

There are several questions connected with the proposed extension which are not in my province to raise, but on receipt of your reply, which I trust will be an affirmative one, I will move my colleagues to take the necessary action, if they consider they are in a position to do so.

Requesting the favour of an early reply,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

GEORGE THORN, jun.

No. 4.

The Hon. Mr. REYNOLDS to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Queensland.

Sir,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 21st August, 1875.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 9th ultimo, in which you inform me that, with the view of increasing the efficiency of the Torres Straits Mail Service, it is proposed to arrange, if possible, for a higher rate of speed; and you express the hope that the Government of this colony might be disposed to co-operate with the Government of Queensland, not only to secure this desideratum, but also to arrange and provide for a branch service to run between Brisbane and Auckland.

2. In reply, I have the honor to state that, after giving the subject of your letter careful consideration, the Government of this colony, are unable to favourably entertain your proposal, inasmuch as it is believed that the Torres Straits Mail Service would not be of any value to this colony as an alternative service for the exchange of mails between this colony and the United Kingdom. The Government, therefore, think it undesirable to disturb the existing mail-service arrangements,—at least for the present.

3. This Government, however, would be willing to entertain any proposal of the Queensland Government, or of the Eastern and Australian Mail Steam Company, for establishing steam communication between this colony and Queensland; and, in anticipation of any such offer being made, the Parliament now in session will be asked to make provision for such a contingency. I may add that this Government are of the opinion that beneficial results would follow the establishing of regular steam communication between Brisbane and this colony.

4. Since the receipt of your letter, a communication has been received from Sir Julius Vogel, enclosing copy of correspondence which had taken place in London with the Eastern and Australian Mail Steam Company, from which I learn that the Directors of the Company are not yet in a position to name the subsidy required for extending their line of steamers to this colony.

5. Awaiting a further communication from you on the subject,

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM H. REYNOLDS.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Queensland.

No. 5.

Mr. J. McDONNELL to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

SIR,—

Postmaster-General's Department, Brisbane, 16th July, 1875.

I am directed to forward enclosed herewith, for your information, two copies of the Postal Convention between the General Post Office, Queensland, and the General Post Office, Straits Settlements.

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 5.

CONVENTION between the GENERAL POST OFFICE of the COLONY of QUEENSLAND and the GENERAL POST OFFICE of the COLONY of the STRAITS SETTLEMENTS.

(Laid on the Table of the Legislative Council by Command, and ordered to be printed, 13th July, 1875.)

THE General Post Office of the Colony of Queensland, and the General Post Office of the Colony of the Straits Settlements, being desirous of establishing and maintaining an exchange of mails between Brisbane and the other Australian ports—Tasmania and New Zealand on the one hand, and Singapore and other ports on the other hand—by means of the Eastern and Australian line of steamers, the undersigned, duly authorized for that purpose, have agreed upon the following articles:—

ARTICLE I.

There shall be a direct exchange of mails between the Post Office of Queensland on the one part, and the Post Office of Singapore on the other part, comprising letters, newspapers, prices current, books, packets, and packets of samples originating in the Australian colonies, Tasmania, and New Zealand, and addressed to the Straits Settlements; or originating in the Straits Settlements and addressed to the Australian colonies, Tasmania, and New Zealand.

These mails shall be conveyed by the Eastern and Australian line of steamers between Brisbane, Rockhampton, Townsville, Somerset, and Singapore.