

E.—No. 3. 4 PAPERS RELATIVE TO CONVEYANCE OF MAILS VIA SUEZ.

the Admiralty Agents on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's boats arriving at Melbourne, requesting them to be good enough to deliver all Mails arriving by this route for New Zealand to the Postmaster-General of Victoria, with the exception of those for Auckland, which should be carried on to Sydney, and delivered to the Postmaster-General, New South Wales, from which port they will be forwarded to destination.

Mails from the various ports in New Zealand for Great Britain, will, after September, be sent to Sydney and Melbourne by such opportunities as may present themselves. Instructions have been issued to the various Postmasters in this Colony, to avoid the unnecessary multiplication of mails which may be so sent; but I fear that, owing to the irregularity which characterizes the movements of the unsubsidized steamers running between New Zealand and Australia, it will be impossible, without seriously delaying correspondence for the Suez route, to avoid some increase in the number of such mails.

I shall be glad to adopt any suggestions with which you may favour me with a view of obviating the inconvenience which this change may occasion either to your office or to the Admiralty Agents on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's boats.

The discontinuance of this mail steamer, the only remaining one between Australia and New Zealand, will of course involve the cessation of the contribution of £3,000 per annum now paid by the Imperial Post Office to the cost of the mail service between this Colony and Australia, as well as of the commuted payment of £300 paid by New Zealand on account of postages collected on correspondence sent by this route. I shall feel obliged if you will in future cause the acknowledgments of mails *viâ* Suez to be forwarded direct to this Department, instead of to the different Provincial Offices as hitherto.

I have, &c.,

JOHN HALL,

Postmaster-General.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

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No. 4.

Mr. F. HILL to the Hon. JOHN HALL.

(No. 3,206.)

General Post Office,

SIR,—

London, 31st October, 1868.

In reply to your letter of 30th July last, announcing the intention of the Government of New Zealand to discontinue, after the month of September following, to subsidize a steamer between New Zealand and Australia in connection with the mail service with the United Kingdom *viâ* Suez, and stating in what manner the mails to and from New Zealand by this route would henceforth be forwarded, I beg to inform you that instructions have been given to the Naval Agents to deliver all mails for the Colony of New Zealand at Melbourne, with the exception of those for Auckland, which will be carried on to Sydney.

With reference to the third paragraph of your letter, in which you state that you will be glad to adopt any suggestions from this Department with a view of obviating the inconvenience which may result from the increase in the number of mails from New Zealand under the altered arrangements for despatching the homeward mails, I have to observe that it will be desirable that a Return should be forwarded monthly from your office, showing the particular number of mails for England which were made up during the month, and the names of the ships by which they were conveyed.

The necessary instructions have been given with regard to the cessation, from the 1st of the present month, of the contribution of £3,000 per annum now paid by this office towards the cost of the mail service between New Zealand and Australia, as well as of the commuted payment of £300 paid by your office in lieu of the actual sea postage due on intercolonial letters conveyed by the contract packets between these two Colonies.

I have to add that I have also given instructions, as requested by you, that the acknowledgments of mails from New Zealand *viâ* Suez, shall be forwarded direct to Wellington, instead of to the various Provincial Offices in the Colony as hitherto.

I have, &c.,

F. HILL.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

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No. 5.

Mr. G. ELIOTT ELIOTT to SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

General Post Office,

Wellington, 6th February, 1869.

SIR,—

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter noted in the margin in reply to my communication of 30th July last, pointing out the manner in which it was desired the New Zealand portion of the English Mails *viâ* Suez should be disposed of on arrival at Melbourne after the proposed discontinuance of the subsidized steamer between New Zealand and Australia in connection with that service, and to convey to you my thanks for the readiness manifested by you to give effect to the desired arrangements.

Monthly Returns of the mails made up for England will be sent to the London Office as requested, until the re-establishment of regular mail communication with Australia, rendered necessary by the cessation of the Panama service, is effected, when I will again address you on this subject, as well as that of the cost of the mail service in question.

I have, &c.,

G. ELIOTT ELIOTT

(for the Postmaster-General).

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

No. 3 of this series.

31 October, 1868.