

1880.
NEW ZEALAND.

ABANDONMENT OF THE SOUTHAMPTON MAIL ROUTE

(PAPERS RELATIVE TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

MEMORANDUM from His Excellency the GOVERNOR to the Hon. the PREMIER.

A CIRCULAR telegraphic despatch, in cypher, has been received from the Secretary of State through the Governor of South Australia, intimating that it is proposed to abandon the Southampton mail after January next, sending all Suez mails by Brindisi, and charging as follows: Letters, 7d.; newspapers, 1½d. four ounces; book-packets and patterns, 1½d. two ounces. Letters and newspapers specially addressed private ships to be liable to present Southampton rates.

The opinion of the various Governments is desired.

The Governor begs that the Premier will favour him with an expression of the opinion of this Government upon the foregoing proposal.

Wellington, 28th August, 1879.

HERCULES ROBINSON.

No. 2.

MEMORANDUM by MR. GRAY for the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

THE payments made for the overland transit of the Brindisi mails are: On letters, 7¼d. per ounce; books, 7¾d. per pound; newspapers, 5d. per pound. The additional postage levied on correspondence intended for transmission *via* Brindisi is: On letters, 2d. per half-ounce; books, 1d. per two ounces; newspapers, 1d. per four ounces. This extra postage is presumed to cover the payments for overland carriage, but, as a matter of fact, the transit postage does not cover the payments in the case of letters by nearly 1d. per ounce. Unless the transit payments are to be reduced the loss will be greater under the new proposal, as the Brindisi rate is to be reduced from 2d. to 1d. per half-ounce letter, books from 1d. to ½d. per two ounces, and newspapers from 1d. to ½d. per four ounces.

I have assumed that the payments for the transit of the mail between Brindisi and Calais, so soon as the whole of the mails are transmitted by that route, will be reduced, as I do not think the London Office would have seen its way to reduce the postage unless the cost of the carriage of the mails was to be lessened.

In assenting to the proposal to abandon the Southampton route in favour of that of Brindisi, the department should perhaps stipulate that a corresponding reduction in the payments for overland carriage should follow the reduction of postage, so that the transit postage covers all charges in connection with the transmission of the mails through the Continent of Europe. I also think that only specially-addressed letters should be sent by the Brindisi route, either to or from the United Kingdom.

General Post Office, 22nd September, 1879.

W. GRAY,
Secretary.

No. 3.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE for the COLONIES to the OFFICER ADMINISTERING the GOVERNMENT
(Circular.) of NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 26th August, 1879.

On the 25th instant I communicated to you by telegram through the Governor of South Australia the arrangements proposed for the transmission *via* Brindisi after January next

(when the existing contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company will expire) of the Eastern and Australian mails, and the proposed abandonment of the service *via* Southampton.

I now enclose for the information of your Government copies of a correspondence between the Treasury and this Department upon which that telegram was founded.

The Officer Administering the Government
of New Zealand.

I have, &c.,

M. E. HICKS BEACH.

Enclosure 1 in No. 3.

The TREASURY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 23rd July, 1879.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit to you herewith, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, copy of a letter from the Postmaster-General, dated the 17th instant, respecting future arrangements for the conveyance of the portion of the Eastern mails now carried *via* Southampton; and I am to request you to move Secretary Sir Michael Hicks Beach to favour my Lords with any observations he may have to offer in regard to the proposals contained therein so far as they affect the correspondence with the Australian Colonies, New Zealand, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, and Hong Kong.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

H. SELWIN IBBETSON.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 1 in No. 3.

The POST OFFICE to the TREASURY.

MY LORDS,—

General Post Office, 17th July, 1879.

When the arrangements were made last year for the sea-conveyance of the Eastern mails after the 1st February next, when the existing contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company will expire, it was determined to make no provision for a service between Southampton and Suez, and accordingly that line is omitted in the new contract. It remains now to consider by what means the correspondence which is at present being forwarded by the Southampton route shall be sent after February.

In the early part of this year I put myself in communication with the Post Offices of France and Italy, for the purpose of ascertaining what abatement they would respectively be willing to make in the amount of the transit rates now paid to those offices for the special weekly conveyance between Calais and Brindisi of the accelerated portion of the Eastern mails, provided the whole of the correspondence of every description was forwarded by that route. It is only very recently that I have received a definite reply from Italy. The following is the result: The French office will agree to reduce its transit rates from 15fr. 52c. per kilo. for letters, 60½c. per kilo. for newspapers, 1fr. 21c. per kilo. for books, to 10fr. per kilo. for letters, 50c. other articles; and the Italian Post Office will reduce its rates of 100fr. per kilo. for letters, 50c. other articles, by about 35 per cent. These concessions would reduce the special transit charges on letters by about 9fr. per kilo., leaving payable about 16½fr. per kilo.; and after full consideration I have come to the conclusion that it will be desirable to accept the offers made, and to send the entire mail by the route of Brindisi and by the weekly mail.

In a correspondence which I have had with the Director-General of the Indian Post Office, he expressed an opinion that, when the Southampton mail-packets are withdrawn, all letters, &c., paid at the Southampton rate of postage should be forwarded *via* Brindisi by the ordinary mail-trains of France and Italy, so as to obtain the benefit of the ordinary union transit rates; but I cannot advise such an arrangement, which could not fail to give rise to much dissatisfaction.

In the case of the outward mails, supposing the accelerated mail to be despatched from London on the evening of every Friday, as at present, and a packet to leave Brindisi early on Monday morning, letters sent by the ordinary trains might be posted in London up till the evening of a previous day (Thursday) and reach Brindisi in time to catch the packet. In the opposite direction, the mails for England reaching Brindisi from the East would, if sent through Italy and France by the ordinary trains, arrive in London only about twenty-four hours after the express mail; or, if a Sunday intervened, both portions of the mails might be delivered together. The consequence of this would be, that the bulk of the letters would assuredly be diverted from the quick to the slow mail, seeing that the difference in time would be so trifling. If such were the case, there would be a risk that, on the one hand, the payments to France and Italy for the accelerated service might be diminished to an extent which would lead to a demand for higher transit rates; and that, on the other hand, the weight and bulk of the correspondence sent by the ordinary trains might become so great as to impose extraordinary charges for its conveyance, and thus induce the French and Italian offices to decline to accept the ordinary union transit rates.

The right course, in my opinion, is, as I have said, to send the whole of the Eastern mails by the accelerated service. At the same time, I propose that the single rate of postage to be levied on letters to or from India, China, &c., should not exceed 5d., which is 1d. less than

the present Brindisi rate, and 1d. more than the Southampton rate, which was reduced from 6d. to 4d. on the 1st of April last. In the case of letters to Australia the rate would be 7d. The amount derived from the supplementary charge of 1d. per half-ounce will not be quite sufficient to cover the payments to France and Italy; but the loss which will fall upon the department will probably be less than we should have to pay to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, or any other company by whose vessels the slow portion of the mails might be sent between England and Suez.

I have accordingly to request the authority of your Lordships to adopt the arrangements which I have here proposed. Before coming to a decision your Lordships will no doubt consult the Secretary of State for India, as the Indian Government bears a portion of the expense of the Eastern mail contract, and will also refer to Sir Michael Hicks Beach the proposal, so far as it affects the charge on letters exchanged with the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, or with Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, or Hong Kong.

The Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

I have, &c.,

JOHN MANNERS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 3.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the TREASURY.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 30th July, 1879.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd instant, enclosing a copy of a letter from the Postmaster-General respecting future arrangements for the conveyance of the Eastern and Australian mails now carried *via* Southampton and *via* Brindisi.

With regard to the proposal contained therein, so far as it affects the correspondence with the colonies concerned—*viz.*, that the mails shall in future be carried *via* Brindisi alone—I am to request that you will move the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury to cause Sir Michael Hicks Beach to be informed what are the proposed rates for books and papers; and, secondly, whether, as the raising of the minimum postal charge would appear to bear hardly on the poorer classes, it might not be arranged that letters, &c., should still be conveyed as far as Suez by the numerous steamers trading between this country and the East, as “ship-letters,” at the present, or even a lower rate.

The Secretary to the Treasury.

I have, &c.,

R. G. W. HERBERT.

Enclosure 3 in No. 3.

The TREASURY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 14th August, 1879.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit to you herewith, for the information of Secretary Sir Michael Hicks Beach with reference to your letter of the 30th ultimo respecting the Eastern and Australian Mail Service, copy of a letter which my Lords have received from the Postmaster-General, dated the 8th instant.

R. G. W. Herbert, Esq., Colonial Office.

I have, &c.,

WILLIAM LAW.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 3 in No. 3.

The POST OFFICE to the TREASURY.

MY LORDS,—

General Post Office, 8th August, 1879.

In returning the enclosed reference from the Treasury, of the 1st ultimo, I have the honor to state, in reply to the first question raised by Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, that, in the event of the Eastern and Australian mails being forwarded *via* Brindisi alone, as recommended in my report to your Lordships dated the 17th ultimo, I should propose to fix the postage rates upon newspapers, books, &c., as follows:—

Newspapers, at 1½d. per four ounces, in lieu of the present rates of 1d. *via* Southampton, and 2d. *via* Brindisi.

Book-packets, patterns, &c., at 1½d. per two ounces, in lieu of the present rates of 1d. per ounce *via* Southampton, and 2d. per ounce *via* Brindisi.

As regards the question of sending extra mails as far as Suez by the steamers trading between this country and the East as ship-letters, I beg leave to inform you that, in accordance with the general practice of this office, any letters or newspapers which the senders might specially address for transmission by private ship would be forwarded as desired. Such letters, &c., would be liable only to the present rates of postage chargeable by the Southampton route.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

I have, &c.,

JOHN MANNERS.

No. 4.

MEMORANDUM from the Hon. the PREMIER for His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MINISTERS have the honor to acknowledge receipt of His Excellency's memorandum of the 28th August last, intimating that a telegraphic despatch had been received from the Secretary of

State, in which it is proposed to abandon the Southampton mail after January next, and to forward all mails by way of Brindisi at a reduced rate of postage.

Ministers desire to inform His Excellency, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that there is no objection to the proposal, provided the reduced transit postage be sufficient to defray the charge for the carriage of the mails between Brindisi and Calais, and that, as at present, only specially-addressed correspondence for New Zealand be forwarded by way of Brindisi and Galle.

Government Buildings, 18th October, 1879.

JOHN HALL.

No. 5.

MEMORANDUM from His Excellency the GOVERNOR to MINISTERS.

FOR the consideration of Ministers, in connection with the Premier's memorandum, received by me to-day. As the question of the sufficiency of the proposed postage to defray the charge between Brindisi and Calais seems now disposed of, perhaps the following telegram to the Secretary of State would meet the views of the Government: "Ministers have no objection to the proposed abandonment of the Southampton mail, provided only specially-addressed correspondence for New Zealand be sent by Brindisi." H.R., 22/10/79.

No. 6.

MEMORANDUM by MR. GRAY to the Hon. the PREMIER.

THE transit postage on the letter portion of the mails is now fixed at 1d. per half-ounce, as already stated in the circular telegram. Lord John Manners admits, however, that "the amount derived from the supplementary charge of 1d. per half-ounce will not be quite sufficient to cover the payments to France and Italy; but the loss which will fall upon the department will probably be less than we should have to pay to the Peninsular and Oriental Company, or any other company by whose vessels the slow portion of the mails might be sent between England and Suez." The transit postage on letters, as now reduced, is equal to 9s. 3¼d. per kilogramme, while the charges to be paid the French and Italian Post Offices for the carriage of mails between Brindisi and Calais at the reduced rates will be 13s. 9d. per kilogramme, or a loss of 4s. 6½d. per kilogramme. If the London Post Office intends to make good this loss in respect of the transit of the homeward mails, it will only be necessary for this colony to stipulate that only specially-addressed correspondence be sent in the mails for transmission *via* Brindisi.

In the letter from the London Post Office the rate payable the Italian Post Office is stated to be 100 francs per kilogramme, instead of 10 francs.

General Post Office, 29th October, 1879.

W. GRAY,
Secretary.

No. 7.

MEMORANDUM from the Hon. the PREMIER to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MINISTERS would suggest the following addition to the proposed telegram: "And no charge exceeding transit postage is made on the colony for transmission through France and Italy."

J. HALL, 3/11/79.

NOTE.—Telegram to Secretary of State to above effect sent on 4th November.

No. 8.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the DEPUTY POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Melbourne.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 5th January, 1880.

HAS reduced rate Brindisi postage been finally determined?

The Deputy Postmaster-General, Melbourne.

W. GRAY,
Secretary, Post Office.

No. 9.

MR. JACKSON to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 6th January, 1880.

REDUCED rates *via* Brindisi not yet notified. It is proposed after January to send all mails *via* Brindisi, charging Southampton rates. Concurrence of neighbouring colonies in this arrangement has been invited.

W. Gray, Esq., Secretary, General Post Office,
Wellington.

T. W. JACKSON.

No. 10.

The CHIEF SECRETARY, Victoria, to the Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY, New Zealand.

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 6th January, 1880.

SOUTHAMPTON and Suez contract being abandoned by the Imperial Government, this Government propose to send all mails after January *via* Brindisi, and charge present Southampton rates on letters, packets, and newspapers.

Division of postage between Imperial and colonial Governments to be matter of future arrangements; for the present, other colonies to account to Victoria same rates as now. Your concurrence invited in transmission of mails by fortnightly service *via* Brindisi. In accordance with foregoing, favour of early reply requested.

The Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

GRAHAM BERRY,
Chief Secretary.

No. 11.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the CHIEF SECRETARY, Melbourne.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 6th January, 1880.

THANKS for message about Suez mail. Will consider, and reply immediately.

The Hon. Graham Berry, Chief Secretary,
Melbourne.

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

No. 12.

MEMORANDUM by Mr. GRAY to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

I THINK this is a matter rather of Imperial than colonial concern, inasmuch as the Imperial Post Office controls the mail service between London and Galle, and makes all arrangements for the payment for the transit of mails between Brindisi and Calais. As the Imperial Government, on deciding to abandon the Southampton route, made an alternative proposal for the carriage of the whole of the mails by way of Brindisi and Calais, which has been accepted by this colony, it would be scarcely competent at present for the department to accept the proposal of the Chief Secretary of Victoria.

The sixpenny rate would, no doubt, prove attractive; but as there would be no margin for defraying the overland transit charges, the colonies would suffer considerable loss by only charging the Southampton rates on correspondence sent *via* Brindisi.

This loss would not be made good by the London office; and unless Victoria undertakes to defray the whole of the charge connected with the transit of mails between Calais and Brindisi over and above that agreed to be paid by London, I fear but few of the colonies will consent to the proposal.

It is not the policy of this colony to make the Brindisi service over-attractive, and already it has been decided not to take full advantage of the fortnightly service.

General Post Office, 12th January, 1880.

W. GRAY,
Secretary.

No. 13.

The Hon. the COLONIAL SECRETARY to the Hon. the CHIEF SECRETARY,
Melbourne.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 15th January, 1880.

PROPOSED alteration *re* Suez mails. At invitation Imperial Government, this colony, in October last, approved of proposal to abandon Southampton route and forward its Suez mails *via* Brindisi. The rates of postage proposed by Imperial Post Office were higher than the present Southampton rates, being on the basis of sevenpence per half-ounce letter, and other rates in proportion. There was thus a margin for defraying cost of conveying mails between Brindisi and Calais. This colony also stipulated that, should the proposed margin be insufficient to cover foregoing charges, any deficiency to be made good by Imperial Post Office. Your proposal to levy present Southampton rates only means, in the case of New Zealand, we should have to make increased payments for the carriage of our mails between Brindisi and Calais, not covered by postage receipts, which would be a serious loss. We pay large sum for maintaining Frisco service, and are not prepared to further increase colony's loss in connection with ocean services. After careful consideration I regret, therefore, I cannot agree to proposal made in your telegram of 6th instant.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

JOHN HALL,
Colonial Secretary.

No. 14.

The Hon. JOHN HALL to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 17th January, 1880.

GOVERNOR wired Colonial Office November fourth respecting rates postage Brindisi route after Southampton abandoned. No reply received. Ascertain decision. Telegraph rates.
Sir Julius Vogel, London.

J. HALL.

No. 15.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 24th January, 1880.

LETTERS, sevenpence half-ounce; newspapers, three-halfpence four ounces; books, &c., three-halfpence two ounces, after first February. But proposal by Victoria for reduction under consideration.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

J. VOGEL.

No. 16.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 26th January, 1880.

NEW ZEALAND objects Victorian proposal respecting postages.
Sir Julius Vogel, London.

J. HALL.

No. 17.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, London, 31st December, 1879.

You are aware that, in the new contract between the Postmaster-General and the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for the conveyance of mails between this country and India and China after the 1st February next, no provision is made for a service between Southampton and Suez, and that, consequently, arrangements have been made for sending wholly by the way of Brindisi the mails for those countries as well as those for such of the Australian Colonies as use the Suez route.

In anticipation of this change a correspondence has taken place between this department and the French and Italian Post Offices with reference to the transit rates to be paid after the 1st February next for the accelerated service through France and Italy; and the negotiations have resulted in the Postmaster-General accepting the offer of the French and Italian offices to reduce the present transit rates to 10 francs per kilogramme for letters, 50 centimes per kilogramme for other articles, for the French transit, and by about 35 per cent. for the Italian transit.

With this reduction of the foreign transit rates, Her Majesty's Government have decided to fix the following reduced rates of postage on such of the correspondence for New Zealand as may be sent from the United Kingdom by the Suez route: On letters, 7d. per half-ounce; newspapers, not exceeding four ounces, 1½d. each; books and patterns, 1½d. per two ounces.

The rates of postage now levied on letters, &c., forwarded to New Zealand *via* San Francisco or by private ship will remain unchanged.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

WM. JAS. PAGE.

No. 18.

Mr. GRAY to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 26th February, 1880.

I have the honor, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 31st December last, stating, with reference to the new contract between your department and the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company involving the discontinuance of the service between Southampton and Suez, that you had arranged with the French and Italian Post Offices to have the transit charges reduced, and that, in consequence, from the 1st instant the rates of postage on correspondence for New Zealand *via* Suez would be fixed at 7d. per half-ounce for letters, 1½d. each for newspapers not exceeding four ounces, and 1½d. per two ounces for books and patterns.

In reply, I am to state that the Postmaster-General will direct that similar rates of postage shall be levied on correspondence for the United Kingdom from this colony for transmission *via* Brindisi, provided the additional postage charged over and above the ordinary rate will be sufficient to cover the French and Italian transit charges. The Postmaster-General will be glad to be informed that this is the case.

I have, &c.,

W. GRAY,

Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

No. 19.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,—

7, Westminster Chambers, London, 12th February, 1880.

Referring to that portion of the Hon. the Premier's telegram of 17th January on the subject of the rates of postage to be charged by the Brindisi route, and to my reply by telegram of 24th January (copies enclosed), I have the honor to inform you that on communicating with the Colonial Office on the subject, in accordance with my instructions, a correspondence ensued, of which I now transmit a copy for your information.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Enclosure 1 in No. 19.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 23rd January, 1880.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you, for your information, the accompanying copy of a despatch addressed to the Governor of New Zealand, forwarding to him a copy of a letter from the Treasury in reference to a telegram* (a copy of which is annexed) received from Sir Hercules Robinson in November last, relative to the postage rates *via* Brindisi to be charged after the abandonment of the Southampton mail route.

I am to state that, according to the notice issued by the Post Office, which will be found printed in the *Times* of 31st December, 1879, the rates will be—7d. per half-ounce letter; newspapers, 1½d. per four ounces; book-packets, patterns, &c., 1½d. per two ounces, after the 1st of February.

Sir Michael Hicks Beach desires me further to acquaint you that the Government of Victoria has proposed an arrangement by which letters to and from Victoria and South Australia would be carried *via* Brindisi for 6d., and newspapers for 1d., under terms which it is anticipated will very shortly be communicated to the other Australasian Governments, in order to ascertain whether they desire a similar agreement.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

ROBERT GEO. HERBERT.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure 1 in No. 19.

Sir MICHAEL HICKS BEACH to Sir HERCULES ROBINSON.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 14th January, 1880.

With reference to your telegram of the 4th of November last, relating to the abandonment of the Southampton mail route, which was duly communicated to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, I have the honor to transmit to you, for the information of your Government, the accompanying copy of a letter, written by direction of their Lordships, enclosing one from the Postmaster-General upon the subject of your telegram.

I have, &c.,

Governor Sir Hercules Robinson, G.C.M.G., &c.

M. E. HICKS BEACH.

Sub-Enclosure 2 to Enclosure 1 in No. 19.

The TREASURY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 9th January, 1880.

With reference to your letter of the 6th November last, transmitting copy of a telegram from the Governor of New Zealand as to letters for that colony to be hereafter conveyed *via* Brindisi, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit to you, for the information of Secretary Sir Michael Hicks Beach, copy of a report of the Postmaster-General, dated the 5th instant, on the subject. My Lords trust that the arrangements described in that report will prove satisfactory to the colony.

I have, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

R. R. W. LINGEN.

Sub-Enclosure 3 to Enclosure 1 in No. 19.

Lord JOHN MANNERS to the LORDS of the TREASURY.

MY LORDS,—

General Post Office, 5th January, 1880.

I have the honor to return the enclosed Treasury reference, dated the 7th November last, enclosing a letter from the Colonial Office, with a telegram from the Governor of New Zealand conveying the views of his Ministers relative to the abandonment of the Southampton route for the conveyance of mails between this country and the Australian Colonies.

It appears that the Government of New Zealand entertain no objection to the abandonment of the Southampton mail, provided that only such correspondence for that colony as may be

* *Vide* Nos. 7 and 9 of present series.

specially so addressed is forwarded by the route of Brindisi, and that no extra charge exceeding the foreign transit postage is made on the colony for the transmission of the mails through France and Italy.

The first of these conditions is met by the regulation under which all correspondence for New Zealand is forwarded as a rule *via* San Francisco, and only such correspondence as is specially so addressed is forwarded *via* Brindisi.

As regards the other condition laid down, your Lordships are aware that it is proposed to levy on letters sent by the Brindisi route an additional rate of one penny only per half-ounce to cover the foreign transit. This is slightly less than the amount which will have to be paid to France and Italy, so that for letters sent from New Zealand to the United Kingdom by the Brindisi route (which will probably be very few), the colony will have to pay a transit rate a little in excess of what it will levy from the public on such matter.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

I have, &c.,
JOHN MANNERS.

Enclosure 2 in No. 19.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES.

SIR,—

London, 27th January, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Herbert's letter of 23rd instant, transmitting copies of correspondence for my information relating to the postage rates *via* Brindisi to be charged after the abandonment of the Southampton mail route.

I desire to thank you for the prompt attention given to my inquiry.

I have also to inform you that I have received from the Government of New Zealand a telegram of which the following is a copy: "New Zealand objects Victorian proposal respecting postages."

The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

I have, &c.,
JULIUS VOGEL,
Agent-General for New Zealand.

Enclosure 3 in No. 19.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 3rd February, 1880.

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, informing him that you have received a telegram from the Government of New Zealand stating that they object to the proposal made on behalf of Victoria respecting postal charges on correspondence passing between this country and Australia.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
JOHN BRAMSTON.

Enclosure 4 in No. 19.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 4th February, 1880.

With reference to your letter of the 27th ultimo, in which you transmitted a copy of a telegram from the Government of New Zealand stating that that Government "objected to the Victorian proposal respecting postages," I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you a copy of a letter which he has caused to be addressed to the Agent-General for New South Wales.

Sir Michael Hicks Beach concludes that the objection of your Government was based on the same grounds as that of the Government of New South Wales, and trusts that the arrangement now made will be found to meet fairly the requirements of the case.

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

I have, &c.,
ROBERT G. W. HERBERT.

Sub-Enclosure to Enclosure 4 in No. 19.

The COLONIAL OFFICE to the AGENT-GENERAL for NEW SOUTH WALES.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 4th February, 1880.

With reference to your letter of the 20th ultimo, transmitting a telegram from the Government of New South Wales instructing you to protest against "any reduction which would prevent their receiving the 4d. already agreed to be allowed on every half-ounce letter," I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to inform you that he has received a communication from the Right Hon. W. C. E. Childers, M.P., stating, on the part of the Government of Victoria, that, in order to obviate all possible objection as to letters *via* Suez, the Colony of Victoria agrees that Her Majesty's Postmaster-General shall continue to credit 4d. to

each of the other colonies, Victoria undertaking to make the necessary payments to Her Majesty's Post Office.

Her Majesty's Government have no intention of proposing any alteration of the arrangement under which 4d. is credited to the colonies on letters sent *via* the San Francisco route, and the objection which you conveyed to the Secretary of State on behalf of the Government of New South Wales appears therefore to be sufficiently met.

The Agent-General for New South Wales.

I have, &c.,

R. G. W. HERBERT.

Enclosure 5 in No. 19.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, 6th February, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Herbert's letter of the 4th instant.

In reply I have to state that I do not know the nature of the objections my Government has to the Victorian proposals respecting postages; so that I cannot say if the explanation given in the letter to the Agent-General for New South Wales will remove those objections.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,

Agent-General for New Zealand.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

No. 20.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 19th February, 1880.

Referring to my letter of the 31st December last, in which I stated that after the 1st of this month the Italian transit rate for mails forwarded between the United Kingdom and Australia by the route of Brindisi would be reduced by about 35 per cent., I now beg leave to inform you that the Italian Post Office has since fixed its transit rates thus: 6fr. 50c., in lieu of 10fr., per kilogramme for letters; 37½c., in lieu of 50c., per kilogramme for printed papers.

These rates, added to the French transit charge of 10fr. per kilogramme for letters and 50c. per kilogramme for printed papers, converted into British equivalents, give the following result: Letters (per ounce)—France, 2·72d.; Italy, 1·77d.; total, 4·49d. Printed papers (per pound)—France, 2·18d.; Italy, 1·63d.; total, 3·81d.

I request that you will be good enough to cause these transit rates, in lieu of the present rates, to be accounted for to this department for all correspondence sent to the United Kingdom by the route of Brindisi since the 1st of this month.

I have, &c.,

W. JAS. PAGE.

The Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 21.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

SIR,— 7, Westminster Chambers, London, S.W., 18th March, 1880.

I have the honor to enclose a copy of a despatch received from the Colonial Office, covering copies of correspondence with that department relating to the rearrangement of the Australian postal charges.

I have, &c.,

JULIUS VOGEL,

Agent-General.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 21.

Mr. HERBERT to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,— Downing Street, 15th March, 1880.

With reference to recent correspondence on the subject of the arrangement of Australian postal charges, I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Treasury, enclosing one from the Postmaster-General, from which you will learn that Her Majesty's Government have agreed to the proposals made on behalf of the Government of Victoria, and that the postal charges on correspondence sent *via* Brindisi, Adelaide, and Melbourne will for the future be fixed at the same rates as those which were charged until the 1st February for correspondence forwarded by way of Southampton.

I am also to transmit to you a copy of a letter from Mr. McIlwraith, dated 25th February, and to inform you that the above-mentioned rates will also be charged upon correspondence sent *via* Brindisi and Singapore.

I have, &c.,

ROBERT G. W. HERBERT.

The Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

2—F. 5.

Sub-Enclosure 1 to Enclosure in No. 21.

The TREASURY to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

SIR,—

Treasury Chambers, 23rd February, 1880.

I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit herewith copy of a report from the Postmaster-General, dated the 21st instant, having reference to the letters from the Colonial Office, dated the 13th, 18th, and 19th instant, relative to proposals made on behalf of the Colony of Victoria by the Right Honourable Hugh C. Eardley Childers, under which the postage on the correspondence, newspapers, books, and patterns between this country, Victoria and the other Australian Colonies, and New Zealand, now forwarded *via* Brindisi, and which are carried by the Victoria contract packet between Ceylon and Australia, should be fixed at the same rates as were charged up to the first of this month on the Australian correspondence, &c., conveyed by the Southampton route; and I am to request that in laying the same before Secretary Sir Michael Hicks Beach you will state to him that my Lords agree to the terms submitted by Mr. Childers on behalf of Victoria, and will therefore issue instructions to the Postmaster-General to prepare the necessary warrant for fixing the postage at the rates proposed. As the Government of Queensland has not, however, signified its acquiescence in an arrangement being made as regards the correspondence, &c., of that colony, which is sent by way of Singapore, similar to that proposed on behalf of Victoria, the postage on such correspondence, &c., will have to remain as fixed by the recent warrant; but, on learning that the Government of Queensland is prepared to agree to terms similar to those now sanctioned with respect to Victoria, my Lords will be ready to give directions for reducing the postage on correspondence, &c., conveyed by the Queensland contract packets to the same rates as those which will be charged on correspondence, &c., carried by the Victoria packets.

I have, &c.,

R. G. W. Herbert, Esq., Colonial Office.

H. SELWIN IBBETSON.

Sub-Enclosure 2 to Enclosure in No. 21.

The GENERAL POST OFFICE to the TREASURY.

MY LORDS,—

General Post Office, London, 21st February, 1880.

I have the honor to return the three accompanying letters from the Colonial Office, referred to me on the 20th instant.

Two of these letters cover communications from Mr. Childers, M.P., on the subject of the proposals which he made on the 3rd instant, that the rates of postage on letters, newspapers, and book-packets sent to and from the United Kingdom *via* Brindisi and Point de Galle, and thence by the packets subsidized by the Government of Victoria, should be at once reduced to the rates hitherto charged for correspondence sent *via* Southampton in the case of all the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, the Government of Victoria undertaking to be responsible that practically the same arrangements in regard to the division of the postage shall be adopted by the other colonies that are offered by Victoria itself.

Mr. Childers has now supplied what was deficient in his former letter, but he states that he can make no offer with regard to correspondence sent to or from Queensland *via* Brindisi and Singapore, and thence by the packet subsidized by the Queensland Government.

On this point I made a separate report to your Lordships on the 16th instant. Should your Lordships be disposed to agree to the reduction suggested, it will remain to be decided whether you will wait for a further communication from the Premier of Queensland, or whether you will leave the postage on correspondence sent to Queensland or any other Australian colony *via* Singapore and Torres Straits at the present amount, and apply the reduced rates to such correspondence only as is forwarded *via* Point de Galle by the Victoria packet.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's

I have, &c.,

Treasury.

JOHN MANNERS.

P.S.—So far as this department is concerned, I see no objection to the adoption of the latter course.—J.M.

Sub-Enclosure 3 to Enclosure in No. 21.

Mr. THOMAS McILWRAITH to the COLONIAL OFFICE.

Queensland Government Offices, 32, Charing Cross, London, S.W.,

SIR,—

25th February, 1880.

On account of my absence from London I received your letter of the 18th instant only to-day. I have examined carefully the explanation of the existing and proposed arrangements for postal charges in the letter from the Post Office Department to the Treasury accompanying yours, and find the proposed arrangement as therein explained more equitable than as set forth in the memorandum of the Right Hon. H. C. E. Childers. Considering that it would be highly disadvantageous to Queensland that the postal rates to and from that colony *via* Brindisi should be different and higher than those to and from the adjoining colonies, I agree, on behalf

of Queensland, to the rate for a single letter being reduced to 6d., and a newspaper to 1d., and to the apportionment of the rates collected in England and the colony being carried out as set forth in the letter of the Right Hon. the Postmaster-General to the Treasury, dated the 16th instant.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies,
Downing Street.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS McILWRAITH.

No. 22.

The Hon. Mr. DICK to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 22nd May, 1880.

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letters, of 12th February and 18th March respectively, relative to the rates of postage proposed to be charged on correspondence forwarded by the Brindisi route, and to thank you for the copies of the correspondence you were good enough to enclose.

The objections entertained by this Government to the Victorian proposal, conveyed in my telegram to you of the 26th January, were based on the increase which it would make to the loss already sustained by New Zealand on correspondence sent *via* Brindisi. The loss is represented by the difference between the transit postage and the sum paid for the transmission of the mails between Brindisi and Calais, an amount estimated to be on letters equal to 1d. per ounce. In addition to this loss, the sum paid for the carriage of the Brindisi mails between Melbourne and the colony must also be taken into account. The very recent proposal of the Victorian Government diminishes this objection, but does not remove it. It is obvious, however, that the effect of reducing the Brindisi postage to 6d. per half-ounce would be to increase the number of letters sent by that route and in like proportion the colony's loss on correspondence sent by way of Brindisi, while at the same time the revenue earned by the San Francisco service would be seriously diminished.

I have, &c.,

Sir Julius Vogel, K.C.M.G.,
Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

THOMAS DICK,
(for the Postmaster-General).

No. 23.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 16th March, 1880.

With reference to my telegram of the 25th of August last, and to the despatch which followed it in the same month, relating to the abandonment of the Southampton mail route, I have the honor to inform you that I have taken care to bring the views of your Government and of the other colonies concerned under the consideration of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury.

In consequence of the reduction of the transit rates agreed upon by the French and Italian Post Offices (which rendered a reduced Brindisi rate possible) being made dependent upon the transmission of all the correspondence by way of Brindisi, Her Majesty's Government were unable to change the arrangements which I communicated to you, so as to restore the Southampton route, as was urged by several of the Colonial Governments.

Her Majesty's Government have, however, since received a proposal made by the Right Hon. H. C. E. Childers on behalf of the Government of Victoria, the acceptance of which has been urged by the Agent-General for South Australia as the representative of that colony, for establishing the same rates for letters, newspapers, and book-packets transmitted *via* Brindisi, Adelaide, and Melbourne as those already charged *via* San Francisco, which also correspond with the old Southampton rates.

I proceed briefly to notice the points of difference between this proposal and the arrangement which came into force on the 1st February:—

By this latter arrangement, as your Government is aware, the rates were fixed at—letters, 7d. per half-ounce; newspapers (not exceeding four ounces), 1½d.; book-packets and patterns, 1½d. per two ounces. Of the postage charged on the outward letter, it had been arranged that the Imperial Treasury should retain 2d., the shares of postage on the double letter (*i.e.*, a letter each way) being divided in the proportion of 2d. to the Imperial Treasury, and of 10d. to the colonies; the mother-country and the colonies each retaining 1d. towards payment of foreign transit rate on letters which they respectively despatch.

The present proposal fixes the rates for letters at 6d. per half-ounce; for newspapers (not exceeding four ounces), 1d.; book-packets and patterns, 1d. per ounce; and provides that the Imperial Treasury, in consideration of its defraying the transit rates in both directions, shall retain 3½d. on the outward letter, the colonies receiving 2½d. on the outward, and 6d. on the homeward letter. On newspapers and book-packets the Imperial Treasury is to retain the whole of the outward postage, and to be credited with one-half of the homeward rate, defraying therefrom all the overland charges of the French and Italian Governments.

In order to obviate any objection which might be taken to this proposal by other colo-

nies, on account of the alteration of the arrangement by which the Colonial Governments were to be credited 4d. on every outward letter, it has been agreed on behalf of Victoria that the Imperial Post Office should continue to credit the 4d. in question, leaving that Government to arrange with the other colonies primarily interested in the service *via* Suez, King George's Sound, Adelaide, and Melbourne as to their several contributions.

I have now the honor to acquaint you that Her Majesty's Government have consented to accede to this proposal, although entailing loss upon the Imperial Exchequer, as it appears to them to meet in a satisfactory manner the requirements of the colonies which previously enjoyed the advantages of the cheaper postage-rates by the Southampton route, and not to be liable to objection from the colonies employing the service *via* San Francisco.

The same rates will also be charged upon correspondence sent by way of Singapore, and thence by the steamers under contract with the Queensland Government, the Premier of that colony, who is now in England, having agreed with Her Majesty's Government upon a division of postage which will enable this arrangement to be carried out.

The new rates came into force on the 1st instant, and I have the honor to enclose copies of the notice issued by the General Post Office upon the subject.

I have, &c.,

M. E. HICKS BEACH.

The Officer Administering the Government of New Zealand.

Enclosure in No. 23.

MAILS for AUSTRALIA, *via* BRINDISI.

Further Reduction of Postage.

ON the 1st of March next the following reduced rates of postage on correspondence for the Colony of Victoria, or for any other Australian colony, or for New Zealand, forwarded *via* Brindisi, will be substituted for those which came into operation on the 1st instant: Letters, 6d. per half-ounce; newspapers (not exceeding four ounces), 1d. each; book-packets and patterns or samples 1d., not exceeding one ounce; 2d., not exceeding two ounces; 4d., from two ounces to four ounces; and 4d. for every additional four ounces,—being the same rates as those charged on correspondence forwarded *via* San Francisco.

By command of the Postmaster-General.

General Post Office, 26th February, 1880.

By Authority: GEORGE DIDSBURY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1880.