

Tasmania, that a conference of delegates from each Colony should meet in Melbourne, as the most central spot, for the purpose of inquiring whether and at what period it would be advisable to put an end to such contract, and to suggest the best means by which the Ocean Postal Service may be provided for in the event of the connection with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company being dissolved.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

I have, &c.,  
JAMES McCULLOCH.

### No. 9.

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

(No. 186.)

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office,  
Adelaide, South Australia, 13th March, 1866.

I have the honor, by desire of His Excellency Sir Dominick Daly, to acknowledge yours of 12th ultimo, enclosing copy of a letter addressed to you by the Manager of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company, relating to the Steam Postal Service between these Colonies and Europe, and requesting to be favoured with the views of this Government on the subject.

In reply, I am directed to inform you, that this Government fully concur in opinion with that of New Zealand, as to the very unsatisfactory manner in which the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company have, for some time passed, conducted the service; and have already given notice to the Imperial Government of their wish to terminate the contract at the expiration of two years.

I have the honor to enclose for your information, copy of a letter addressed by this Government to the Manager of the Australasian Steam Navigation Company on the subject.

I have, &c.,  
JOHN HART,  
Chief Secretary.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

### Enclosure in No. 9.

(No. 107.)

SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office,  
Adelaide, South Australia, 8th February, 1866.

In acknowledging the receipt of your letter of 5th instant, on the subject of the Ocean Postal Service, I have the honor, by the Chief Secretary's directions, to express the regret of this Government that the Australasian Steam Navigation Company should have been precluded by circumstances from competing for the mail service between Sydney and Galle, as they have always conveyed the mails between King George's Sound and South Australia, in a most satisfactory manner.

The Chief Secretary at the same time desires me to intimate to you, that although this Government were, from necessity, compelled to become parties to the new arrangement made with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, by the Postmaster-General, yet, by way of practically protesting against that officer's action in the matter, they gave notice by the same mail (December, 1865,) of their desire to terminate the contract at the earliest period.

To Samuel Clark, Esq.,  
Manager, Australasian Steam Navigation Company,  
Sydney.

I have, &c.,  
O. K. RICHARDSON,  
Under Secretary.

### No. 10.

Copy of a Circular from the Hon. E. W. STAFFORD to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARIES of Tasmania, South Australia, and Victoria.

(No. 124.)

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office,  
Wellington, 14th April, 1866.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 6th ultimo, on the subject of notice being given to terminate the existing contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for carrying the mails between England and Australia, and, in reply, to inform you, that subsequently to the date of my letter of the 12th February last to you on this subject, the New Zealand Government has notified to the Imperial Government its wish that the contract in question should be terminated.

While I am glad to learn that this important subject will be fully considered at the approaching conference to be held at the invitation of the Government of Victoria at Melbourne, it is a matter of surprise that the New Zealand Government, which is deeply interested both as a large contributor to the main line, and as subsidizing many branch services dependent thereon, has not been invited to send a delegate to that conference.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

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

(No. 125.) Similar letter to Honorable Chief Secretary of South Australia, in reply to his letter of 13th March, 1866.

(No. 126.) Similar letter to Honorable Chief Secretary of Victoria, in reply to his letter of 8th March, 1866.