

his suggestion that direct closed mails from Hong Kong for New Zealand should be forwarded to Brisbane *via* Torres Straits, owing to the absence of direct or reliable communication between New Zealand and Queensland.

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
JOHN McDONALD.

Enclosure in No. 8.

Mr. McDONALD to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Hong Kong.

Postmaster-General's Department, Brisbane,

7th October, 1875.

SIR,—

With further reference to your letter dated 3rd January, No. 4, enquiring whether there is any objection to your enclosing closed mails containing correspondence from China and Japan for the Australian colonies and New Zealand in the mails for Brisbane despatched *via* Torres Straits, I am directed to inform you that the various colonies have been communicated with on the subject, and that the following replies have been received :—

From Wellington, stating "that, in consequence of there not being any direct or reliable communication between New Zealand and Brisbane, the Postmaster-General is of opinion that it would be inadvisable to acquiesce in the proposal made by the Postmaster-General, Hong Kong."

From Sydney, stating "that it is considered desirable that correspondence for New South Wales from China and Japan should be forwarded to Sydney by the route referred to ;"

and
From Melbourne, stating "that the postal authorities of China and Japan have been requested to forward *via* Torres Straits all letters, &c., that may be especially addressed for transmission by that route."

In reference to the above subject, I am to refer you to my letter of the 18th ultimo, stating that mails should be forwarded loose for the other colonies, as delays frequently occur when they are enclosed in the mails for Brisbane.

I have, &c.,
JOHN McDONALD,
Under Secretary.

The Postmaster-General, Hong Kong.

No. 9.

Mr. LISTER to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

General Post Office, Hong Kong, 24th January, 1876.

SIR,—

In reply to your letter of the 5th November, 1875, I have the honor to enclose copies of the notice referred to, and of such portions of a letter* from the Brisbane office as in any way refer to New Zealand.

You will observe that my notice says nothing about the forwarding of letters from your department.

I very much regret that any issue from this Post Office should form the basis of an intemperate newspaper attack upon your administration. I think you will however agree with me that, on the information I possessed, the notice seemed justified. It was found that each mail more and more letters were received directed to New Zealand *via* Torres Straits, and it was desirable to acquaint the community with what was supposed to be the facts.

The attention of the Brisbane Office has some time since been called to the anomaly of shutting out the Hong Kong public from communication with New Zealand by a route which is open to the Singapore Post Office by convention.

I have only to add that if I can in any way meet the views of your office, I shall be most happy to do so. I feel bound, however, to let matters stand as they are until I receive a definite expression of your wishes as to the Torres Straits route, and I shall be glad to know at your earliest convenience to which Australian office you would desire the New Zealand mails to be enclosed.

I have, &c.,
ALFRED LISTER,
Postmaster-General.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 9.

POST OFFICE NOTICE.

Correspondence for New Zealand via Torres Straits.

A CONSIDERABLE amount of correspondence being received directed to New Zealand *via* Torres Straits, it is notified that the New Zealand Post Office has declined to receive mails by that route ; hence there is no alternative but to forward such correspondence *via* Galle.

* *Vide* Enclosure in No. 7.