that Colony at or near its present amount, which is represented by the small fraction required to make up the total of the Colonial moiety.

In consequence of the length of the notices requisite for determining the existing contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the new arrangement can hardly, under any circumstances, come into operation in less than two years and a half from the present time.

It was further resolved that the new contracts for the main services should be made for a period of seven years. The agreement between the Colonies now entered into, may consequently, if given effect to by the action of the Imperial Government, be deemed to be concluded for the same period.

In order to carry out the resolutions of the Conference, and to obtain for them the most favorable consideration of the Imperial Government, a Memorial to Her Majesty was drawn up and signed by all the Representatives. It was also agreed that the several Colonial Governments should do all that may be necessary in London to further the objects of the Conference.

On the second branch of the subject, namely, the contribution to be made provisionally by the non-contracting Colonies to the cost of the Panama service, we regret to state that no satisfactory arrangement was arrived at by the Conference. The importance of a settlement of this question was pressed on the consideration of the Conference by the Representatives of New South Wales and New Zealand. But as, after several days' discussion, there appeared no prospect of a satisfactory result being arrived at, it was eventually determined to refer the matter to private negotiation between the Colonies concerned, by which means it was believed that a settlement would be most speedily arrived at. We are glad to state that to some extent these negotiations have already been successful.

It was agreed that, in accordance with the suggestion emanating from the Imperial Government, the Colonies in combination should undertake to call for tenders, and enter into the contracts necessary for connecting the Australian Colonies with the lines of postal communication maintained by the Imperial Government. With a view to the adoption of the measures requisite for this purpose, and also for carrying out in other respects the resolutions of the Conference, it was deemed expedient that a Federal Council, comprising Representatives from all the Australasian Colonies, should be established. The meeting of this Council will be necessary when the answer of the Imperial Government shall have been received.

The Conference was unanimously of opinion that other subjects of common interest, as they arise from time to time, may be advantageously referred to this Council.

We have the honor to append to this Report copies of the Proceedings of the Conference, of the Memorial to Her Majesty, and of Papers and Returns laid before the Conference.

We have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,
CROSBIE WARD.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 15.

Proceedings of the POSTAL CONFERENCE held at Melbourne.

MONDAY, 4TH MARCH, 1867.

THE following gentlemen, representatives of the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, Tasmania, and New Zealand, were present:—

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch.	Queensland	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. Henry Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. Joseph Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut.	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,		

The Honorable James McCulloch having been elected to the Chair, it was

Resolved—That the proceedings of the Conference shall be strictly private, and that the results of the deliberations shall not be made known without the concurrence of the Conference.

Resolved—That the Conference shall sit daily at 11 a.m.

Resolved—That the representatives of each Government undertake that the respective Governments shall recommend to their Parliaments the adoption of measures to carry out all the resolutions of the Conference to which they may individually have given their assent.

The meeting then adjourned until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 5th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

TUESDAY, 5TH MARCH, 1867.

Present:

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. J. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the representatives, after conferring until 2 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, 7th March, at 11 a.m., in order that time might be allowed for the preparation of certain returns.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

THURSDAY, 7TH MARCH, 1867.

Present:

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.

New South Wales	The Hon. Henry Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed, the returns ordered, numbered 1 and 2 respectively, were handed in.

General discussion then ensued, in the course of which papers were read by Mr. Docker, Mr. Hall, and Mr. Macalister. These papers having been ordered to be printed, and the return numbered 2 having been ordered to be amended, the meeting adjourned at 1.45 p.m. until 11 a.m. on Friday, the 8th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

FRIDAY, 8TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

Memoranda from the representatives of New Zealand, Queensland, New South Wales, and Victoria, were handed in and ordered to be printed.

General discussion ensued.

It was resolved—That at the next meeting of the Conference the proposal of Mr. Macalister, that there be three postal routes, shall be first considered, and that resolutions be submitted thereupon.

Letter from the Manager, Australasian Steam Navigation Company, dated 23rd February, 1867, was read to the meeting, which then adjourned, at 2 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Monday, the 11th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

MONDAY, 11TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

Mr. Macalister proposed—That three postal routes be established, viz., *via* Suez and King George's Sound, *via* Panama, and *via* Singapore and Torres Straits, and that the cost of these services be borne by the United Kingdom and the Colonies respectively, on the basis of the proposition contained in the memorandum handed in by the representatives of New Zealand (*vide* pp. 31-3), and that the colonial moiety be paid by the Colonies respectively in the following proportions, viz.:—

	£
Victoria	48,000
New South Wales	47,000
South Australia	16,000
New Zealand	39,400
Queensland	20,500
Tasmania	5,000
Western Australia	700

Amounting to ... £177,000

being moiety of the estimated cost of the three lines with branch services.

Seconded by Mr. Gore.

Discussion ensued.

Copy of resolutions to be moved by Mr. Parkes handed in.—Ordered to be printed.

Memorandum handed in by the representatives of South Australia.—Ordered to be printed.

(*Vide* p. 34.)

The meeting then adjourned, at 2 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, the 12th.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

TUESDAY, 12TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

Mr. Macalister requested to be allowed to withdraw the resolution standing in his name in favor of the following—moved by Mr. Parkes:—

"1. That any scheme of ocean postal communication agreed upon by this Conference should, in providing for the general convenience, be so adapted to special interests as to secure the concurrence and support of all the associated Colonies.

"2. That any such scheme will be valuable to each of the Colonies in proportion to the number of points of commercial intercourse which it shall be made to include, in combination of expedition and regularity of conveyance between Great Britain and Australia.

"3. That the facilities for the transmission of merchandise and for passenger traffic ought not to be overlooked as collateral advantages.

"4. That the advantage of more rapid telegraphic communication by way of Torres Straits commends that route to the favorable consideration of the Conference.

"5. That the contributions of the associated Colonies to the cost of any such general scheme should be proportioned, not so much by calculations of the actual population or the post office correspondence, as on the basis of a compromise of interests and preference in view of a common federal object.

"6. That, considering our political connection as dependencies of the Crown, and the interest of England as a commercial nation in the trade and progress of the Colonies, one-half of the cost of any such aggregate scheme ought in justice to be borne by the Imperial Government.

"7. That in the proposed federal action, the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand are considered as possessing equal interests, which may be approximately estimated as follows:—

Victoria.—On the basis of population and commerce, with her general interest in Australian progress, and her special interest in the maintenance of the Suez route, from her undoubted priority of advantages derived from it.

New South Wales.—On the basis of population and commerce and the same general interest, with her supposed greater interest with the Panama route.

New Zealand.—On the same basis of individual and general interest, with her undoubted priority of advantages in communication *via* Panama.

"8. That the interests of Queensland, governed by her geographical situation, require a special service which does not present any considerable advantages to the other Colonies, but that it is not desirable that Queensland should be disunited from the other Colonies in the settlement of this question.

"9. That the Colonies of South Australia and Tasmania, partly owing to specialities of social character, and partly to the limitation of their intercolonial relations, will be least affected by any new adjustment of the existing postal arrangements.

"10. That in order to establish a postal system affording regular fortnightly communication by three lines, *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits to Singapore, *via* Melbourne and South Australia to Suez, and *via* New Zealand to Panama, with the necessary branch services, the six Colonies represented at this Conference should contribute a moiety not exceeding £200,000 of the total cost, in the following proportions, viz.:—

Victoria	...	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
New South Wales	...	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
New Zealand	...	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
Queensland	...	...	...	...	...	One-seventh.
South Australia	...	...	...	...	...	One-twelfth.
Tasmania	...	...	...	...	...	One-fiftieth.

"11. That it is expedient that the six Colonies represented at this Conference should act in concert in urging these views, and should join in a memorial to Her Majesty, setting forth the mutual advantages to be derived by England and Australia from their adoption."

Seconded by Mr. Docker.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Ward moved, as an amendment, that the following words be added to the eighth resolution proposed by Mr. Parkes:—

"That this Conference, while deeming it inexpedient to establish at present three lines of communication for postal purposes, will be prepared to consider any reasonable proposal which may be made for a joint contribution to a steam service to be established by Queensland *via* Torres Straits to Singapore, in addition to any general postal system which may be agreed upon."

Seconded by Mr. Hall.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Ward's amendment was then put to the meeting by the Chairman, with the following result:—

For.	Against.
Victoria,	New South Wales,
New Zealand.	South Australia,
	Tasmania,
	Queensland.

The amendment was accordingly lost.

Mr. Parkes' resolutions were then considered.

The first resolution was put to the meeting and agreed to without amendment.

The second resolution was agreed to after being amended by striking out the words "in combination," second line, and inserting in lieu the word "consistently."

The third resolution was agreed to without amendment.

The fourth resolution was agreed to without amendment.

The fifth resolution was agreed to without amendment.

The sixth resolution was agreed to after being amended by striking out the word "England," and inserting in lieu the words "Great Britain" (second line), and by striking out the words "in justice," in the last line.

On the seventh resolution being considered, Mr. Hall proposed that the word "and," after "New South Wales," in first line, be struck out, and that the words "and Queensland" be inserted after the words "New Zealand," in second line.

Seconded by Mr. Ward.

The amendment was put to the meeting by the Chairman, with the following result :—

For.	Against.
New Zealand.	Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Tasmania, Queensland.

The amendment was accordingly lost, and the original resolution, as proposed, was agreed to.

The eighth resolution was agreed to, after inserting the word "postal" after the word "considerable," in second line.

The ninth resolution was agreed to, after striking out all the words from "partly," first line, to "relations" inclusive, in second line, and by striking out the words "any new," second line, and inserting in lieu "the proposed."

On the tenth resolution being considered, it was proposed by Mr. Boucaut, and seconded by Mr. Duffield, That the proportion to be borne by South Australia shall be one-thirteenth, and that by Tasmania be one forty-seventh.

This amendment was put to the meeting by the Chairman, with the following result :—

For.	Against.
South Australia, New Zealand.	Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, Tasmania.

The amendment was accordingly lost, and the original resolution, as proposed, was agreed to.

The eleventh resolution was agreed to, after striking out the word "England," last line, and inserting the words "United Kingdom" in lieu.

The whole of the resolutions, as follow, were then unanimously agreed to.

"1. That any scheme of ocean postal communication agreed upon by this Conference should, in providing for the general convenience, be so adapted to special interests as to secure the concurrence and support of all the associated Colonies.

"2. That any such scheme will be valuable to each of the Colonies in proportion to the number of points of commercial intercourse which it shall be made to include, consistently with expedition and regularity of conveyance between Great Britain and Australia.

"3. That the facilities for the transmission of merchandise and for passenger traffic ought not to be overlooked as collateral advantages.

"4. That the advantage of more rapid telegraphic communication by way of Torres Straits commends that route to the favorable consideration of the Conference.

"5. That the contributions of the associated Colonies to the cost of any such general scheme should be proportioned, not so much by calculations of the actual population or the post office correspondence, as on the basis of a compromise of interests and preferences in view of a common federal object.

"6. That, considering our political connection as dependencies of the Crown, and the interest of Great Britain as a commercial nation in the trade and progress of the Colonies, one-half of the cost of any such aggregate scheme ought to be borne by the Imperial Government.

"7. That in the proposed federal action, the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand are considered as possessing equal interests, which may be approximately estimated as follows :—

Victoria.—On the basis of population and commerce, with her general interest in Australian progress, and her special interest in the maintenance of the Suez route, from her undoubted priority of advantages derived from it.

New South Wales.—On the basis of population and commerce and the same general interest, with her supposed greater interest in the Panama route.

New Zealand.—On the same basis of individual and general interest, with her undoubted priority of advantages in communication *via* Panama.

"8. That the interests of Queensland, governed by her geographical situation, require a special service which does not present any considerable postal advantages to the other Colonies, but that it is not desirable that Queensland should be disunited from the other Colonies in the settlement of this question.

"9. That the Colonies of South Australia and Tasmania will be least affected by the proposed adjustment of the existing postal arrangements.

"10. That, in order to establish a postal system affording regular fortnightly communication by three lines, *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits to Singapore, *via* Melbourne and South Australia to Suez, and *via* New Zealand to Panama, with the necessary branch services, the six Colonies represented at this Conference should contribute a moiety, not exceeding £200,000, of the total cost, in the following proportions, viz. :—

Victoria	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
New South Wales	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
New Zealand	...	...	...	...	One-fourth.
Queensland	...	...	...	...	One-seventh.
South Australia	...	...	...	...	One-twelfth.
Tasmania	...	...	...	...	One fiftieth.

"11. That it is expedient that the six Colonies represented at this Conference should act in concert in urging these views, and should join in a Memorial to Her Majesty, setting forth the mutual advantages to be derived by Great Britain and Australia from their adoption."

The meeting then adjourned, at 2 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Thursday, 14th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

THURSDAY, 14TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. J. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

It was proposed by Mr. Ward, and seconded by Mr. Verdon, That in the absence of a representative from Western Australia, the contribution of that Colony to the postal service remain as heretofore.

Carried unanimously.

It was proposed by Mr. Docker, and seconded by Mr. Parkes, That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is expedient that the Colonies in combination should undertake to contract for all Australian services requisite to carry out the resolutions adopted by this Conference, in accordance with the suggestions contained in the Treasury Minute of the Imperial Government of 4th September, 1866.

Carried unanimously.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

1. Mr. Chapman gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, That the contract for the main service or services be for seven (7) years certain, and that two years' notice of intention to discontinue be given at the expiration of such term.

2. Mr. Verdon gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move—

(1.) That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is expedient, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions which have been adopted, that a Federal Council be established, consisting of representatives of the Australasian Colonies.

(2.) That, in the opinion of this Conference, other subjects of common interest, as they arise, from time to time, may be advantageously referred to such a Council.

3. Mr. Verdon gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, That the rate of speed to be maintained on the main lines be not less than 10 knots per hour, and that the vessels to be employed on the King George's Sound and Panama routes be not less than 1,500 tons register, and on the Torres Straits route, 1,000 tons register.

4. Mr. Hall gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference, he will make certain propositions relative to the several branch services.

The meeting then adjourned, at 2 p.m., until 11 a.m. on Friday, the 15th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

FRIDAY, 15TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed,—

It was moved by Mr. Chapman,—That any contract for carrying on the main service or services shall be for seven (7) years.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Chapman consented to the following amended resolution, which was agreed to by the Conference:—

"That, with a view to economy in making arrangements for the contracts for carrying out the main service or services, such contracts should be terminable by two years' notice, to be given at any time not being earlier than five years from the commencement of the contract."

Mr. Verdon's motion (No. 2) respecting the establishing of a Federal Council was postponed until next meeting of Conference.

Mr. Verdon moved, That the rate of speed to be maintained on the main lines be not less than 10 knots per hour, and that the vessels to be employed in the King George's Sound and Panama routes be not less than 1,500 tons register, and on the Torres Straits route 1,000 tons register.

Discussion ensued.

Mr. Verdon consented to the following amended resolution, which was agreed to by the Conference:—

"That the rate of speed to be maintained on the main lines be not less than 10 knots per hour, exclusive of stoppages; and that the tonnage of the vessels to be employed on the King George's Sound and Panama routes be not less than 1,500, and on the Torres Straits route not less than 1,000 tons."

Mr. Hall handed in List of Branch Services.—Ordered to be printed. [*Vide* p. 35.]

Mr. Ward handed in Sketch Time Table.—Ordered to be printed. [*Vide* p. 38.]

NOTICES OF MOTION.

1. Mr. Gore gave notice that at the next meeting the representatives of Queensland will intimate to the Conference that it is the intention of the Colony they represent to proceed with the extension of the electric telegraph wire beyond Port Denison, until it reaches a point at or near the Gulf of Carpentaria, where it is intended to unite with the submarine cable of the Anglo-Indian Telegraph Company.

2. Mr. Gore gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, That in any contract entered into for the conveyance of mails *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits, it shall be stipulated that the mail steamships shall receive and deliver mails at Keppel Bay and at Port Denison.

3. Mr. Hall gave notice that, in accordance with intimation already given, he will at the next meeting of the Conference move resolutions on the subject of the contribution to be made to the present cost of the Panama Service, pending the decision of the Imperial Government on the resolutions already agreed to by the Conference.

4. Mr. Verdon gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move—

- (1.) That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is expedient, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions which have been adopted, that a Federal Council be established, consisting of Representatives of the Australasian Colonies.
- (2.) That, in the opinion of this Conference, other subjects of common interest, as they arise from time to time, may be advantageously referred to such a Council.

The meeting then adjourned, at 2 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Saturday, the 16th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

SATURDAY, 16TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	South Australia	The Hon. W. Duffield.
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	Queensland	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed,—

Mr. Gore, at the suggestion of the Conference, agreed to the following amended intimation on the subject of the extension of the Electric Telegraph in Queensland, being entered on the minutes of proceedings:—

"That it is the intention of the Colony of Queensland to proceed with the extension of the Electric Telegraph wire beyond Port Denison, until it reaches the point where it is intended to unite with the submarine cable of the Anglo-Indian Telegraph Company, provided that if within two (2) years, no steps are in progress for laying the submarine cable, the Colony will establish a line to Cape York."

Mr. Gore consented to his motion on the subject of the mail steamers calling at the northern ports of Queensland being amended as follows:—

"That in any contract entered into for the conveyance of the mails *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits, it shall be stipulated that the mail steamships shall receive and deliver mails at Keppel Bay and Port Denison, provided the total delay each trip shall not exceed six (6) hours."

The resolution, as amended, having been seconded by Mr. Verdon, "was agreed to by the Conference."

Mr. Hall moved:—

"That pending the coming into operation of the General Scheme of Postal Communication decided on by the Conference, it is expedient that a joint contribution should be made to the cost of the Panama Mail Service, in consideration of this service being thrown open for use by all the Australian Colonies.

"That in pursuance of the foregoing resolution, mails to and from all these Colonies should be conveyed by the Panama steamers, free of charge, and that the Colonies of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, should furnish a joint annual contribution of £20,000 to the cost of this service."

Seconded by Mr. Parkes.

Discussion ensued.

Consideration of motion postponed until next meeting of Conference.

Mr. Verdon consented to his motion (No. 1) on the subject of the establishing of a Federal Council being amended as follows:—

"That it is expedient, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions of this Conference, that a Federal Council be established, consisting of representatives of the Australasian Colonies."

The resolution, as amended, having been seconded by Mr. Parkes, was agreed to by the Conference.

The consideration of Mr. Verdon's motion (No. 2) on the same subject was postponed until the next meeting of the Conference.

Mr. Parkes handed in draft Memorial to Her Majesty the Queen, which was read to the Conference and ordered to be printed.

Mr. Parkes gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, That the Memorial to Her Majesty, read on the 16th, be adopted by the Conference.

Mr. Hall gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, That "The List of Branch Mail Services required," submitted by him (p. 35), be adopted by the Conference.

Mr. Ward gave notice that at the next meeting of Conference he will move, That the "Sketch Time Table" submitted by him (No. I., p. 38), be considered by the Conference.

Mr. Verdon gave notice that at the next meeting of the Conference he will move, in connection with the resolution agreed to, in favor of establishing a Federal Council—

"That in the opinion of this Conference, other subjects of common interest, as they arise from time to time, may be advantageously referred to such a Council."

The meeting then adjourned at 12 noon, until 10 a.m., on Monday, the 18th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE

MONDAY, 18TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia...	The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

Mr. Parkes moved the adoption of the Memorial addressed to Her Majesty and read on the 16th March.

Seconded by Mr. Docker.

The Memorial was then taken into consideration, and agreed to by the Conference, after being amended. [*Vide* pp. 29-31.]

Mr. Parkes moved the adoption of the following resolutions :—

- (1.) "That the Memorial to Her Majesty be signed by all the members of this Conference, each member signifying the office he holds, and, if a member of the Executive Council, his position as such.
- (2.) "That a correct copy of the Memorial be prepared on parchment, and signed in the manner aforesaid, for each Government.
- (3.) "That the Representatives of each Colony, on the conclusion of the sittings of this Conference, take the necessary steps, without delay, to obtain the approval of the Executive to the Memorial.
- (4.) "That the Governors of the Australian Colonies be advised to transmit the Memorial for presentation to Her Majesty by the mail leaving Australia in April, *via* Suez, and the Governor of New Zealand by the first mail afterwards; and that their Excellencies be requested to explain to the Secretary of State the occasion of the assembling of this Conference, and the results of its deliberations.
- (5.) "That the Governments of the Colonies represented at this Conference adopt such measures as may be necessary as early as may be convenient after the assembling of Parliament in each case, to give legislative sanction to the agreements of this Conference.
- (6.) "That, in order to secure uniform and harmonious action on the part of the respective Governments, it is expedient that they should communicate with each other, as fully as may be practicable."

Mr. Verdon seconded the motion, and the Resolutions were agreed to by the Conference.

Mr. Docker moved the adoption of the following resolution :—

"That the respective Governments undertake to do all that may be necessary in London to further the objects of this Conference."

Mr. Parkes seconded the motion, and the resolution was agreed to by the Conference.

Mr. Hall moved the adoption of the List of Branch Services.

Mr. Ward seconded the motion.

Mr. Boucaut proposed, as an amendment, "That the arrangement for the Branch Services, in connection with the Service *via* King George's Sound, be made on the assumption that the mails by the Suez steamer be delivered at Port Adelaide."

Mr. Duffield seconded the motion, which was negatived by the Conference.

Other amendments having been consented to by Mr. Hall, the following List of Branch Services was agreed to by the Conference :—

A LIST of BRANCH MAIL SERVICES required to connect the whole of the Australian Colonies with the three lines of Postal Communication between Great Britain and Australasia, *via* Suez and King George's Sound, *via* Suez and Singapore, and *via* Panama and New Zealand.

I.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

On the arrival of the Suez steamer at Melbourne, one branch steamer to leave for Launceston and another for New Zealand. On the arrival of the same Suez steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to leave for Brisbane. Return branch steamers to leave Brisbane, New Zealand, and Launceston, in time to reach Sydney and Melbourne respectively before the departure of the steamer for Suez.

The Adelaide Mails by this line will be delivered by the Suez steamer at Kangaroo Island, and conveyed to and from that Island and Port Adelaide by a branch service.

II.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* SINGAPORE.

On the arrival of the Singapore steamer at Sydney, one branch steamer to leave that port for a port in New Zealand, and another for Melbourne. On the arrival of the latter vessel at Melbourne, either the same or another steamer to proceed to Adelaide, and a branch steamer also to proceed to Launceston. Branch steamers to return to Melbourne and Sydney respectively in time to catch a return Mail to Singapore.

III.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* PANAMA.

On the arrival of the Panama steamer at Wellington, a branch steamer to leave for Melbourne. On its arrival there, either the same or another vessel to proceed to Adelaide, and another branch steamer to proceed to Launceston. On arrival of the Panama steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to proceed to Brisbane. The branch steamers to return to Sydney and Wellington respectively in time for a return Mail to Panama.

All the branch services to be performed at a speed of not less than nine and a half (9½) knots per hour. The several branch steamers to take their departure, on the outward journey, within six hours after the arrival of the trunk-line steamer; and, if necessary, to wait her arrival for a period not exceeding three days beyond her due date.

SUMMARY.

I.—KING GEORGE'S SOUND LINE.

1. Kangaroo Island to Port Adelaide and back.
2. Melbourne to Launceston and back.
3. Melbourne to New Zealand and back.
4. Sydney to Brisbane and back.

II.—SINGAPORE LINE.

1. Sydney to New Zealand and back.
2. Sydney to Melbourne and back.
3. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.
4. Melbourne to Launceston and back.

III.—PANAMA LINE.

1. Wellington to Melbourne and back.
2. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.
3. Melbourne to Launceston and back.
4. Sydney to Brisbane and back.

Mr. Ward's Sketch Time-Table was then brought forward, and ordered to be recorded with the Minutes of the proceedings.

Mr. Hall's motion, respecting contribution to be made by the Colonies of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania towards the cost of the Panama Service, pending the coming into operation of the general scheme of Postal communication decided on, was postponed until next meeting of the Conference.

Mr. Verdon proposed that, after the resolution already agreed to by the Conference in favor of establishing a Federal Council, the following be inserted:—

"That, in the opinion of this Conference, other subjects of common interest, as they arise from time to time, may be advantageously referred to such a Council."

Seconded by Mr. Boucaut, and agreed to by the Conference, that the resolutions stand as follows:—

(1.) "That it is expedient, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions of this Conference, that a Federal Council be established, consisting of representatives of the Australasian Colonies."

(2.) "That, in the opinion of this Conference, other subjects of common interest, as they arise from time to time, may be advantageously referred to such a Council."

The meeting then adjourned at 4.30 p.m., until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, the 19th March, 1867.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

TUESDAY, 19TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. J. McCulloch,	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia	... The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

The motion submitted by Mr. Hall on the 16th March was taken into consideration.

Mr. Hall consented to the resolutions standing in his name being amended as follows:—

"That, pending the coming into operation of the general scheme of Postal communication decided upon by the Conference, it is expedient that a joint contribution should be made to the cost of the Panama Mail Service, in consideration of this service being thrown open for use by all the Australian Colonies; and that the Colonial Governments should unite in their efforts to adjust the Panama Service as at present carried on, so as to make it alternate as nearly as practicable with the Suez line."

"That, in pursuance of the foregoing resolution, mails to and from all these Colonies should be conveyed by the Panama steamers, free of charge; and that the Colonies of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, should furnish a joint annual contribution of £20,000 to the cost of this service."

The representatives of Victoria offered to contribute the sum of £11,000 per annum towards the maintenance of the Panama Service, on the condition that the Victorian mails by that route are delivered at and despatched from Melbourne *via* Wellington, New Zealand, free of further cost, and that the service is made to alternate as nearly as possible as a fortnightly service with that *via* Point de Galle and King George's Sound.

Discussion ensued, and the consideration of Mr. Hall's motion was further adjourned until next meeting of Conference.

The meeting then adjourned at 2 p.m. until 10 a.m. on the 20th March.

JAMES McCULLOCH.

WEDNESDAY, 20TH MARCH, 1867.

Present :

Victoria	... The Hon. James McCulloch	Queensland	... The Hon. A. Macalister,
"	... The Hon. G. F. Verdon.	"	... The Hon. St. George R. Gore.
New South Wales	The Hon. H. Parkes,	Tasmania	... The Hon. T. D. Chapman.
"	... The Hon. J. Docker.	New Zealand	... The Hon. J. Hall,
South Australia	... The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,	"	... Crosbie Ward, Esq.
"	... The Hon. W. Duffield.		

The minutes of the previous meeting having been read and confirmed—

Mr. Docker submitted the following Memorandum for the consideration of the Conference in connection with the Resolutions standing in Mr. Hall's name:—

Memorandum handed in by Mr. Docker.

Under the general arrangement, the Colonies have agreed to pay a moiety of the Panama line, as forming part of a general service, in certain proportions.

The moiety being £55,000, the contributions of each Colony is as follows:—

	£
Victoria, 1-4th	13,750
New South Wales, 1-4th	13,750
New Zealand, 1-4th	13,750
Queensland, 1-7th	7,858
South Australia, 1-12th	4,584
Tasmania, 1-50th	1,100

If, therefore, during the provisional arrangement, the Colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand take upon themselves the payment of the Imperial moiety, the contributions will stand thus:—

	£
New South Wales	41,250
New Zealand	41,250
Victoria	13,750
Queensland	7,858
South Australia	4,584
Tasmania	1,100

But these proportional contributions included the provisions for the branch services connected with this line.

These branch services would be as follows:—

	£
Wellington to Melbourne	say 6,000
Sydney to Brisbane	2,400
Melbourne to Adelaide	2,400
Melbourne to Tasmania	1,000
	<hr/> £11,800

to be defrayed out of the common fund.

The proportion of the non-contracting Colonies, supposing the whole of this portion of the subsidy was credited to them, would be—

	£
Victoria, 1-4th	2,950
Queensland, 1-7th	1,685
South Australia, 1-12th	983
Tasmania, 1-50th	236

If therefore, these branch lines were not carried into effect during the provisional arrangement, and each Colony obtained its letters by the earliest opportunity, the proportion of each, founded on the joint agreement, would stand thus—

	£13,750	—	£2,950	£10,800
Victoria	13,750	—	2,950	10,800
Queensland	7,858	—	1,685	6,173
South Australia	4,584	—	983	3,601
Tasmania	1,100	—	236	864
			<hr/>	<hr/> £21,438

Mr. Boucaut submitted the following Memorandum:—

“If New Zealand is entitled to interior contribution for the Panama service, so is South Australia in an equal degree entitled to interior contribution for the cost of the King George's Sound branch service, which unjustly ignores her geographical position; although, in consideration of the general agreement assented to, South Australia waives her claim for any such interior contributions.”

Mr. Hall requested permission to withdraw the resolutions standing in his name in favor of the following, moved by Mr. Ward:—

That, until the amalgamated postal service proposed by the Conference shall be determined one way or other, it is reasonable and expedient that the Panama line of mail steamers at present existing should be jointly made use of and supported, in addition to the Suez service, by all the Colonies.

That it is desirable that the associated Colonies should use their joint endeavors so to arrange the Panama and Suez services as that the arrivals and departures of mails thereby at the several colonial ports shall fall as nearly as possible at equal intervals.

That, in consideration of the varying circumstances and liabilities of the several Colonies, it is expedient that the contributions of the Colonies of Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, should be fixed at the total sum of £12,000 per annum, in equal reduction of the sums paid by New South Wales and New Zealand respectively; and that the four first-mentioned Colonies should share such contribution between them in the following proportions, viz.:—Victoria, £9,000; Queensland, £2,000; South Australia, £550; Tasmania, £450.

That the transit and other incidental expenses of the conveyance of correspondence, and the cost of all branch services, should be borne by the Colony concerned in each case.

Mr. Verdon moved the following amendment:—

That pending the commencement of the new postal arrangements agreed to by this Conference, the Colonies which do not contract for the Panama service should contribute in proportion to the advantage thus derived from it, either—

1st. On the understanding that the service be made to alternate with the service *via* Suez, and that the mails be delivered directly.

2nd. On the understanding that the service remain as at present.

In either case the payments to be made either in proportion to the extent to which the non-contracting Colonies use the service, to be determined by the result, or in fixed sum, to be agreed upon, in either case, between the contracting Colonies on the one hand, and the non-contracting Colonies individually on the other.

Prolonged discussion ensued ; and there being no prospect of unanimity, the motion and amendment respectively were not pressed to a division.

Mr. Verdon proposed the following Resolution—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that direct steam communication should be established by way of the Cape of Good Hope, by means of large steamers carrying mails and passengers cheaply, quickly and regularly, between Great Britain and Australasia.

Seconded by Mr. Parkes.

The motion was not pressed to a division.

Mr. Ward withdrew the motion standing in his name.

Mr. Chapman moved—

That, pending the coming into operation of the postal communication decided upon by this Conference, it is expedient that a four-weekly service *via* Suez be maintained.

Seconded by Mr. Verdon.

After discussion, it was agreed to leave the question to be settled by the Home Government.

Mr. Parkes moved—"That, in order to give authorized and uniform publicity to the proceedings of the Conference, the following arrangement be agreed to, viz. :—

(1.) "That the Government of Victoria be at liberty to lay copies of the proceedings, as read and confirmed by the Chairman, on the Table of both Houses of Parliament, on Thursday, the 28th of March.

(2.) "That the Governments of New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, be at liberty to publish copies of the proceedings, in the same form, in a *Gazette Extraordinary*, or other manner to be decided upon by each Government, on the same day.

(3.) "That the Government of New Zealand be at liberty to publish copy of the proceedings in same form, in a *Gazette Extraordinary*, or other manner, immediately on the arrival of the representatives of that Colony at Wellington."

Seconded by Mr. Docker, and agreed to by the Conference.

Proposed by Mr. Parkes :—

"That this Conference desire to leave on record their acknowledgments of the courteous attention of the Honorable James McCulloch, in presiding over their proceedings."

Seconded by Mr. Macalister, and carried unanimously.

The proceedings of the Conference were then brought to a close.

JAMES MCCULLOCH.

Enclosure 2 in No. 15.

MEMORIAL to HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN.

To the Queen's Most Excellent Majesty.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR MAJESTY,—

The Memorial of the Undersigned most humbly and dutifully sheweth :

THAT the six Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, by the duly accredited Representatives of their respective Governments assembled in Conference in the City of Melbourne, approach Your Majesty with feelings of profound loyalty and attachment to Your Majesty's throne and person.

Your Majesty's Colonial Governments have had under their consideration a Despatch from the Right Honorable the Earl of Carnarvon, one of Your Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, enclosing a Treasury Minute of September the 4th, 1866, in which they are urgently invited, in combination, to provide for the Steam Postal Service between Point de Galle and Australia, the Imperial Government engaging to pay one-half of the necessary subsidy. Your Majesty's Australasian dependencies are prepared to respond to an invitation so appreciative of their ability to direct their own affairs ; but they feel it incumbent on them to represent to Your Majesty that a single branch service connecting them with the Ocean Postal System of India and China is no longer adequate to their wants, or sufficient to meet the demands of British interests. The rapid progress of these Colonies in population and in all the elements of national wealth, and the widely differing conditions that control their progress, not only render increased facilities of intercourse with the United Kingdom a necessity for the group, but also render it impossible to give equal advantages to all, or to avoid inflicting injustice on some, by any one service. While the productive capabilities and the commerce of the associated Colonies have attained a magnitude which, it is humbly submitted, entitles them to a foremost place in the consideration of Great Britain, their geographical extent imposes upon them deprivations and hardships which can only be alleviated by new and various means of communication with the rest of the world. The farther the settlement of population advances, the greater becomes the difficulty. Thus the enterprise of the Colonists, in extending the bounds of the Empire, and spreading the lustre of Your Majesty's name, entails upon them the penalty of their more certain exclusion from British intelligence. In the early years of Australian colonization, this virtual banishment was a condition of life to be faced and endured as inevitable ; but the Colonies of the present day, as fields of production and markets of consumption for the national manufactures, have advanced to a position which makes their intimate connection not less important to the United Kingdom than to themselves.

The imports into the six Colonies during the year 1865, as valued at the different ports of arrival, amounted to thirty-five millions sterling ; and although the estimate includes the intercolonial trade carried on by Your Majesty's Australasian subjects, and the imports from foreign countries, by far the greater part of this sea-borne commerce assists in sustaining the manufacturing power of the United Kingdom. Their exports—consisting principally of gold and wool—for the same period amounted to more than thirty millions. The following are the returns for the several Colonies :—

	Imports.	Exports.
Victoria	£13,257,537	£13,150,748
New South Wales	9,928,595	8,191,170
New Zealand	5,594,977	3,713,218
South Australia	2,927,596	3,129,846
Queensland... ..	2,505,559	1,153,464
Tasmania	762,375	880,965
	£34,976,639	£30,219,411

Within the last sixteen years, the two Colonies of Victoria and New South Wales have produced a supply of gold amounting in value to One hundred and fifty millions sterling, five-sixths of which has been the produce of Victoria alone. The Colony of New South Wales has raised from the earth 4,617,100 tons of coal, valued at £2,742,224; and her coal fields north and south of the port of Sydney may be said to be inexhaustible. The Colonies of New Zealand and South Australia are eminently favored in the rich variety of their resources. New Zealand has risen within the last few years to an important position as a producer of gold and wool. In ten years the Colony of South Australia has exported copper of the value of £4,751,638, while the produce of her corn fields is unsurpassed by other countries. The Colony of Queensland, in addition to her pastoral and mineral wealth, has established by successful experiment her capability of growing both cotton and sugar. Nor are the resources of Tasmania unimportant to the British Empire. Her wool, grain and timber, with the oil of her whale fisheries, form a valuable part of Australian exports. In the year 1865 the exports of the associated Colonies, in five articles of production, which are selected for their conspicuous value to the world, amounted to more than twenty-one millions sterling. The results are given from the latest official returns:—

	Wool.	Gold.	Coal.	Copper Ore.	Grain of all kinds.
Victoria	3,315,109	6,190,317	...	...	...
New South Wales	1,624,114	2,647,668	274,303	...	...
New Zealand	1,141,761	2,226,474	...	...	...
South Australia	964,397	...	...	618,472	1,228,480
Queensland... ..	885,299	101,352	...	...	...
Tasmania	381,625	...	...	...	107,268
	£8,812,305	£11,165,811	£274,303	£618,472	£1,335,748

If the position of the six associated Colonies be tested by the number of the shipping visiting their various ports, its importance to Great Britain will be equally manifest. The shipping returns of 1865 for the Australasian Colonies give an aggregate of arrivals amounting to 1,969,091 tons, and 2,018,224 tons as the aggregate of departures. The following table will show the distribution of this tonnage amongst the six Colonies:—

	Inwards. Tons.	Outwards. Tons.
Victoria	580,973	599,351
New South Wales	635,888	690,294
New Zealand	295,625	283,020
South Australia	183,102	174,188
Queensland	173,227	167,153
Tasmania	100,276	104,218
	1,969,091	2,018,224

The present number of those animals most useful to man, as compared with the number only forty-two years ago, will exhibit alike the progress and the internal wealth of the Colonies. In the year 1825 there were in all Australia, 6142 horses, 134,519 head of horned cattle, and 237,622 sheep. In 1865 the returns for the Australian Colonies alone were as follows:—

	Horses.	Horned Cattle.	Sheep.
Victoria	121,051	621,337	8,835,380
New South Wales	282,587	1,961,905	8,132,511
South Australia	73,993	158,057	3,779,308
Queensland	51,091	887,856	6,810,005
Tasmania	22,152	90,020	1,736,540
	550,874	3,719,175	29,293,744

The number of Your Majesty's loyal subjects in Australasia is fast approaching an aggregate of two millions, and the evidences of their successful industry and enterprise which are here recorded, though necessarily brief and imperfect, will not fail to ensure for them Your Majesty's gracious consideration. The interests of commerce are strong in uniting Colonies to the parent country, but stronger still is the glory of an advancing civilization which belongs to the remotest British dependency as part of a great nation under Your Majesty's beneficent reign. Nor will Your Majesty be insensible to those claims of the poorest of your subjects which grow out of affections that cannot be severed with separated households. The parent in England and the child in Australia, actually as well as figuratively, feel the need of a closer and more constant intimacy.

The four continental Colonies of South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, occupy a seaboard of not less than three thousand miles, with points of settlement and traffic throughout its extent; and the islands of New Zealand are a thousand miles distant from the Australian coast. The letters brought by the way of Cape Leeuwin by a mail steamer calling at any port in the Colony of South Australia, could not be forwarded from that point by any practicable means of communication to Your Majesty's subjects at the northern ports of Queensland under twelve or fourteen days, or to the ports of New Zealand under nine. A steamer arriving by the Torres Straits route would afford still less satisfaction, as the most populous Colonies would be the last to receive their letters. The means of communication with many important settlements in the interior of Australia is only by a journey of several days, and cannot, on account of cost, be more frequent than once or twice a week. It will thus be seen that any single monthly line of steamers would leave large numbers of Your Majesty's subjects unable to reply to their correspondence by the return mails, and that any two or more lines by the same route would fail in affording general satisfaction.

The Representatives of the several Colonies assembled in Conference, after careful and anxious consideration of the whole subject, on behalf of their respective Governments, approach Your Majesty, and humbly and dutifully represent that, in order to meet the demands of the large and growing commerce of these Colonies, and to serve in a satisfactory manner the complicated interests that connect them with the United Kingdom, it has now become necessary to maintain three Ocean Postal Services; one by way of King George's Sound, one by way of Torres Straits, and one by way of New Zealand and Panama. The last two of these routes have been opened successfully by the enterprise of Your Majesty's subjects in Australia and New Zealand; and their advantages to the Colonies most nearly affected by them are too apparent to be relinquished.

The associated Colonies, by their Representatives in Conference, have agreed to contribute annually a moiety not exceeding £200,000 of the entire cost of maintaining these three lines of postal communication, and they are prepared to act in combination in contracting for the necessary services to open and maintain these routes in connection with Your Majesty's contract services to India and China and to the West Indies. They humbly pray that Your Majesty may be advised to take such steps as may be expedient, by terminating or re-adjusting present contracts, or calling for fresh tenders for the performance of the main services, to establish the proposed United Australasian Postal System without drawing upon the limited resources of the Colonies beyond the large sum which they cheerfully undertake to pay.

Your Memorialists humbly urge the claims of the great Colonies they represent to the favorable consideration of Your Most Gracious Majesty, and they trust that a project so closely in harmony with the spirit of British enterprise, so essential for the development of British trade, so calculated in its effects to promote the welfare of Your Majesty's loyal subjects in Australasia, and one in which the whole of the Colonies are acting in union, may receive Your Majesty's royal favor and support.

And Your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects will ever pray.

(Signed)	JAMES McCULLOCH, Chief Secretary, and Member of the Executive Council of Victoria.
(Signed)	GEO. VERDON, Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council, Victoria.
(Signed)	HENRY PARKES, Colonial Secretary, and Member of the Executive Council, New South Wales.
(Signed)	JOSEPH DOCKER, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, New South Wales.
(Signed)	JOHN HALL, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, New Zealand.
(Signed)	CROSBIE WARD, Special Representative of New Zealand.
(Signed)	JAS. P. BOUCAUT, Attorney-General, and Member of the Executive Council, South Australia.
(Signed)	WALTER DUFFIELD, Colonial Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council, South Australia.
(Signed)	A. MACALISTER, Vice-President of the Executive Council and Colonial Secretary of Queensland.
(Signed)	ST. GEORGE R. GORE, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, Queensland.
(Signed)	THOS. D. CHAPMAN, Colonial Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council of Tasmania.

Melbourne, 20th March, A.D. 1867.

Enclosure 3 in No. 15.

PAPERS submitted by the Representatives of the six Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania.

NEW ZEALAND.

THE scheme of Postal Communication between the Australasian Colonies and Great Britain, which appears to the Delegates from New Zealand to present the greatest advantages and to be most likely to prove satisfactory both to the Mother Country and to the Colonies, is one under which the two services by way of Panama and Suez, should be regarded as constituting one aggregate line of Postal Communication, so timed as to alternate as far as possible fortnightly with each other; the total cost

of the joint services being divided equally between the Mother Country and the Colonies, and the Colonial moiety being allocated to the several Colonies in proportion either to the amount of their correspondence, to the extent of their population, or perhaps according to a combination of both. It is assumed that the Imperial Government will agree to pay half the cost of the combined service; it is very improbable that, if the Colonies are unanimous in support of such a scheme as that now proposed, and memorialise the Home Government to that effect, that Government will refuse to bear an equal share of the necessary expense.

The total expense may be taken as follows:—

Panama Service, including costs of Isthmus transit	£120,000
Suez Service, including share of service between Southampton and	
Galle	147,000
Branch Services*—	
To Tasmania	2,000
To Queensland	4,000
To New Zealand	12,000
To South Australia	4,000
	£289,000
Colonial moiety	£144,500

*Estimated cost of Branch services necessary to connect the amalgamated Suez and Panama services with all the Colonies:—

Colony served.	In connection with		Total.
	The Suez Line.	The Panama Line.	
	£	£	£
South Australia	Nil.	From Melbourne 4,000	4,000
Tasmania	From Melbourne 1,000	From Melbourne 1,000	2,000
Victoria	Nil.	From New Zealand 6,000	6,000
Queensland	From Sydney 2,000	From Sydney 2,000	4,000
New Zealand	From Melbourne 6,000	Nil.	6,000
New South Wales	Nil.	Nil.	—
Totals	£9,000	£13,000	£22,000

The apportionment of the Colonial moiety, if made strictly according either to population or correspondence, would be, in round figures as follows:—

	According to Population.	According to Correspondence.
Victoria	£55,000	£48,000
New South Wales	36,000	24,000
South Australia	15,000	12,000
New Zealand	19,000	36,000
Queensland	8,000	12,000
Tasmania	8,000	8,000
Western Australia	3,000	4,000
	£144,000	£144,000

But however equitable the above rules of apportionment may be, the delegates from New Zealand suggest that, having regard to existing obligations with respect to Postal Subsidies, and to the financial circumstances of the several contributing Colonies, neither of these rules should be strictly insisted upon. They propose, as a fair and reasonable adjustment, the following allocation of the Colonial moiety:—

	£
Victoria	40,000
New South Wales	37,000
South Australia	15,000
New Zealand	37,000
Queensland	10,00
Tasmania	4,000
Western Australia †	700
	£144,500

† In the absence of any representative from Western Australia, it has not been thought desirable to increase the charge upon this Colony.

In the event of the Colonial moiety proving to be either more or less than the total sum abovementioned, the contributions from the several Colonies to be proportionately increased or diminished.

It is submitted that the above payments cannot be complained of as excessive by the western group of Colonies, considering that they will be thereby entitled to a full participation in the advantages of both the Panama and Suez services, without any extra charge for correspondence sent by

either route. The payments are probably not at all heavier than would be the cost of contributions to the cost of the Suez service alone, which would devolve upon the western Colonies if the expense of this service were not shared by New South Wales and New Zealand. The above allocation is proposed as adapted to the existing circumstances of the Colonies, and should be revised at stated intervals.

The bringing into operation of the scheme now proposed need not be deferred until new contracts are obtained for the Suez service; the plan can be given effect to as soon as the assent of the Imperial Government is obtained, and in the meantime the Colonial moiety should be contributed in the proportions above stated.

It is desirable that the attention of the British Post Office should be called to the fact that if the mails proceeding from Great Britain to the Eastward are in future to be despatched at weekly intervals, the mails to the West Indies, of which the Panama line is a branch, should also be despatched at intervals of four weeks instead of a calendar month, in order that the two services may harmonise.

JOHN HALL,
CROSBIE WARD.

QUEENSLAND.

Melbourne, March, 1867.

WE, the representatives of the Government of Queensland at this Conference, and in terms of a suggestion on the part of the Conference, that each Colony should put forward its own proposal, beg to offer, for the consideration of the Conference, the two following propositions:—

There are three routes now before the Conference, viz.: that from and to Galle and Melbourne; that from and to Sydney and New Zealand *via* Panama; and that from Galle by way of Singapore and Torres Straits.

The first of our proposals is as follows:—

That the Conference should recommend to all the Colonies represented by it, to subsidize the whole of these routes, the contribution by each Colony to be in proportion to its population.

In submitting this proposition to the Conference, we do not do so because we think that for postal purposes these three routes are essential. We regard these lines as not wholly in existence for postal purposes, and we think them calculated to bring the various Colonies into direct and immediate communication with every portion of the world. We submit this proposal in the hope that by a subsidy to the three routes an amicable and united recognition may be made of the claims and interests of all the Colonies.

In the event of the above suggestion being acceded to, there will be no necessity for considering our second one; but should the Conference not concur in approval of the three routes, then our second proposition is as follows:—

The Colony of Queensland, while hitherto paying her full share, at least, for the conveyance of the mails by King George's Sound and Melbourne, has practically derived little or no benefit from that line, for it very seldom happens that the incoming mail arrives in Queensland in time to have letters answered by the outgoing mail of the same month; and in no case does it ever arrive in time for answers beyond a circuit of a few miles around Brisbane.

We propose, therefore, that the Conference should recommend the establishment of a fortnightly mail from Galle; one mail to be carried as at present by Adelaide and Melbourne, the other to be conveyed by way of Singapore and Torres Straits, the contract amount to be borne by the several Colonies as follows—one-half on the basis of population, the other half in proportion to the estimated number of letters forwarded and received by each respective Colony.

This proposal commends itself for various reasons:—

- (1.) The Peninsular and Oriental Company's steamers already carry the English mails to Singapore, where there are docks in which these steamers are regularly examined, and the probability therefore is, that that Company would offer to convey the mails from Singapore to Australia, by way of Torres Straits, at a less sum than any other Company.
- (2.) By the employment of good steamers, bound to a certain average speed, and on the completion of the improvements now going on in Torres Straits, the mail by that route ought to be delivered in Melbourne within a very limited period beyond that at which the present mail arrives, while the public intelligence, as announced by the electric wire, and much private and business information by the same way, would in connection with the mail steamer, reach the whole of the Colonies much earlier than by any other route.
- (3.) The line by Torres Straits and Singapore is a smooth water passage, with natural advantages unknown to any other route, and must, when well opened, be the one preferred by all passengers proceeding to England.
- (4.) Regarding the Torres Strait route as something more than a postal one to Europe, it opens up to these Colonies a new and safe means of access to India, China, Japan, and California, in place of the stormy passage by the Leeuin.

Having submitted the two foregoing propositions to the Conference, we would now add that, in the event of the rejection of both, or in the event of any modification in which we cannot concur, we reserve to ourselves the right of considering any other proposal that may be submitted, and of assenting or dissenting therefrom, either in whole or in part.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

First Proposition.

THE Colonies to move the Imperial Government to undertake the payment of a moiety of the lines *via* Panama, making an estimate of the contribution at present paid by the free conveyance of the Australian mails by the West Indian Mail Service.

To make the necessary provision for the carriage of the Australian mails *via* Suez as far as Galle, in conjunction with the China and Japan service.

The departure of the mails from Southampton and Sydney to be fixed respectively for the 1st and 15th of every month, making the conjoint services a fortnightly communication. The Colonies to contribute to each line *pro rata* on the system now in force on the Suez line; each Colony and England keeping its respective collections.

The Colonies to call for tenders for the performance of the service once a month, from Galle to Sydney, calling at King George's Sound and Melbourne, with a branch service to Adelaide, New Zealand, and Brisbane.

Second Proposition.

The Imperial Government to bear the expense of delivery of the Australian mails at Singapore, keeping its collections.

The Colonies to call for tenders for a monthly service from Singapore *via* Batavia and King George's Sound (known as the Western Passage) to Sydney, delivering mails at Adelaide and Melbourne; returning *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits to Singapore.

Also, for a monthly service alternating with the foregoing from Singapore *via* Batavia and Torres Straits to Melbourne, delivering mails at Brisbane and Sydney, returning *via* Adelaide and King George's Sound to Batavia and Singapore; branch mails to New Zealand and Tasmania.

Also, for an Intercolonial service to leave Sydney on the arrival of the outward mail with the mail for Brisbane; and on the other line, leaving Melbourne with the mail for Adelaide. The Intercolonial boat to leave Adelaide six days after the arrival of the outward mail, with the return mail, calling at Melbourne, and thence to Sydney, arriving there in time for the despatch of the departing mail *via* Torres Straits; and, in the alternating passage, leaving Brisbane in the same manner, calling at Sydney *en route* for Melbourne, for the steamer returning by the Western route.

The arrivals of each line-steamer to be fortnightly (say 1st and 15th); the departure, 5th and 22nd of the month.

The expense to be distributed *pro rata* on the Suez system, and each Colony to retain its own collections.

In the event of this plan being adopted, it will be necessary to fix some plan of contribution from the Colonies which are not at present contributing to the Panama line, to be apportioned by the extent to which they use it.

VICTORIA.

1. The Representatives of Victoria in the Postal Conference assembled at Melbourne, are of opinion that a Monthly Mail Service by way of Suez and King George's Sound is essential for the interests of Victoria and the other Western Colonies.

2. That it is expedient that a Fortnightly Service between England and Australia be established.

3. That this service could be most efficiently and cheaply performed by way of Suez, but that to secure the collateral advantages to be obtained by the adoption of a second route for the fortnightly service, and to enable the Australasian Colonies to act together in the matter of Postal communication, they are prepared to entertain any proposal which will secure those advantages without entailing upon the Western Colonies a disproportionate cost.

4. That if a general scheme be adopted by the Colonies in common, it is desirable that the plan of direct communication by way of the Cape of Good Hope, should be considered by the Conference.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

We support the Suez route, believing it to be the best for the interests of the Australian Colonies generally. The ocean steamers to call at a port in South Australia.

Nevertheless, for the purpose of securing the advantages that would follow united action by the various Colonies, we would join in a more general or federal scheme, on a just estimate of the resources and geographical position of South Australia.

Melbourne, 9th March, 1867.

JAS. P. BOUCAUT,
WALTER DUFFIELD.

Resolutions to be moved by Mr. Parkes.

1. That any scheme of ocean postal communication agreed upon by this Conference should, in providing for the general convenience, be so adapted to special interests as to secure the concurrence and support of all associated Colonies.

2. That any such scheme will be valuable to each of the Colonies in proportion to the number of points of commercial intercourse which it shall be made to include, in combination with expedition and regularity of conveyance between Great Britain and Australia.

3. That the facilities for the transmission of merchandise and for passenger traffic ought not to be overlooked as collateral advantages.

4. That the contributions of the associated Colonies to the cost of any such general scheme should be proportioned, not so much by calculations of the actual population or the post office correspondence as on the basis of a compromise of interests and preferences in view of a common federal object.

5. That, considering our political connexion as dependencies of the Crown, and the interest of England as a commercial nation in the trade and progress of the Colonies, one-half of the cost of any such aggregate scheme ought in justice to be borne by the Imperial Government.

6. That in the proposed federal action the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand are considered as possessing equal interests, which may be approximately estimated as follows :

Victoria.—On the basis of population and commerce, with her general interest in Australian progress and her special interest in the maintenance of the Suez route from her undoubted priority of advantages derived from it.

New South Wales.—On the basis of population and commerce and the same general interest, with her supposed greater interest in the Panama route.

New Zealand.—On the same basis of individual and general interest, with her undoubted priority of advantages in communication *via* Panama.

7. That the interests of Queensland, governed by her geographical situation, requires a special service which does not present any considerable advantages to the other Colonies, but that it is not desirable that Queensland should be disunited from the other Colonies in the settlement of this question.

8. That the Colonies of South Australia and Tasmania, partly owing to the specialities of social character, and partly to the limitation of their Intercolonial relations, will be least affected by any new adjustment of the existing postal arrangements.

9. That in order to establish an aggregate system, affording regular monthly communication from the port of Sydney *via* Brisbane and Torres Straits to Singapore, and *via* Melbourne and Galle to Suez, and *via* New Zealand to Panama, with the necessary branch services, the six Colonies represented at this Conference should contribute a sum of £197,900 by the following proportions, or a larger or smaller sum, not exceeding £200,000 in the whole, by the same rate of apportionment, viz.:—

	£
Victoria ...	50,000
New South Wales ...	50,000
New Zealand ...	50,000
Queensland ...	27,500
South Australia ...	15,500
Tasmania ...	4,000
	<hr/> £197,000

10. That it is expedient that the six Colonies represented at this Conference should act in concert in enforcing these views, and should join in a Memorial to Her Majesty, setting forth the mutual advantages to be derived by England and Australia from their adoption.

A LIST of BRANCH MAIL SERVICES required to connect the whole of the Australian Colonies with the three lines of Postal Communication between Great Britain and Australia *via* Suez and King George's Sound, *via* Suez and Singapore, and *via* Panama and New Zealand.

I.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

On the arrival of the Suez steamer at Melbourne, one branch steamer to leave for Launceston and another for New Zealand. On the arrival of the same Suez steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to leave for Brisbane. Return branch steamers to leave Brisbane, New Zealand, and Launceston, in time to reach Sydney and Melbourne respectively before the departure of the steamer for Suez.

The Adelaide mails by this line will be delivered by the Suez steamer at Kangaroo Island, and conveyed to and from thence by the South Australian Government.

II.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* SINGAPORE.

On the arrival of the Singapore steamer at Sydney, one branch steamer to leave that port for New Zealand, and another for Melbourne. On the arrival of the latter vessel at Melbourne, either the same or another steamer to proceed to Adelaide, and a branch steamer also to proceed to Launceston. Branch steamers to return to Melbourne and Sydney respectively in time to catch a return Mail to Singapore.

III.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* PANAMA.

On the arrival of the Panama steamer at Wellington, a branch steamer to leave for Melbourne. On its arrival there, either the same or another vessel to proceed to Adelaide, and another branch steamer to proceed to Launceston. On the arrival of the Panama steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to proceed immediately to Brisbane. These branch steamers to return to Sydney and Wellington respectively in time for a return Mail to Panama.

All the branch services to be performed at a speed of not less than nine knots per hour. The several branch steamers to take their departure on the outward journey, within twelve hours after the arrival of the trunk-line steamer; and if necessary, to wait her arrival for a period not exceeding three days beyond her due date.

SUMMARY.

I.—KING GEORGE'S SOUND LINE.	II.—SINGAPORE LINE.	III.—PANAMA LINE.
1. Melbourne to Launceston and back.	1. Sydney to New Zealand and back.	1. Wellington to Melbourne and back.
2. Melbourne to New Zealand and back.	2. Sydney to Melbourne and back.	2. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.
3. Sydney to Brisbane and back.	3. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.	3. Melbourne to Launceston and back.
	4. Melbourne to Launceston and back.	4. Sydney to Brisbane and back.

COST OF OCEAN MAIL SERVICES—UNITED KINGDOM, AUSTRALIA, and NEW ZEALAND, 1866.

Country Contributing.	SUEZ ROUTE.						PANAMA ROUTE.				TORRES STRAITS ROUTE.		
	Between Southampton and Galle.	Between Galle and Sydney.*	BRANCH SERVICES.					Total, Suez Route.	Between Sydney and Panama.	Isthmus Transit Rate.	Between Colon and Southampton.	Total, Panama Route.	Queensland and Batavia.
			Between King George's Sound and Adelaide.	Between Melbourne and New Zealand.	Between Melbourne and Tasmania.	Sydney to New Zealand.	Sydney to Queensland.						
United Kingdom ...	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 65,512 13 2	£ s. d. 2,475 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 925 0 0	£ s. d. 3,000 0 0	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 71,912 13 2	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. Nil	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	
Victoria ...	6,122 10 10	22,652 6 1	...	...	...	...	...	28,774 16 11	...	"	...	...
New South Wales ...	2,658 7 0	11,977 3 6	...	...	...	...	...	14,635 10 6	55,000 0 0	2,300 0 0	57,300 0 0	...
South Australia ...	1,406 3 10	3,691 17 2	9,319 0 0	...	...	...	...	14,417 1 0	...	"	...	...
New Zealand ...	4,244 4 5	19,250 5 1	...	6,000 0 0	...	3,000 0 0	...	32,494 9 6	55,000 0 0	7,700 0 0	62,700 0 0	...	
Tasmania ...	459 12 8	1,754 1 3	...	...	925 0 0	...	...	3,138 13 11	...	"	...	...
Queensland ...	1,354 4 11	6,070 2 5	...	...	...	...	2,050 0 0	9,474 7 4	...	"	...	+45,000 0 0
Western Australia ...	193 16 4	525 12 10	...	...	...	...	...	719 9 2	...	"	...	...
TOTALS ...	16,439 0 0	131,434 1 6	11,794 0 0	6,000 0 0	1,850 0 0	6,000 0 0	2,050 0 0	175,567 1 6	110,000 0 0	10,000 0 0	120,000 0 0	45,000 0 0	

* Includes moiety of cost of mail boxes, of naval agents, of special packets between Dover and Calais, and Egyptian transit rate.
† £23,000 by Dutch Government.

RECAPITULATION.			
Cost of monthly service per annum, Southampton to Sydney, <i>via</i> Suez	£	s.	d.
Ditto ditto ditto, <i>via</i> Panama	175,567	1	6
Estimated cost, Queensland and Batavia, <i>via</i> Torres Straits	120,000	0	0
	45,000	0	0
TOTAL cost of Services	£340,567	1	6

RETURN showing the Population of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, the estimated Number of Letters received and despatched by the Colonies, respectively, the Contract Time of the Outward Voyage by the several Postal Routes, and the Amounts contributed by the United Kingdom and the Colonies towards the maintenance of Steam Postal Communication between Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand.

Country.	Population.	Estimated Number of Letters received and despatched during one Year.			Contract Time—Outward Voyage.				Amount Contributed.		Estimated Cost of Service via Batavia.	Total.
		Via Galle.	Via Panama.	Via Batavia.	Via Galle and Marseilles. Southampton	Via Panama.	Via Marseilles.	Via Batavia and Southampton	Via Galle.	Via Panama.		
United Kingdom	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	£ s. d. 69,437 13 2	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. 69,437 13 2
Victoria	630,000	1,094,668	20,874	...	48	56	54	60	28,774 16 11	...	...	28,774 16 11
New South Wales	430,859	475,302	79,789*	1,016	51	56	52	58	14,635 10 6	57,300 0 0	...	71,935 10 6
South Australia	165,000	251,423	3,120	...	46	52	57	63	17,098 1 0	...	...	17,098 1 0
New Zealand	220,000	758,843	250,000	...	55	49	59	65	32,494 9 6	62,700 0 0	...	95,194 9 6
Queensland	100,000	242,124	...	...	53	59	50	56	9,474 7 4	...	45,000 0 0	54,474 7 4
Tasmania	100,000	82,176	...	...	50	58	56	62	3,138 13 11	...	...	3,138 13 11
Western Australia	...	34,644	...	...	...	...	...	...	719 9 2	...	...	719 9 2
	1,645,859	2,939,180	...	...	...	...	...	...	175,773 1 6	120,000 0 0	45,000 0 0	840,773 1 6

* This is estimated from the actual number received and despatched during the quarter ended 31st December, 1866. The number of letters by the Panama route has increased since then; and a corresponding reduction has taken place in the number of letters sent and received via Suez.

PAPERS RELATIVE TO THE

SKETCH TIME TABLE.—No. I.

DESIGNED to afford as nearly as possible regular Fortnightly Communication between London and the various Australian Colonies and New Zealand, by the amalgamation of three routes, viz:—*via* Mauritius and Suez, *via* Singapore and Suez, and *via* Panama.

OUTWARDS.

				<i>Via</i> Mauritius.	<i>Via</i> Singapore.	<i>Via</i> Panama.
London (Southampton)	...	...	<i>departure</i>	April 12 *	April 20 *	April 2 *
" <i>via</i> Marseilles	...	...	"	" 18 *	" 26 *	...
Suez	...	...	"	" 28 *	May 6 *	...
Mauritius	...	...	"	May *	...	...
Singapore	...	...	"	...	" 29 *	...
St. Thomas	...	...	"	...	...	" 18 *
Panama	...	...	"	...	...	" 24 *
Adelaide	...	...	<i>arrival</i>	June 4 *	June 23	June 2
Melbourne	...	...	"	" 6 *	" 20	May 29
Sydney	...	...	"	" 9 *	" 18 *	" 29 *
Brisbane	...	...	"	" 11	" 16 *	June 1
New Zealand	...	...	"	" 13	" 25	May 22 *
Launceston	...	...	"	" 8	" 22	June 1

HOMEWARDS.

				<i>Via</i> Mauritius.	<i>Via</i> Singapore.	<i>Via</i> Panama.
New Zealand	...	...	<i>departure</i>	April 13	April 8	April 8 *
Brisbane	...	...	"	" 13	" 19 *	March 28
Sydney	...	...	"	" 16 *	" 16 *	April 1 *
Launceston	...	...	"	" 18	" 11	March 29
Melbourne	...	...	"	" 20 *	" 13	April 1
Adelaide	...	...	"	" 22 *	" 10	March 28
Colon	...	...	"	...	...	May 7 *
St. Thomas	...	...	"	...	...	" 15 *
Singapore	...	...	"	...	May 7 *	...
Mauritius	...	...	"	May *	...	...
Alexandria	...	...	"	" 29 *	June 4 *	...
London, <i>via</i> Marseilles	...	...	<i>arrival</i>	June 7 *	" 14 *	...
" (Southampton)	...	...	"	" 13 *	" 20 *	" 29 *

* This mark denotes a port of call on the trunk line. The others are served by branches.
NOTE.—The above Table is constructed for calendar months of thirty days. A simple modification would adapt it to the weekly system, should such be adopted on all three lines. But the Table would not be applicable should weekly intervals of departure be arranged for some portions of the amalgamated service and not for the whole.

SKETCH TIME TABLE.—No. II.

SHewing the way in which the proposed POSTAL SERVICES *via* Panama, *via* Singapore and Torres Straits, and *via* Point de Galle and King George's Sound would work under existing arrangements for the Panama and Indian and China services.

OUTWARDS.

Route.	London.	Arrive.	Arrive.	Arrive.	Arrive.	Arrive.	Arrive.
	Depart.	Adelaide.	Melbourne.	Sydney.	Launceston.	Wellington.	Brisbane.
Panama	June 2	August 1	July 29	July 29	July 31	July 22	July 31
Singapore	June 10	August 4	August 2	July 31	August 4	August 7	July 29
Point de Galle and King George's } Sound	June 26	August 11	August 13	August 16	August 15	August 20	August 18

HOMEWARDS.

Route.	Depart.	Depart.	Depart.	Depart.	Depart.	Depart.	Arrive.
	Adelaide.	Melbourne.	Sydney.	Launceston.	Wellington.	Brisbane.	London.
Panama	July 29	August 1	August 1	July 30	August 8	July 29	Sept. 29
Singapore	August 14	August 16	August 19	August 14	August 12	August 21	October 13
Point de Galle and King George's } Sound	August 31	August 28	August 24	August 26	August 21	August 22	October 14

PROPORTIONS IN WHICH THE COLONIES WILL CONTRIBUTE TO THE PROPOSED POSTAL SERVICE.

Victoria	...	...	...	...	25·00
New South Wales	...	...	...	...	25·00
New Zealand	...	...	...	...	25·00
Queensland	...	...	...	...	14·20
South Australia	...	...	...	...	8·35
Tasmania	...	...	...	...	2·00
Western Australia	...	...	...	...	36
					100·00

TABLE showing the amount and proportion of Correspondence of each Colony, the contract times of the services by way of Suez, and Marseilles, and Southampton, and Panama respectively, the difference of time by each route from London to each Colony, and the advantage or disadvantage accruing to each Colony by the routes respectively in proportion to the Correspondence.

Colony.	Amount of Correspondence in 1866.	Ratio	Days.			Marseilles over Panama.		Panama over Marseilles.		Southampton over Panama.		Panama over Southampton.	
			Via Marseilles.	Via Southampton	Via Panama	Days	Value.	Days	Value.	Days	Value.	Days	Value.
Victoria	1,094,668	4	48	54	56	8	32	*	*	2	8	...	*
New South Wales	475,302	2	51	57	56	5	10	...	...	...	...	1	2
South Australia	251,423	1	46	52	59	13	13	...	...	7	7	...	...
New Zealand	758,843	3	55	61	49	...	—	6	18	...	...	12	36
Queensland	242,124	1	53	59	59	6	6	...	...	...	...	...	...
Tasmania	82,176	0½	50	56	58	8	3	...	...	2	1	...	...
						64	—	18	—	16	—	38	—
Balance						46	Southampton Correspondence being treble that <i>via</i> Marseilles—net value ...						22
						Net balance in favour of Panama						66	
												20	

* The values shown in these columns are obtained by multiplying the days gained by the ratio of correspondence of the Colony.

Australasian Steam Navigation Company,
Sydney, 23rd February, 1867.

GENTLEMEN,—
I do myself the honor to inform you that this Company will be prepared to tender for the “Mail Service to and from Galle,” at a less rate than is now paid, and will undertake to perform it in the same time as the present service is limited to; or, if deemed preferable, would unite with owners of steamers in the sister Colonies for the performance of the service.

I have, &c.,
FREDK. H. TROWTON,
Manager.

The Representatives of the Australian Governments
assembled in Conference on Ocean Postal Arrangements, Melbourne.

No. 16.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. H. PARKES to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.
Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, New South Wales, 1st April, 1867.

SIR,—
I have the honor to inform you that the Memorial to Her Majesty in favour of an ocean postal system for the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, which was signed by the Representatives of the different Governments recently assembled in conference at Melbourne, has been submitted for the approval of His Excellency the Governor and the Executive Council of this Colony, in accordance with the Resolutions of the Conference, and has been so approved.

2. In further accordance with the Resolutions of the Conference the Memorial will be duly transmitted to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies by the mail steamer leaving Sydney on the 24th instant, and I am desired to add that it will afford His Excellency Sir John Young much pleasure to support its prayer by the expression of his entire concurrence in the objects which are submitted for the favourable consideration of Her Majesty and the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.,
HENRY PARKES.

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

No. 17.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. H. PARKES.
Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 9th May, 1867.

SIR,—
I have the honor to inform you that the Memorial to Her Majesty agreed to at the Postal Conference recently assembled at Melbourne in favour of an ocean postal system for Australasia, has, in accordance with the Resolutions of the Conference, been submitted to His Excellency the Governor in Council, and approved.

The Memorial has been duly transmitted by the last mail to the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I enclose a *New Zealand Gazette Extraordinary* of the 15th ultimo, in which the Resolutions and Minutes of Proceedings of the Postal Conference, and other documents connected therewith, are published for general information.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

E. W. STAFFORD.

NOTE.—Similar Letters sent to Chief Secretary, South Australia; Chief Secretary, Victoria; Colonial Secretary, Queensland; Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

No. 18.

Copy of a Despatch from Governor Sir GEORGE GREY, K.C.B., to the Right Hon. Earl of CARNARVON.

MY LORD,—

Government House, Wellington, 26th April, 1867.

Petition printed
at p. 29.

I have the honor herewith to transmit for presentation to Her Majesty the enclosed petition, signed by the Representatives of the Government of New Zealand and of the several Australian Colonies, who took part in a Postal Conference recently held in the City of Melbourne. At the same time, I have the honor to transmit a copy of a Memorandum I have received from my Responsible Advisers in relation to this petition, and, in conformity with their request, I have the honor earnestly to recommend the prayer of the petition to the favourable consideration of the Imperial Government.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Earl of Carnarvon.

G. GREY.

Enclosure in No. 18.

Memorandum by Mr. STAFFORD.

MINISTERS respectfully request His Excellency to transmit to the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies, for presentation to the Queen, the accompanying Memorial to Her Majesty, signed by the Representatives of the Governments of the several Australasian Colonies who took part in the Postal Conference recently held in the City of Melbourne. This Conference was held for the purpose of determining what answer should be given by the Australasian Colonies to the Circular Despatch from the Earl of Carnarvon, of the 22nd September, 1866, on the subject of the arrangements to be made for the conduct and maintenance of the postal service between Great Britain and the Colonies alluded to. This important question was discussed at great length by the Representatives of the several Colonies, and the conclusions which were ultimately arrived at were embodied in resolutions, of which a copy is enclosed; these resolutions were agreed to unanimously.

Ministers do not disguise from themselves that the share of the Colonial moiety of the cost of the proposed postal services, which is allotted to New Zealand in these resolutions, is large in proportion to its present population, its resources, and the amount of its correspondence. Looking, however, to the full consideration which was given to this as well as to other branches of the subject by the members of the Conference,—to the great advantages which would result to all the Colonies concerned from the carrying into effect of the comprehensive scheme proposed, which would afford to the several Colonies equal facilities for communication with all parts of the world,—and to the very great difficulty which would now be experienced in obtaining the general consent of the Colonies to any other arrangement,—Ministers entirely approve of the assent which was given by the Representatives of New Zealand to the resolutions above mentioned, and they earnestly trust that the proposals embodied in them will be given effect to.

Ministers tender the accompanying Memorial as their answer to the Circular Despatch from the Earl of Carnarvon, of the 22nd September last, and they trust that His Excellency will be able to recommend the prayer of the Memorial to the favourable consideration of the Imperial Government.

His Excellency Sir George Grey, K.C.B.

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 19.

Copy of a Letter from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to CROSBIE WARD, Esq.

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 16th April, 1867.

I am directed by His Excellency Sir George Grey to express to you the high sense entertained by the Government of New Zealand of the valuable services rendered by you in representing its views at the recent Postal Conference at Melbourne, and to state that the Government is desirous to obtain for the Colony the benefit of the assistance you would be able (on your return home) to render it in London, in connection with the re-arrangement of the postal services between Great Britain and Australia, which is now under consideration. The negotiations conducted by you on behalf of this Colony with the Government of New South Wales in respect to the Panama service, and the part taken by you, as one of the Representatives of New Zealand at the late Postal Conference in Melbourne, have placed you fully in possession of the views of this Government in reference to existing postal services, and to the more permanent arrangements recommended by the Conference. The Government will therefore feel indebted to you if you will undertake to afford to the Imperial authorities any explanations which may appear to you to be required as to the views of the New Zealand Government on both the subjects above mentioned, and will represent the Colony in the discussion of any modification which may be proposed in the general scheme recommended by the Conference.

It will be desirable that you should place yourself in communication on the above subjects with Mr. Morrison, the Agent of the Colony, in England, who will be instructed to reimburse to you any expenses to which you may be put in rendering the services above alluded to.

Crosbie Ward, Esq., &c.

I have, &c.,

E. W. STAFFORD.

No. 20.

Copy of a Letter from CROSBIE WARD, Esq., to the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD.

SIR,—

Christchurch, 23rd April, 1867.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 16th instant, and to express my thanks for the terms in which you have recorded the opinion of His Excellency's Government as to the services I was able to perform at the recent Postal Conference, under your instructions, and in co-operation with the Hon. the Postmaster-General. It will give me the highest pleasure if any exertions of mine shall prove to have conduced to the objects which His Excellency's Government had in view in sending Representatives from New Zealand to the Conference.

It will also give me sincere pleasure, while resident in England, to co-operate with Mr. Morrison, or in any other way to serve the Government of New Zealand in furthering the interests of the Colony, and especially in endeavouring to place its large postal enterprises on a permanent and satisfactory basis. So far, therefore, as other engagements will permit, I will hold myself in readiness to attend to your instructions on these subjects, as requested in your letter now under reply, and without any remuneration.

My address in London will usually be as stated in the margin; and letters directed thither will in all cases reach me with the greatest expedition.

16, Charing Cross,
London, S.W.

I have, &c.,

CROSBIE WARD.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.
