

(No. 57.)



1883.

T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

POSTAL CONFERENCE SYDNEY, 1883.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Moore, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
July 24, 1883.

1883.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.
NEW SOUTH WALES.

POSTAL CONFERENCE, 1883.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE,

HELD IN SYDNEY, IN MAY, 1883.

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS,

RESOLUTIONS,

PAPERS LAID BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

ORDERED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY TO BE PRINTED,

30 *May*, 1883.



SYDNEY: THOMAS RICHARDS, GOVERNMENT PRINTER.

1883.

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
POSTAL CONFERENCE,

HELD IN SYDNEY, IN 1883.

Executive Council Chambers, Sydney,

3 MAY, 1883.

THE undermentioned gentlemen, Representatives of the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania, were present :—

<i>New South Wales :</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART. THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria :</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Tasmania :</i>	THE HONORABLE JOHN S. DODDS.

It was mentioned that the Honorable Boyd D. Morehead, representing Queensland, was prevented from attending in consequence of the death of a relative.

The Honorable ALEX. STUART and the Honorable F. A. WRIGHT laid upon the Table their Commissions.

The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY proposed, and the Honorable J. L. PARSONS seconded, the appointment of the Honorable Alex. Stuart as Chairman. Carried.

Mr. Alexander C. Budge was appointed Secretary.

The Conference having deliberated upon the desirability or otherwise of the permanent Heads of Departments accompanying the Delegates being present during discussion on the Postal Question, it was resolved in the affirmative, as tending to facilitate the business of the Conference.

The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY then laid before the Conference a Memorandum which he had prepared on the subject of the Universal Postal Union, which was ordered to be printed.

Other papers bearing upon the Postal Question were laid before the Council and ordered to be printed.

The Conference then adjourned until to-morrow, at 10 o'clock, a.m.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney.

4 MAY, 1883.

Present :—

<i>New South Wales :</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART. THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria :</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Queensland :</i>	THE HONORABLE BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
<i>Tasmania :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at 10 o'clock, the Minutes of the Proceedings of yesterday were read and confirmed.

The Honorable BOYD D. MOREHEAD then laid his Commission upon the Table.

Mr. MOREHEAD drew attention to the resolution arrived at yesterday, allowing the permanent officials in attendance on the members of the Conference to be present during the discussion of the Postal Question, and expressed his dissent therefrom. After

After this expression of opinion by Mr. Morehead the Secretaries withdrew.

A Memorandum proposed by Mr. BERRY was then read, on the subject of the "Universal Postal Union," and the Conference having at some length discussed the same, its further consideration was postponed on the following Motion, proposed by Mr. DODDS, and seconded by Mr. WRIGHT:—

"That the official Heads of Departments, accompanying the Delegates, be instructed to prepare a Report showing the loss to the Postal Revenues of the Australian Colonies, New Zealand, and Tasmania, and the amount of the contributions respectively to the Mail Services known as the Peninsular and Oriental, the San Francisco, and Torres Straits, upon the basis of the alternative proposals contained in the Memorandum laid before the Conference by Mr. Berry; also showing the result, calculated upon the basis of population, of the above-named Colonies, and generally such further information as they may think necessary to be laid before the Conference."

The Conference adjourned until Monday, the 7th instant, at 2 o'clock p.m.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney,

7 MAY, 1883.

Present:—

<i>New South Wales:</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART.
	THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria:</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Queensland:</i>	THE HONORABLE BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
<i>Tasmania:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at 2 o'clock, p.m., the Minutes of the proceedings on the 5th instant were read and confirmed.

Mr. BERRY laid on the Table his Commission.

The Conference then resumed consideration of the subject of the "Postal Union"; and the Report of the official Heads of Departments who accompany the Delegates, having been brought up, was discussed at length, and personal explanations obtained from the officials referred to, upon several matters affecting the subject.

It was resolved that the Report and Returns connected therewith should be printed, and placed in the hands of the Delegates without delay, in order that some definite conclusion might be arrived at as early as possible.

Several matters of importance to the Colonies were discussed, and, as bearing upon the subject, notices of motion were given.

Mr. WRIGHT then laid upon the Table a Report by the Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney, on the subject of the proposed Postal Union, which was ordered to be printed.

Letters from the Melbourne and Sydney Chambers of Commerce respectively, on the subject of Intercolonial Postage and Telegraph Rates, were also laid on the Table and ordered to be printed.

The following Notices of Motion for next meeting were then given, and the Conference adjourned at half-past 5 o'clock, until Wednesday at half-past 11 o'clock, a.m.

NOTICES OF MOTION FOR WEDNESDAY, THE 9TH INSTANT:—

Mr. BERRY to move:—

This Conference having had under its consideration the various despatches from the Imperial Government and other memoranda and statistics explaining the world federation known as the Universal Postal Union, is of opinion,—

1. That the Australasian Colonies should lend their support thereto, by an expression of willingness to enter the said Postal Union.
2. That the conditions suggested in the despatch signed by Mr. Fawcett, as precedent to such entry, be insisted upon.
3. That the loss on all existing contracts and subsidies consequent on the adoption of the lower Union rates of transit other than the net loss on the P. & O. contract, which last year amounted to £15,600, which will in future, as at present, be borne by Victoria alone, be borne by each and all of the Colonies, on the basis of correspondence homeward and outward.
4. That no further or additional postal subsidy be agreed to except by the unanimous approval of all the Colonies.
5. That such further conditions as this Conference may agree to must also be regarded as precedent to entering the said Union.

Mr. STUART to move:—

That in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable,—

1. That the Australasian Colonies should become parties to the Postal Union.
2. That it should be a condition thereof that they be admitted to vote.
3. That the voting power to be accorded to these Colonies should not be less than three, inasmuch as three lines of ocean steamers are subsidized by the Colonies.
4. That each Colony continue the management and risk of its own subsidized line, but that any other Colony using such line shall pay to the subsidizing Colony the full amount of the Postal Union rates upon the postal matter transmitted thereby.

Mr.

Mr. WRIGHT to move:—

That the agreement of May, 1878, in regard to the apportionment between the Australasian Colonies of the subsidy to the Port Darwin Cable, on the basis of *population*, shall be taken to include in such calculation the aboriginal inhabitants of the respective Colonies.

Mr. WRIGHT to move:—

That it is desirable the attention of the Company should be called to the recent interruptions in the cable, which, were the two cables maintained in working order, in terms of the agreement, should, it is thought, not occur.

Mr. WRIGHT to move:—

That, as regards Government messages transmitted over the Port Darwin Cable, the term "Government messages," in accordance with the cable agreement of May, 1879, shall apply to "messages sent from or to Her Majesty, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, or any Government Department in the United Kingdom, or the respective Agent-General for the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, or any other Australasian Colony or Colonies as to which it shall be notified as hereinbefore mentioned, on the one hand, and the Governors, or Chief or Colonial Secretaries, of, or any Government Department of, the various Colonial Governments on the other, or any of them, on matters relating to the administration of the Governments." It being understood from the above clause that messages sent from or to any Department of the Public Service in Great Britain or the Colonies be considered "Government messages," and entitled to be transmitted at the reduced rates.

Mr. WRIGHT to move:—

That, as regards telegrams passing between the Australasian Colonies and New Zealand, fifteen letters shall be allowed as the maximum length of each word, instead of ten letters as proposed by the Cable Company.

Mr. PARSONS to move:—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that uniform packet and parcel postal rates and regulations should be adopted by all the Australasian Colonies, and that Messrs. Todd, C.M.G., Lambton, Jackson, and Packer be requested to submit draft regulations.

Mr. PARSONS to move:—

That the Indian and Indo-European Telegraph Departments, the Eastern Telegraph Company, and the Indo-European Telegraph Company, be requested to reduce their rates on press telegrams to and from Australia.

Mr. PARSONS to move:—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that the system of Postal Notes should be introduced, and have currency throughout the Australasian Colonies.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney,

9 MAY, 1883.

Present:—

<i>New South Wales:</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEXANDER STUART. THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria:</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Queensland:</i>	THE HONORABLE BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
<i>Tasmania:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at half-past 11 o'clock, the Minutes of the Proceedings on the 8th instant were read and confirmed.

The Honorable J. L. PARSONS laid his Commission on the Table.

The Conference then proceeded to the consideration of the motions on the subject of "Postal Union," of which notice was given yesterday by Messrs. Berry and Stuart, and after mature deliberation a draft series of Resolutions were framed for final consideration at the next meeting.

Draft Regulations referred to:—

That this Conference, having had under its consideration the various despatches from the Imperial Government and other memoranda and statistics respecting the Universal Postal Union, is of opinion—

1. That the Australasian Colonies should apply for admission to the said Postal Union.
2. That the stipulation suggested by the Postmaster-General of England, in the despatch dated 6 November, 1882, as precedent to such entry, be insisted upon.
3. That each of the Australasian Colonies, parties to this agreement, be accorded a separate voice in the affairs of the Union.
4. That each Colony continue the management and responsibility of its existing subsidized line, but that any other Colony using such line shall pay to the subsidizing Colony the full amount of the Postal Union rates upon the postal matter transmitted thereby.

5. That if on annual investigation it be shown that, by adopting Postal Union rates, any such subsidizing Colony incurs a greater loss than it at present incurs (subject, in the case of New South Wales and New Zealand, to modification consequent upon the reduced Pacific Mail contract now being entered into), an adjustment shall be made of such excess loss whereby it shall be borne by the Colonies respectively using such line, in proportion to the postal matter carried.
6. That no further postal subsidy be subject to this agreement except by the unanimous approval of the Colonies assenting hereto.

Mr. WRIGHT then moved,—

“That the agreement of May, 1878, in regard to the apportionment between the Australasian Colonies of the subsidy to the Port Darwin Cable, on the basis of *population*, shall be taken to include in such calculation the aboriginal inhabitants of the respective Colonies,”

which was carried upon the following division:—

For.
New South Wales,
Victoria.

Against.
South Australia.

Queensland and Tasmania did not vote.

Mr. WRIGHT also moved,—

“That it is desirable the attention of the Company should be called to the recent interruptions in the cable, which, were the two cables maintained in working order, in terms of the agreement, should, it is thought, not occur,”

and, after discussion, the following amended Motion was agreed to:—

“That it is desirable the attention of the Cable Company should be called to their failure to carry out the contract, and to the recent interruptions in the cable, which, were the two cables maintained in working order, in terms of the agreement, would not occur, and that they be required to intimate at what time that portion of the agreement relating to the maintaining of the two cables will be carried into effect.”

Mr. WRIGHT further moved,—

“That, as regards Government messages transmitted over the Port Darwin Cable, the term ‘Government messages,’ in accordance with the cable agreement of May, 1879, shall apply to ‘messages sent from or to Her Majesty, Her Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, or any Government Department in the United Kingdom, or the respective Agent-General for the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, or any other Australasian Colony or Colonies as to which it shall be notified as hereinbefore mentioned, on the one hand, and the Governors, or Chief or Colonial Secretaries of, or any Government Department of, the various Colonial Governments on the other, or any of them, on matters relating to the administration of the Governments.’ It being understood from the above clause that messages sent from or to any Department of the Public Service in Great Britain or the Colonies be considered ‘Government messages,’ and entitled to be transmitted at the reduced rates,”

which was agreed to after discussion.

Mr. PARSONS moved,—

“That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that uniform packet and parcel postal rates and regulations should be adopted by all the Australasian Colonies, and that Messrs. Todd, C.M.G., Lambton, Jackson, and Packer, be requested to submit draft regulations.”

The motion was agreed to.

A telegram was received during the day from Mr. Dick, Postmaster-General of New Zealand expressing regret at his inability to attend the Conference.

The Conference then adjourned at 5 o’clock, until to-morrow at 3 o’clock p.m.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney,

10 MAY, 1883.

Present:—

<i>New South Wales:</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART.
	THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria:</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Queensland:</i>	THE HONORABLE BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
<i>Tasmania:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at 3 o’clock, p.m., the Minutes of the Proceedings of yesterday were read and confirmed.

The Conference then proceeded to the further consideration of the Draft Resolutions on the subject of “Postal Union,” when the following were submitted for final approval, by the Chairman:—

That this Conference, having had under its consideration the various despatches from the Imperial Government and other memoranda and statistics respecting the Universal Postal Union, is of opinion,—

1. That the Australasian Colonies should apply for admission to the said Postal Union.

- 2 That the stipulations suggested by the Postmaster-General of England, in the despatch dated 6 November, 1882, as precedent to such entry, be insisted upon.
3. That each of the Australasian Colonies, parties to this agreement, be accorded a separate voice in the affairs of the Union.
4. That each Colony continue the management and responsibility of its existing subsidized line, but that any other Colony using such line shall pay to the subsidizing Colony the full amount of the postage upon all postal matter despatched from such Colony; the subsidizing Colony paying all transit rates on homeward mails, and receiving the proportion of Union transit rates due on outward mails, and any contribution from England in respect of the postal matter carried by each line.
5. That if on annual investigation it be shown that, by adopting Postal Union rates, any such subsidizing Colony incurs a greater loss than it at present incurs (subject, in the case of New South Wales and New Zealand, to modification consequent upon the reduced Pacific Mail contract now being entered into), an adjustment shall be made of such excess loss whereby it shall be borne by the subsidizing Colony and the other Colonies using such line, in proportion to the postal matter carried.
6. That no future postal subsidy shall be subject to this agreement except by the unanimous approval of the Colonies assenting hereto.

Mr. MOREHEAD thereupon proposed the following amendment:—

“That this Conference is of opinion that the cost of the existing subsidized Colonial Mail Services and the proposed “Orient” service should be met by contributions from the Colonies making use of such services, and that the proportionate amount of such contributions be based upon the population of each Colony.”

The motion, “That the words proposed to be omitted stand part of the question,” was put from the Chair, and resulted in the following division:—

Ayes.	No.
New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania.	Queensland.

The Question that the resolutions, as submitted, be approved, was carried on the following division:—

Ayes.	No.
New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania.	Queensland.

Mr. WRIGHT then moved,—

“That, as regards telegrams passing between the Australasian Colonies and New Zealand, fifteen letters shall be allowed as the maximum length of each word, instead of ten letters as proposed by the Cable Company,”

which, after discussion, was agreed to.

Mr. WRIGHT laid before the Conference a copy of the Paris Postal Union Convention, which was ordered to be printed and appended to the papers.

The Conference then adjourned until to-morrow at half past 2 o'clock.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney,

11 MAY, 1883.

Present:—

<i>New South Wales:</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART. THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria:</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Queensland:</i>	THE HONORABLE BOYD D. MOREHEAD.
<i>Tasmania:</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at half-past 2 o'clock, the Minutes of the Proceedings of yesterday were read and confirmed.

Mr. PARSONS then moved an amendment in the motion of which he had given notice, on the subject of reduced rates for Press Messages by Cable; and the same having been put from the Chair, the following Resolution was unanimously agreed to:—

“That South Australia having intimated her willingness to reduce the charge on Press Telegrams for transmission by Cable by 25 per cent., this Conference is of opinion that the Indian and Indo-European Telegraph Departments, the Eastern Telegraph Company, and the Indo-European Telegraph Company should be requested to make a similar reduction.”

Mr.

Mr. PARSONS also moved the motion of which notice had been given, on the subject of adopting a system of Postal Notes, and the same having been amended, the following Resolution was agreed to :—

“That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that a system of Postal Notes not exceeding 10s. in value should be introduced, and have currency throughout the Australasian Colonies ; and that the South Australian Government be requested to prepare a Draft Bill on the subject.”

Mr. STUART laid before the Conference a communication from several of the leading Steam Companies and others, urging the establishment of a “Federal Quarantine,” and after mature deliberation, the Conference agreed to the following Resolution :—

“That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that such Quarantine Station should, if practicable, be established.”

The subject of reduced Intercolonial Telegraph Rates was then discussed, and the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania agreed to the following, viz. :—

	s.	d.
A message of ten words transmitted over the land lines of two Colonies	1	0
For each additional word	0	2
A message of ten words transmitted by the land lines of three Colonies	1	6
For each additional word	0	3

To be divided in equal shares between the Colonies performing the service.

Submarine cable charges additional in all cases where the cable is used.

The Conference then proceeded to consider a proposed new clause in the “Postal Union” Resolutions, affecting the carriage of postal matter by the Orient Steam Company, when the following Resolution was arrived at :—

“In the event of New South Wales concluding a contract with the Orient Company, it shall be at the risk of that Colony only ; but any other Colony transmitting postal matter thereby shall pay the said Company a rate not less than 10s. per pound on letters, and 6d. per pound on newspapers and packets transmitted homeward thereby.”

The Conference adjourned at a quarter to 6 o'clock, until to-morrow at 10 o'clock.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney.

12 MAY, 1883.

Present :—

<i>New South Wales :</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART.
	THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria :</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Tasmania :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having met at 10 o'clock, the Minutes of the Proceedings of yesterday were read and confirmed.

The following Resolutions with respect to the concurrence of New Zealand and Western Australia in the Postal Union Regulations were agreed to, viz. :—

“That the Chairman communicate the Resolutions affecting Postal Union to New Zealand and Western Australia by telegram, and urge their acceptance thereof.”

“That in the event of New Zealand refusing to accept the Resolutions, they shall remain valid on the part of the Colonies which have agreed thereto, unless the Imperial Government be unable to remove difficulties of carrying out the arrangement for the Pacific Service on a dual system without placing New South Wales in a worse position.”

Copy of Telegram.

“The Conference, except Queensland, has agreed to following Resolutions, and urges your acquiescence in them if possible by Tuesday morning, when final sitting held.

“Resolutions on other subjects shall be forwarded by post.”

The Conference then discussed a number of matters affecting the Colonies upon which information was considered desirable, but the subjects were not of such a character as to require action by the Conference.

The Conference adjourned until Tuesday, the 15th instant, at 10 o'clock.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

At the Executive Council Chambers, Sydney.

15 MAY, 1883.

Present :—

<i>New South Wales :</i>	THE HONORABLE ALEX. STUART.
	THE HONORABLE F. A. WRIGHT.
<i>Victoria :</i>	THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY.
<i>South Australia :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. L. PARSONS.
<i>Tasmania :</i>	THE HONORABLE J. S. DODDS.

The Conference having assembled at 10 o'clock, the Minutes of the Proceedings of the 12th instant were read and confirmed.

Mr. STUART laid before the Conference telegrams from the Governments of New Zealand and Western Australia on the subject of the Postal Union Regulations, which were ordered to be printed.

The Report of Messrs. Todd, Lambton, Jackson and Packer on the subject of Packet Regulations, was then brought up and ordered to be printed.

The Conference having had their attention drawn to the subject of Patent Laws, agreed to the following Resolution :—

“That this Conference considers it desirable that such a law should obtain throughout the Colonies, and requests the Chairman to communicate with the various Colonies with a view to some uniform mode of action being devised.”

The Report of Dr. Mackellar, Health Officer, Sydney, on the subject of a Federal Quarantine, was ordered to be printed.

Papers relating to child-desertion were laid before the Conference by Mr. BERRY, and ordered to be printed.

Mr. STUART informed the Conference that he had a communication from New Zealand on the subject of child-desertion; and Mr. PARSONS stated that the subject had engaged the attention of the South Australian Government.

The Conference then considered a number of matters affecting the Australasian Colonies, and expressed regret that the time at their disposal would not admit of that consideration which their importance demands.

The Conference then adjourned.

ALEX. C. BUDGE,
Secretary.

ALEX. STUART,
Chairman.

ALEX. STUART, }
F. A. WRIGHT, } New South Wales.

GRAHAM BERRY, Victoria.

J. L. PARSONS, South Australia.

JOHN S. DODDS, Tasmania.

POSTAL CONFERENCE, 1883.

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RESOLUTIONS TO WHICH THE CONFERENCE AGREED.

POSTAL UNION.

That this Conference, having had under its consideration the various despatches from the Imperial Government and other memoranda and statistics respecting the Universal Postal Union, is of opinion,—

1. That the Australasian Colonies should apply for admission to the said Postal Union.
2. That the stipulations suggested by the Postmaster-General of England, in the despatch dated 6 November, 1882, as precedent to such entry, be insisted upon.
3. That each of the Australasian Colonies, parties to this agreement, be accorded a separate voice in the affairs of the Union.
4. That each Colony continue the management and responsibility of its existing subsidized line, but that any other Colony using such line shall pay to the subsidizing Colony the full amount of the postage upon all postal matter despatched from such Colony; the subsidizing Colony paying all transit rates on homeward mails, and receiving the proportion of Union transit rates due on outward mails, and any contribution from England in respect of the postal matter carried by each line.
5. That if on annual investigation it be shown that, by adopting Postal Union rates, any such subsidizing Colony incurs a greater loss than it at present incurs (subject, in the case of New South Wales and New Zealand, to modification consequent upon the reduced Pacific Mail contract now being entered into), an adjustment shall be made of such excess loss whereby it shall be borne by the subsidizing Colony and the other Colonies using such line, in proportion to the postal matter carried.
6. In the event of New South Wales concluding a contract with the Orient Company, it shall be at the risk of that Colony only; but any other Colony transmitting postal matter thereby shall pay the said Company a rate not less than 10s. per pound on letters and 6d. per pound on newspapers and packets transmitted homeward thereby.
7. That no future postal subsidy shall be subject to this agreement except by the unanimous approval of the Colonies assenting hereto.

CABLE SUBSIDY.—POPULATION BASIS.

That the agreement of May, 1878, in regard to the apportionment between the Australasian Colonies of the subsidy to the Port Darwin Cable, on the basis of *population*, shall be taken to include in such calculation the aboriginal inhabitants of the respective Colonies.

CABLE INTERRUPTION.

That it is desirable the attention of the Cable Company should be called to their failure to carry out the contract, and to the recent interruptions in the cable, which, were the two cables maintained in working order, in terms of the agreement, would not occur, and that they be required to intimate at what time that portion of the agreement relating to the maintaining of two cables will be carried into effect.

GOVERNMENT MESSAGES OVER PORT DARWIN CABLE.

That, as regards Government messages transmitted over the Port Darwin Cable, the term "Government messages," in accordance with the cable agreement of May, 1879, shall apply to "messages sent from or to Her Majesty, Her Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for the Colonies, or any Government Department in the United Kingdom, or the respective Agent-General for the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, or any other Australasian Colony or Colonies as to which it shall be notified as hereinbefore mentioned, on the one hand, and the Governors, or Chief or Colonial Secretaries, of, or any Government Department of, the various Colonial Governments on the other, or any of them, on matters relating to the administration of the Governments." It being understood from the above clause that messages sent from or to any Department of the Public Service in Great Britain or the Colonies be considered "Government messages," and entitled to be transmitted at the reduced rates.

UNIFORM PACKET AND PARCEL POSTAL RATES.

That in the opinion of this Conference it is desirable that uniform packet and parcel postal rates and regulations should be adopted by all the Australasian Colonies, and that Messrs. Todd, C.M.G., Lambton, Jackson, and Packer, be requested to submit draft regulations.

NEW

NEW ZEALAND CABLE—NUMBER OF LETTERS IN A WORD.

That, as regards telegrams passing between the Australasian Colonies and New Zealand, fifteen letters shall be allowed as the maximum length of each word, instead of ten letters as proposed by the Cable Company.

REDUCTION OF CHARGES IN PRESS TELEGRAMS BY CABLE.

That South Australia having intimated her willingness to reduce the charge on Press Telegrams for transmission by Cable by 25 per cent., this Conference is of opinion that the Indian and Indo-European Telegraph Departments, the Eastern Telegraph Company, and the Indo-European Telegraph Company should be requested to make a similar reduction.

POSTAL NOTES.

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that a system of Postal Notes not exceeding 10s. in value should be introduced, and have currency throughout the Australasian Colonies; and that the South Australian Government be requested to prepare a Draft Bill on the subject.

“FEDERAL QUARANTINE.”

That, having had under consideration a communication from some of the leading Steam Companies and others, on the subject of “Federal Quarantine,” the Conference agreed to the following Resolution:—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is desirable that such Quarantine Station should, if practicable, be established.

INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPH RATES.

The Conference having considered the subject of reduction of Intercolonial Telegraph Rates, the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania agree to the following:—

	s.	d.
A message of ten words transmitted over the land lines of two Colonies ...	1	0
For each additional word ...	0	2
A message of ten words transmitted by the land lines of three Colonies ...	1	6
For each additional word ...	0	3

To be divided in equal shares between the Colonies performing the service.
Submarine cable charges additional in all cases where the cable is used.

TELEGRAM TO NEW ZEALAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

That the Chairman communicate the Resolutions affecting Postal Union to New Zealand and Western Australia by telegram, and urge their acceptance thereof.

That in the event of New Zealand refusing to accept the Resolutions, they shall remain valid on the part of the Colonies which have agreed thereto, unless the Imperial Government be unable to remove difficulties of carrying out the arrangement for the Pacific Service on a dual system without placing New South Wales in a worse position.

COPY OF TELEGRAM.

“The Conference, except Queensland, has agreed to following Resolutions, and urges your acquiescence in them if possible by Tuesday morning, when final sitting held.

“Resolutions on other subjects shall be forwarded by post.”

PATENT LAWS.

The Conference having had under consideration the question of an Intercolonial Patent Law to facilitate the securing of Patent rights and to lessen their cost, agreed to the following Resolution:—

That this Conference considers it desirable that such a law should obtain throughout the Colonies; and requests the Chairman to communicate with the various Colonies with a view to some uniform mode of action being devised.

ALEX. STUART,	} New South Wales.
F. A. WRIGHT,	
GRAHAM BERRY,	Victoria.
J. LANGDON PARSONS,	South Australia.
J. S. DODDS,	Tasmania.

POSTAL CONFERENCE, 1883.

(HELD IN SYDNEY, MAY, 1883.)

PAPERS LAID BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

1. Memorandum by the Honorable Graham Berry on Postal Union.
 2. Despatches, &c., on the subject of "Postal Union."
 3. Report by Permanent Officials accompanying the Delegates, on the subject of Postal Union.
 4. Report by Secretary, Post Office Department, Sydney.
 5. Letters from Chambers of Commerce of New South Wales and Victoria, on the subject of Postal and Telegraphic Rates.
 6. Letter from Steam Companies and others, Sydney, urging the establishment of a Federal Quarantine.
 7. Paris Postal Union Convention.
 8. Telegrams from Governments of New Zealand and Western Australia, on the subject of the Postal Union Regulations.
 9. Report of Messrs. Todd, Lambton, Jackson, and Packer, on the subject of Packet Regulations.
 10. Report of Dr. Mackellar, on the subject of Quarantine.
 11. Papers relating to child-desertion and absconding parents.
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POSTAL CONFERENCE—1883.

PAPERS LAID BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

MEMORANDUM BY THE HONORABLE GRAHAM BERRY, POSTMASTER-GENERAL OF VICTORIA.

THE Universal Postal Union has progressed year by year until nearly the whole civilized world is within its operations, the Australasian Colonies, the Cape of Good Hope, and Natal being the only important commercial people who still hold aloof. These exceptions will soon be reduced by the contemplated entrance of the Cape and Natal into the Union. Under the circumstances it is desirable, by a comprehensive consideration of the subject, to ascertain if the time has not arrived when steps should be taken to settle the terms upon which these Colonies can become an integral portion of this great postal confederation. For the purpose, therefore, of investigating the question, it may be advantageous to set forth, as succinctly as possible, the objects for which the Postal Union Convention appears to have been formulated, and the benefits sought to be secured.

I. It is designed to stimulate social and commercial intercourse and the establishment of closer relations and common interests between individuals of different nationalities, and in this respect it may be designated as beneficent and cosmopolitan in its character.

II. With a view to facilitate and promote this intercourse, it proposes not only that the best and most rapid means of conveyance shall be employed, but that the cost of such conveyance shall be reduced to the lowest possible limits, and that the postal charges on the correspondence shall be proportionately low, both transit rates and postal charges being subject to reduction from time to time, as circumstances may seem to demand.

III. It aims at establishing a common agreement between all nations in a matter of universal interest, which will form a not unimportant addition to international law, and can scarcely fail to secure many advantages to all civilized communities.

IV. It provides for the adoption, as far as practicable, of *uniform* rates and practice in dealing with correspondence, the consequent removal of anomalies in postal charges, and the prevention of inconveniences resulting from complicated regulations giving rise to complaints on the part of the public and trouble to the Post Offices.

V. It arranges not only for the interchange of letters at low rates, and of packets of all kinds, including patterns and samples of merchandise, but also of books and newspapers, thus encouraging the wide dissemination of knowledge, the influence of which it is hardly possible to over-estimate.

VI. It is capable of great development, and, in connection therewith, arrangements have already been made between many countries of the Union for exchange of international money orders, the transmission of articles of declared value, and the establishment of the Parcel Post system.

VII. It is almost needless to call attention to the fact that, for many years past, the general tendency of postal reforms throughout the world has been in the direction of those proposed by the Postal Union Treaty, which provides for the extension to all nations of principles previously having only a very limited operation.

With reference to the proposal that the Colonies should join the Union, difficulties have been suggested and objections raised, but upon careful examination they would scarcely appear to be insurmountable or of such weight as to justify an adverse decision being arrived at.

1. It has been urged that by far the largest portion of the foreign correspondence is with the United Kingdom, and as the Colonies can make any arrangements they desire with the Home Government, there is not sufficient inducement for them to enter the Postal Union in order to improve their postal relations with other countries, which are comparatively limited in extent.

With respect to this, it may be pointed out that it has not hitherto being found practicable to secure uniformity of rates and practice in these Colonies in regard to correspondence *for the United Kingdom*, and there seems little probability of obtaining it except by their entering the Union, and further that, by taking the proposed step, their right to make special agreements with the Imperial Government respecting the postages collected would not necessarily be interfered with.

It

It should also be borne in mind, in connection with correspondence for other countries, that the commercial relations of the Colonies with many places are of very recent growth, but they are capable of great expansion, and a postal reform, which could be obtained at small cost, would be an important factor in assisting their extension.

At the same time it must be remembered that all other countries have either joined, or are about to join, the Postal Union, and the Australian Colonies would occupy an invidious position should they determine to remain excluded from it, and this circumstance would doubtless tend to injure their prestige in the eyes of other communities.

2. It has been stated that the interests of the several Colonies are so conflicting as to present an insuperable obstacle to a reciprocal arrangement for maintenance of the sea services.

The difficulties, however, appear to have been greatly over-estimated. Ever since the Colonies have established mail lines of their own, each Colony which is not a party to the contracts has, in an indirect manner, by the payment of transit charges, assisted in maintaining them, the largest measure of support having been accorded to the Ceylon service, which has proved to be the most useful and beneficial of the existing lines, and it is proposed that this support shall be continued in such a way that the loss consequent upon reduction of the postage shall be borne in equitable proportions by the Colonies concerned.

For this purpose the following alternative plans are suggested:—

A.—Contribution towards the net loss under the contracts, according to the extent of correspondence conveyed.

B.—Payment of fixed transit rates as at present.

A.—According to the first scheme the Colonies would pay, at Union rates, all the charges for transit of homeward mails, and, in addition, contribute towards the net loss under the contracts in proportion to the extent of correspondence conveyed thereby.

For the computation of the respective contributions, the letter portion of the mails may be taken as representing with sufficient exactness the extent of the correspondence.

Taking as a basis the correspondence *via* Ceylon during 1882, it appears that Victoria sent and received about one-half of the letters, and would therefore bear about half the loss on the contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Company, the other Colonies defraying the remaining moiety. It has been calculated that the loss would be about £52,000 per annum, after deducting the value of the postages collected, and the receipts from all sources, including the amount of profit to the Imperial revenue which the Home Government proposes to pay over to Victoria.

On the basis referred to, the contributions would be—

Victoria	...	...	...	...	...	...	£26,000 per annum.
Other Colonies	...	...	...	...	...	...	£26,000 „

The net loss to other Colonies would, however, be less than the amount mentioned, as they would retain portion of the postage collected on the homeward mails after payment of the transit charges; and in the following statement will be found the estimated contribution to be paid by each of them, the postage retained, and the net loss:—

	Contribution.	Postage retained.	Net Loss.
New South Wales	£9,735	£1,550	£8,185
South Australia	7,235	820	6,415
New Zealand	4,200	230*	3,970
Tasmania	2,080	180*	1,900
Queensland	1,375	130*	1,245
Western Australia	1,375	260	1,115

In considering, however, the matter of loss, it should not be overlooked that the public would benefit by the reduction of the postal charges; and taking, as before, the correspondence during 1882, the gain to persons sending letters it is estimated would be—

Victoria	...	...	...	£3,000
New South Wales	...	...	...	3,250
South Australia	...	...	...	600
New Zealand	...	...	...	770
Tasmania	...	...	...	660
Queensland	...	...	...	580
Western Australia	...	...	...	170

The reduction in New South Wales, New Zealand, and Tasmania would be 3d. per letter and 1d. per paper; in Queensland, 4d. per letter and 1d. per paper; and in Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia, 1d. per letter.

Upon the establishment of uniform rates it is probably that an increased extent of correspondence would be sent *via* Ceylon by other Colonies, and the amounts to be contributed would be larger in proportion; but, under any circumstances, the largest share of the loss (say not less than two-fifths) would be paid by Victoria.

In regard to other contract services, contributions on the same basis would be paid to the Colonies maintaining them.

B.—For payment of transit rates, the following plan appears to be the simplest and most equitable:—

Non-contracting Colonies to pay the contracting Colony fixed transit rates (say 5d. per letter, or equivalent bulk rate, and 6d. per lb. of other articles) on both homeward and outward mails, the contracting Colony also receiving the proportion of sea rate for all outward mails carried by its service.

In consideration for these payments, the contracting Colony to convey mails to and from Ceylon, San Francisco, or Singapore, as the case may be, and to pay all the charges for conveyance to destination of the homeward correspondence carried by the service under its control.

So far as the Ceylon Service is concerned, the net loss to Victoria under the contract by this arrangement is estimated at £23,000 per annum, taking the returns for 1882 as the basis of the calculation.

The

* Calculating 1d. a letter for cost of conveyance of outward mails to Melbourne.

The net loss to Colonies accounting for transit rates to Victoria would be the amounts paid for conveyance of outward mails, and the gross cost and net loss to each Colony would be as follows :—

	Gross Cost.	Net Loss.
Victoria	£41,000	£23,000
New South Wales	13,865	8,210
South Australia	10,988	7,650
New Zealand	6,705	5,400
Tasmania	3,325	2,200
Queensland	2,025	1,330
Western Australia... ..	2,138	1,240

The saving to the public in consequence of reduction of the postage would be as before mentioned.

A large extent of correspondence would doubtless be sent *via* Ceylon upon establishment of reduced and uniform rates, but it is computed that under this scheme, as under the first plan suggested, Victoria would bear not less than two-fifths of the loss upon the contract.

If, however, contrary to expectation, it should be found that the increase of correspondence, and consequently in the amounts paid for carriage of mails, had become so large as to unduly decrease the Victorian share of the loss, the transit rates would be revised with a view to their reduction.

3. The circumstance mentioned in the circular despatch of the Right Honorable the Secretary of State for the Colonies, dated 13th December, 1882, may perhaps be assumed to constitute another objection; Lord Kimberley having brought under notice that the German Post Office has announced its intention to propose, at the Lisbon Postal Congress, to be held in 1884, a very considerable reduction in the rates for sea carriage and in the postal charges.

At the same time, however, he points out that the Australian Colonies, in order to avoid incurring a very heavy loss at the outset, could make their entry into the Union conditional upon the present rates being maintained, at least until after the next quinquennial Congress to that of 1884, by which time the conditions of maintenance of Australian mail services may undergo important modifications.

It is desirable, therefore, that the Colonies entering the Union should do so expressly coupled with the two stipulations suggested in the despatch, viz. :—

- (1.) That the rates of payment for sea transit and the surtaxes fixed by the convention of Paris shall not be reduced, at all events until after the next quinquennial Congress to that of Lisbon.
- (2.) That the Australian Colonies shall be directly and adequately represented at future Congresses.

This would admit of their rendering material assistance to the Imperial Government, in opposing radical changes likely to cause undue loss to the imperial and colonial revenue.

In any case the Colonies would have the power to withdraw from the Union, upon giving twelve months' notice, should they disapprove of any action proposed to be taken which they might regard as seriously detrimental to their interests.

Adverting further to the financial aspect of the case and the money loss which would be involved, attention should be specially directed to the fact that reduced postage leads to increased intercourse, and that, if the revenue should suffer to a slight extent, proportionate advantages would be secured to individuals, and especially to those who by their energy and enterprise are the most influential in developing the resources of the country and promoting its welfare.

In conclusion, it may be safely asserted that public opinion, as expressed by Chambers of Commerce in the chief Australian cities, and the Press of the Colonies generally, is strongly favourable to united action being taken in this matter without delay, and it would therefore be impolitic to defer any longer a settlement of the question.

GRAHAM BERRY,
Postmaster-General of Victoria.

DESPATCHES,

DESPATCHES, &c., ON THE SUBJECT OF POSTAL UNION.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies to His Excellency the Governor.

(Circular.)

Sir,

Downing-street, 20 December, 1880.

7th September,
1880, and
enclosures.
C.O. to Treasury.
23rd September.
Treasury, 23rd
October.
C.O. to Treasury,
13th November.
Treasury, 29th
November.

I have the honor to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Treasury, enclosing a copy of a correspondence between that Department and the General Post Office, with reference to the proposal to again bring under the consideration of the respective Governments of the Australasian Colonies the question of entering into the General Postal Union. I have also the honor to enclose a copy of the correspondence noted in the margin, which has since taken place with regard to the financial effect to those Colonies of their joining the Union under the arrangement proposed by the Postmaster-General.

2. Your Ministers will see by the letter from the Treasury, of the 29th of November, that the Lords Commissioners will not refuse to forego, during the term of the present Postal Contracts, in favour of the Colonies concerned, the thirty thousand pounds annual gain which it is estimated would accrue to the Imperial Exchequer by the change, such sum to be divided amongst the Colonies named, in the proportions suggested by the Postmaster-General in his report of the 25th of August.

3. I shall be glad to be favoured with the views of your Ministers on this subject at as early a period as may be convenient.

4. I also take this opportunity of transmitting to you a copy of a letter from the General Post Office, dated the 27th of September, enclosing a copy of a communication from Dr. Stephan, the Postmaster-General of Germany, urging that steps should be taken for bringing into the Postal Union the important British Colonies of Australasia and South Africa; and I have to add that a copy of this letter, and of its enclosure, has been communicated to the Governors of the South African Colonies, for the consideration of their respective Governments.

I have, &c.,
KIMBERLEY.

The Officer administering the Government of

7 Sept., 1880.

The Treasury to the Colonial Office.

No. 15,431.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 7 September, 1880.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit to you herewith, copies of the following correspondence upon the subject of the rates of postage upon Australian correspondence under the Postal Union, viz. :—

1. Post Office Report, dated the 30th April, 1880.
2. Treasury Reply thereto (8,165) dated 7th May, 1880.
3. Post Office Report, dated 25th June, 1880.
4. Treasury Reply thereto (11,520) dated 15th July, 1880.
5. Post Office Report, dated 25th August, 1880.

I am to request that you will move Lord Kimberley to favour my Lords with his opinion thereon.

The Under-Secretary for the Colonies.

I am, &c.,
R. R. W. LINGEN.

The Post Office to the Treasury.

No. 41,970.

My Lords,

General Post Office, 30 April, 1880.

The question whether the Australian Colonies should become members of the Universal Postal Union has, from time to time, formed the subject of correspondence between the Treasury, the Colonial Office, and this Department, but little progress has been made in the settlement of the question.

In a letter dated the 16th of January last, the Deputy Postmaster-General of Victoria requested information in respect to the effect which an entry of that Colony into the Union would have on the rates of postage to be collected, and on the sea rates to be accounted for by the Colonial Post Office on letters sent in transit through the United Kingdom.

It was found, however, difficult to furnish the particulars asked for, because it seems evident that, if the Australian Colonies enter the Union, the existing arrangements for sharing between the Mother Country and the Colonies respectively, the cost of the sea services, and for the appropriation of the postage collected on the correspondence exchanged, must be altogether modified and made conformable to the principles of the Union Treaty. I accordingly directed the Deputy Postmaster-General of Victoria to be answered that the points which he had raised would render a reference to your Lordships necessary, and that the subject would receive early consideration.

In bringing the matter before your Lordships, I beg leave to transmit a memorandum which I have caused to be prepared, showing to what extent the rates of postage on Australian correspondence of all kinds will require to be altered to correspond with Union principles, and the rates at which the charges for sea transit will, in the opinion of this Department, be accounted for after the entry of the Colonies into the Union.

Your Lordships will probably think it advisable to direct that a copy of this memorandum may be forwarded to the Governments of each of the Australian Colonies and of New Zealand, so that they may be fully aware of the effect of entering the Union before they come to any decision.

But you will, no doubt, cause to be intimated to the several Governments, at the same time, what arrangements you propose to substitute for the existing arrangements with regard to the aid to be rendered from Imperial Funds towards the cost incurred in maintaining the services subsidized by the Colonies.

I have, &c.,
JOHN MANNERS.

Memorandum

Memorandum showing the Changes which seem to be necessary in respect of the exchange of correspondence between the United Kingdom and other countries of the Universal Postal Union on the one side, and the Australian Colonies and New Zealand on the other, in the event of those Colonies entering the Union.

Assuming that the Australian Colonies and New Zealand become members of the Universal Postal Union, it seems to follow:—

1. That the arrangement made by the Treasury in April, 1879, as to the mode in which the sea conveyance of the mails between the United Kingdom and Australia, or New Zealand, should be performed, and as to the shares to be borne by the Mother Country and the Colonies respectively, in the cost of such conveyance, as well as the modification of that arrangement settled with Mr. Childers, M.P., in February last, should be considered at an end.
2. That, thenceforth, the exchange of mails between the Australian Colonies, or New Zealand, and the United Kingdom, or between the Australian Colonies, or New Zealand, and any other Union country, either direct or by way of the United Kingdom, should be strictly according to the principles laid down in the Union Treaty of Paris.

As between the Mother Country and the Colonies, therefore,—

The Imperial Post Office will retain the whole postage collected on the correspondence despatched from the United Kingdom, and the Colonial Post Offices will retain the whole postage collected on the correspondence despatched from the Colonies.

Mails between the United Kingdom and Australia or New Zealand.

The despatching office will defray the cost of the sea conveyance, as well as of the land transit of all mails which it despatches, and will be governed, in each case, by the stipulations of the Treaty of Paris, and by the arrangements made in conformity to those stipulations. Consequently, on the outward mails, *via* Brindisi, the Imperial Post Office will pay to France the special transit rates of 10 fr. per kilo. of letters and 50 c. per kilo. of printed papers or patterns, and to Italy the special transit rates of 6 fr. 50 c. per kilo. of letters and 37½ c. per kilo. of printed papers or patterns.

Outward mails *via* Brindisi.

The Imperial Post Office will then convey the mails from Brindisi to Alexandria, will pay the Egyptian Post Office the transit rates due for their conveyance across the Isthmus, and will again convey the mails from Suez to Ceylon or Singapore.

Outward mails *via* San Francisco.

The Imperial Post Office will further account to the Post Offices of Melbourne or Brisbane for the sea conveyance of the mails by the colonial packets. The rates to be paid for this conveyance will be calculated at the proportion of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers which the distance from Ceylon or Singapore to the place of destination bears to the whole distance travelled by sea. In the case of Melbourne, the distance to be performed by sea from Brindisi, *via* Alexandria, Suez, and Point de Galle, may be set down at 9,089 nautical miles, to which 22 miles must be added for the sea conveyance from Dover to Calais, or 9,111 miles in all. Of this, 4,289 miles is performed by the Imperial and 4,822 miles by the Colonial packets.

The proportion of the Union sea rates of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers, which would have to be accounted for by the Imperial to the Melbourne Post Office, would therefore be 7 fr. 94 c. per kilo. of letters and 53 c. per kilo. of printed papers, &c.

In the case of Brisbane, the distance to be performed by sea from Brindisi, *via* Alexandria, Suez, and Singapore, may be set down at 9,886 nautical miles; 22 miles must be added for the sea conveyance from Dover to Calais, or 9,908 miles in all.

Of this, 5,883 miles is performed by the Imperial and 4,025 miles by the Colonial Packets. The proportion of the Union sea rates of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers which would have to be accounted for by the Imperial to the Brisbane Post Office would therefore be 6 fr. 09 c. per kilo. of letters, and 41 c. per kilo. of printed papers, &c.

The Post Offices of Melbourne and Brisbane will convey the homeward mails *via* Brindisi, in the one case to Ceylon and in the other to Singapore, and will account to the Imperial Post Office—

Homeward mails *via* Brindisi.

1. For the proportion of sea postage due for the services performed by the Imperial Post Office in conveying the mails from Ceylon or Singapore to Suez, and from Alexandria to Brindisi, and from Calais to Dover, viz., 7 fr. 06 c. per kilo. of letters, and 47 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent from Melbourne, and 8 fr. 91 c. per kilo. of letters and 59 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent from Brisbane.
2. For the transit rates payable to Egypt for the territorial conveyance from Suez to Alexandria, say at the ordinary Union transit charges, 2 fr. per kilo. of letters and 25 c. per kilo. of printed papers.

The Post Offices of Melbourne and Brisbane will also account to the Italian and French Post Offices for the territorial transit rates payable for the conveyance of the mails from Brindisi to Calais by special services.

The Imperial Post Office will convey to New York the outward mails *via* San Francisco, and will pay to the United States Post Office the transit rates of 6 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 2 fr. per kilo. of printed papers, &c., due for their conveyance from New York to San Francisco.

Outward mails *via* San Francisco.

The Imperial Post Office will account to the Post Office of Sydney or Wellington for the sea conveyance of the mails by Colonial packet from San Francisco, at rates calculated according to the proportion of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers, which the distance from San Francisco to Sydney or Wellington bears to the distance from Liverpool to New York.

The distance from San Francisco to Sydney is 6,950 miles, and from San Francisco to Wellington 6,255 miles, and the distance from Liverpool to New York is 3,016 miles. The proportion of the Union sea rates of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers, which would have to be accounted for by the Imperial Post Office to the Colonial Post Offices would therefore be 10 fr. 46 c. per kilo. of letters, and 70 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent to New South Wales, and 10 fr. 12 c. per kilo. of letters and 67 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent to New Zealand.

The Post Offices of Sydney and Wellington will convey the homeward mails to San Francisco, and will account to the United States Post Office—

1. For the territorial transit rates due for the conveyance of the mails from San Francisco to New York.
2. Homeward mails *via* San Francisco.

2. For the proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance of the mails from New York to Liverpool, viz., 4 fr. 54 c. per kilo. of letters, and 30 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent from New South Wales, and 4 fr. 88 c. per kilo. of letters, and 33 c. per kilo. of printed papers sent from New Zealand.

Mails between Australia or New Zealand and Postal Union countries other than the United Kingdom.

The mails which are forwarded between the Australian Colonies or New Zealand and Union countries other than the United Kingdom may be classified as shown in the following table :—

	From.	By what route conveyed.	To.
1	Ceylon	Direct	Victoria.
2	Other Union countries in the East.....	Point de Galle and Melbourne	
3	Egypt.....	Point de Galle and Melbourne	
4	Italy, or other Union countries in Europe.....	Brindisi, Point de Galle, and Melbourne ..	
5	United States, or other Transatlantic Union countries.....	United Kingdom	
6	Straits Settlements	Direct	Queensland.
7	Other Union countries in the East.....	Singapore and Brisbane	
8	Egypt.....	Singapore and Brisbane	
9	Italy, or other Union countries in Europe ..	Brindisi, Singapore, and Brisbane	
10	United States or other Transatlantic Union countries.....	United Kingdom	
11	United States.....	Direct	New South Wales, or New Zealand.
12	Canada	United States	
13	Union countries in the Pacific	San Francisco	
14	Bermuda and Newfoundland	New York and San Francisco	
15	Union countries in the West Indies	New York and San Francisco	
16	United countries in Europe	United Kingdom	

* 1. The Ceylon Office will account to the Melbourne Office for the whole sea postage of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters, and one fr. per kilo. of printed papers sent to Melbourne, and the Melbourne Office will make no payment on the letters or papers sent to Ceylon.

2 and 3. The despatching office will account to the Melbourne office for the proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance from Point de Galle to Melbourne, and will account to the Imperial Post Office for the proportion due for the conveyance from the country of origin to Point de Galle.

In the opposite direction the Melbourne office will account to the Imperial Post Office for its proportion of the sea postage.

4. The despatching office will account to the Melbourne office for the proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance from Point de Galle to Melbourne.

In the opposite direction the Melbourne Office will account to the Imperial Post Office for its proportion of the sea postage as well as for the Egyptian transit rate, and will account to Italy for the Union territorial transit rates of 2 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 25 c. per kilo. of printed papers. But on all mails conveyed from Brindisi by the special services provided for the English overland mails, the higher special transit rates must be accounted for to Italy, and also to France if the mails are conveyed through France by the special services, as in the instance of mails for Belgium, Spain, Portugal, &c. To every Union country, other than Italy and France, through which a mail from Victoria may pass in transit, the Post Office of Melbourne must account for the Union transit rates of 2 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 25 c. per kilo. of printed papers.

5. The despatching office will provide for the conveyance of the mails to the United Kingdom, and will account to the Melbourne Office for its proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance of the mails from Point de Galle to Melbourne.

In the opposite direction, the Melbourne Office will account as on mails for the United Kingdom, but the amount of sea postage to be credited to the Imperial Post Office will be at a higher rate, because the proportion of sea service performed by Imperial mail packets will be increased to the extent of the distance between Liverpool and the Transatlantic country. The Melbourne Office will also account to the Imperial Post Office on these mails for the Union territorial transit rates for conveyance through Great Britain.

6. Same as No. 1, substituting "Brisbane" for "Melbourne," and "Singapore" for "Ceylon."

7 and 8. Same as Nos. 2 and 3, substituting "Brisbane" for "Melbourne," and "Singapore" for "Point de Galle."

9. Same as No. 4, substituting "Brisbane" for "Melbourne," and "Singapore" for "Point de Galle."

10. Same as No. 5, substituting "Brisbane" for "Melbourne," and "Singapore" for "Point de Galle."

11. Same as No. 1, substituting "United States" for "Ceylon," and "Sydney or New Zealand" for "Melbourne."

12. The Canadian Office will account to the Sydney or New Zealand Office for the whole of the sea postage of 15 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 1 fr. per kilo. of printed papers.

In the opposite direction the Sydney or New Zealand Office will make no payment to the Canadian Office, but will account to the United States Office for the ordinary Union territorial transit rates.

13. The despatching office will provide for the conveyance of the mails to San Francisco, and will account to the Sydney or New Zealand Office for its proportion of the sea postage due for the conveyance of the mails from San Francisco to Sydney or New Zealand.

In the opposite direction the Sydney or New Zealand Office will account to the United States Office for its proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance of mails to countries north of Panama, and will account to the United States and the Imperial Post Office respectively for their proportions of the sea postage due for the conveyance of mails to countries south of Panama.

14. The despatching office will provide for the conveyance of the mails to New York, will account to the United States Office for the territorial transit rate due for the conveyance from New York to San Francisco, and will account to the Sydney or New Zealand Office for its proportion of the sea postage.

In the opposite direction, the Sydney or New Zealand Office will account to the United States Office for the Union territorial transit rates, and for its proportion of the sea postage due for the conveyance of the mails from New York to Bermuda or Newfoundland.

15. The despatching office will provide for the conveyance to New York or to San Francisco, and will account to the Sydney or New Zealand Office for its proportion of the sea postage.

In the opposite direction the Sydney or New Zealand office will account to the United States Office for its proportion of sea postage.

If the mails are sent by land from San Francisco to New York, the Sydney or New Zealand Office will also account to the United States Office for the Union territorial transit rates.

And if the mails are sent by sea from San Francisco to Panama, the Sydney or New Zealand Office will account to the Imperial Post Office for its proportion of sea postage due for the conveyance from Colon to destination, as well as for the Columbian transit rates of 2 fr. 52 c. per kilo. of letters, and 92 c. per kilo. of printed papers payable for the conveyance of the mails across the Isthmus of Darien.

16. The despatching office will account to the Sydney or New Zealand Office for its proportion of sea postage.

In the opposite direction the Sydney or New Zealand Office will account to the United States Office for the territorial transit rates of 6 fr. per kilo. of letters, and 2 fr. per kilo. of printed papers for the service from San Francisco to New York, as well as for its proportion of sea postage for the service from New York to Liverpool.

The Sydney or New Zealand Office will account to the Imperial Office for the United territorial transit rates for the passage of the mails through Great Britain, and will account to every country on the Continent through which the mails may pass for like transit rates.

As the contract for the packet service from Point de Galle to Melbourne is made by the Government of Victoria alone, it will be necessary that the Governments of South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania should arrange with Victoria respecting the exchange of their mails with the United Kingdom or other Union countries.

Mails to or from South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania.

The ordinary Union rate of postage on letters is fixed by Article 5 of the Convention of Paris at 25 centimes (twopence halfpenny) per half ounce.

Union rates of postage.

Letters sent from one Australian Colony to another will be liable to this rate, unless any lower rate is now charged.

In the same article it is provided that, in cases where letters are subjected to the sea transit rate of 15 francs per kilo., a surcharge not exceeding 25 centimes may be levied in addition. This brings the maximum total rate chargeable in the Australian Colonies or New Zealand, on a paid letter addressed to the United Kingdom or any other postal Union country, to 50 centimes, or fivepence.

Another section of the same article authorizes the collection of and additional charge on letters conveyed by extraordinary services in the Union, such as those between Brindisi and Calais. But if the Australian Colonies and New Zealand adopt the maximum surcharge of 25 centimes and make their total rate 50 centimes, or 5d., on letters sent to Union countries generally, nothing can be collected on this head, because the condition on which the present reduced transit rates were granted by France and Italy was that no higher rate than 5d. per half-ounce should be collected on the letters sent in the British overland mails to or from Union countries.

The postage to be levied in the Australian Colonies or New Zealand on post-cards sent to Union countries generally will be 1½d. each, but on those which are sent to or through the United Kingdom, via Brindisi, the charge will be 2d. each.

Post-cards, news papers, and printed papers.

On newspapers a rate of 1d. each when addressed to Union countries generally will be chargeable; on those sent to or through the United Kingdom, via Brindisi, 1½d. each might be levied, but the Colonial Government will no doubt prefer to charge 1d. only.

On printed papers and patterns the charge will be 1d. per 2 ounces when addressed to Union countries generally, and 1½d. per 2 ounces when sent to or through the United Kingdom, via Brindisi.

General Post Office,
London, April, 1880.

No. 8,165/80. The Treasury to The Post Office.

Sir,
The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury have had before them Lord John Manners' letter of the 30th ultimo, on the question as to whether the Australian Colonies should become members of the Postal Union, and I am to request that their Lordships may be furnished with a statement in figures showing the financial effect of the detailed measures set forth in the printed Memorandum which accompanied that letter, as compared with present cost. My Lords wish, at the same time, to observe that the present postal arrangements with Victoria were only completed in February last.

Treasury Chambers, 7 May, 1880.

The Postmaster-General.

I am, &c.,
WM. LAW.

No. 234 F. The Post Office to The Treasury.

My Lords,
In conformity with the instructions given by your Lordships' letter of the 7th ultimo, No. 8,165, I have the honor to furnish, for your information, a statement in figures, showing the estimated financial effect upon the Imperial Revenue in the event of the Australasian Colonies entering the Postal Union under the terms of the Memorandum which was submitted to you by my predecessor's letter of the 30th of April last.

General Post Office, 25 June, 1880.

It will be seen that the present amount of revenue is estimated at £1,666 a-year, while the prospective revenue is calculated at £31,720; so that your Lordships, should you see fit, would have a balance of £30,054 to hand over to the Australian Colonies, in aid of their packet service, for such period as you may wish to compensate them for abolishing the arrangement which you have recently agreed to in their favour.

I have, &c.,
HENRY FAWCETT.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury.

STATEMENT showing the estimated financial effect upon the Imperial Revenue, in the event of the Australasian Colonies entering the Postal Union under the terms of the Post Office Memorandum of April, 1880.

Route.	Imperial share of the postage.			Effect upon the Imperial Revenue under proposed Union system.	
	Under present system.		Under proposed Union system.		
	Gain.	Loss.	Gain.	Gain.	Loss.
Via Brindisi	£ 8,238	£	£ 21,322	£ 13,084	£
Via San Francisco .....	.....	*9,050	8,295	17,345	.....
By private ship	2,478	.....	2,103	.....	375
Total	10,716	9,050	31,720	30,429	375

Net gain, £1,666.

Net gain to Imperial Revenue } £30,054.

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

GEO. CHETWYND,
Receiver and Accountant-General.

* This amount represents the present loss sustained by the United Kingdom, in consequence of the payment to the United States for transit services being in excess of the Imperial share of the postage.

The Treasury to The Post Office.

No. 11,520/80.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 15 July, 1880.

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury having had before them your further letter of the 25th June, 1880, enclosing a statement of the estimated financial effect of the extension of the Postal Union to the Australian Colonies, by which it appears that the net gain to the Imperial Government would be £30,054 a year instead of £1,666, I am desired to inform you, with reference to Lord John Manners' letter of 30th April last, that as the interests of the Public will be served by the Australian Colonies becoming Members of the Postal Union (thereby reducing the postage of a letter of half-an-ounce from 6d. to 2½d.), the Colonial Postal Authorities should be informed of the financial result, and be invited to say what they would propose in order to provide for their admission to the Postal Union.

The Postmaster-General.

I am, &c.,

WM. LAW.

Extract from a letter from the Post Office to the Treasury, dated 25 August, 1880,
No. 299 F.

"I HAVE had the honor to receive your letter of the 15th ultimo, No. 11,520, with reference to the Memorandum which my predecessor submitted to you on the 30th of April last, showing to what extent the rates of postage on Australian correspondence will require to be altered in the event of the Australian Colonies deciding to become Members of the Postal Union.

"Your Lordships appear to have misapprehended the extent to which the postage of a letter between this country and Australia would be reduced under the proposed arrangements. A reference to the memorandum will show that, upon such letters the rate will be 5d., not 2½d. per half-ounce. As mentioned in the memorandum, the ordinary Union rate for letters is 25 centimes, or 2½d.; but in cases where they are carried over long distances by sea (as in the case in point), a surcharge, not exceeding 25 centimes, may be levied in addition. This would bring the rate upon a letter sent from this country to Australia, or *vice versa*, to 50 centimes, or 5d.

"I have thought it necessary to make special mention of this error, as your Lordships evidently consider that the interests of the public will be served to a greater extent than is really the case, by the Australian Colonies becoming Members of the Postal Union.

"It is understood that the Government of Victoria has made a contract for the conveyance of its mails between Melbourne and Point de Galle for eight years, commencing on the 1st of February last, a period co-existent with the term for which this Department made its contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company for its India and China Mail Service, and I would propose that, for the remainder of such term, your Lordships should offer to make over to the Australian Colonies the sum of £30,000 a year conditionally upon their joining the Postal Union.

"This amount might be apportioned among the Colonies providing the packet service, as it is upon them will fall the loss, inasmuch as they will be obliged to carry the mails of other Colonies for the Union sea rates of 15 francs per kilogramme of letters and post cards, and 1 franc per kilogramme for all other articles. Should this plan be approved of, the proportions in which the £30,000 should be divided would be as follows, viz., £17,000 to New South Wales and New Zealand on account of the Mail Service between San Francisco and Sydney; £11,600 to Victoria on account of the service between Point de Galle and Melbourne; and £1,400 to Queensland on account of the service between Singapore and Brisbane.

"This apportionment will be found to be in agreement with the statement which accompanied my letter of the 25th of June last. That statement shows that about £17,000 is the gain on the San Francisco route, and about £13,000 on the Brindisi route, the latter gain being divisible between Victoria and Queensland, according to the extent of the correspondence.

"By this arrangement the Imperial revenue would be no better or worse off than it is now, while the Colonies, on their part, would not be deprived of the advantages lately assured to them, and would, at the same time, profit by the uniformity of postage rates throughout the civilized world, which would result from their adhesion to the Postal Union."

The Colonial Office to The Treasury.

Sir,

Downing-street, 23 September, 1880.

I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 7th instant (15,431), with reference to the proposal to again bring under the consideration of the respective Governments of the Australasian Colonies the question of entering into the General Postal Union, and I am to request that you will state to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury that Lord Kimberley would be glad to be furnished with a memorandum showing what will be the financial result to the Colonies concerned of their entering the Postal Union under the arrangement proposed by the Postmaster-General. His Lordship would also be glad to be informed how Tasmania would be affected, as that Colony has now to pay sea transit to and from Melbourne.

I am, &c.,

E. WINGFIELD.

The Secretary to the Treasury.

The Treasury to The Colonial Office.

No. 18,077.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 23 October, 1880.

I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to transmit to you herewith, with reference to Mr. Wingfield's letter of the 23rd ultimo, for the information of the Earl of Kimberley, a copy of a letter, dated the 18th instant, from the Postmaster-General, respecting the financial result to the Australian Colonies and Tasmania of joining the Postal Union.

I am, &c.,

WILLIAM LAW.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The

The Post Office to The Treasury.

No. 391 F.

My Lords,

General Post Office, 18 October, 1880.

I have the honor to return the enclosed letter referred to me by your Lordships, in which the Colonial Office asks for a memorandum showing what would be the financial result to the Australian Colonies and Tasmania of joining the Postal Union,

I have the honor to inform your Lordships that, according to an estimate made in this office, it is calculated that the Colonies in question, which under the present system receive postage to the amount of £92,404 a year, would, under the Union system, receive only £38,706 a year, being a loss of revenue to the extent of £53,698 a year. This loss would be reduced to £23,698 a year, if the estimated amount of the gain to this country, £30,000 a year, were handed over to the Colonies as proposed in my letter of the 25th August last, No. 299 F.

With reference to the question how Tasmania would be affected in regard to the sea conveyance of its correspondence to and from Melbourne, I presume that as the Colony of Victoria provides the sea service in this case, it would as a matter of course be entitled, under the Union Regulations, to claim on the correspondence conveyed by its packets, a part of the sea rates allowed for the whole of the distance (viz., 15 francs per kilogramme for letters and post-cards and 1 franc per kilogramme for other articles) proportionate to the mileage traversed by its packets, but the settlement of all claims for sea transit as between the various Australasian Colonies, as well as the apportionment of the total estimated loss above referred to, would no doubt depend upon mutual arrangements between the Colonial Governments providing the packet services and the Colonies making use of such services.

I am, &c.,

The Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury, &c., &c.

HENRY FAWCETT.

The Colonial Office to The Treasury.

Sir,

Downing-street, 13 November, 1880.

I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 23rd October, (18,077), enclosing a copy of a letter from the General Post Office respecting the financial result to the Australasian Colonies of joining the Postal Union; and I am to request that you will state to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, in reply to your letter of the 7th of September (15,431), that his Lordship concurs in the observations of the Postmaster-General contained in the 6th paragraph of his letter of the 25th of August, and will submit a proposal to the respective Governments of the Australasian Colonies to join the Union, if their Lordships are prepared to resign the estimated saving of £30,000 a-year in favour of those Colonies in the proportions suggested by the Postmaster-General,—an arrangement which his Lordship thinks likely to have an important bearing upon the decision of the Colonial Government.

I am to add that Lord Kimberley would propose to transmit a copy of the correspondence for the consideration of the Colonies concerned.

I am, &c.,

The Secretary to the Treasury.

R. G. W. HERBERT.

The Treasury to The Colonial Office.

89586.

Sir,

Treasury Chambers, 29 November, 1880.

In reply to your letter of the 13th instant, respecting the proposed entry of the Australian Colonies into the Postal Union, I am directed by the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to state that, in the event of these Colonies joining the Union, my Lords will not refuse to forego in their favour, during the term of the present contracts, the £30,000 annual gain, which it is estimated will accrue to the Imperial Exchequer by the change, such sum to be divided among the Colonies in the proportion suggested by the Postmaster-General in his report of the 25th August last.

I am to add that my Lords see no objection to the several Colonial Governments being furnished with so much of the correspondence which has passed on this subject as is necessary to show the various results which will follow if the Colonies join the Union.

I am, &c.,

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office.

F. CAVENDISH.

The General Post Office to The Colonial Office.

No. 370 F.

Sir,

General Post Office, London, 27 September, 1880.

Referring to my letter of the 31st March, 1877, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to request that you will be good enough to lay before Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies the enclosed copy of a letter from Dr. Stephan, the Postmaster-General of Germany, once more urging that steps should be taken for bringing into the Postal Union the important British Colonies of Australasia and South Africa.

Dr. Stephan points out that since the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, of the 1st of June, 1878, there has been a considerable accession of British Colonies and Foreign Countries into the Universal Postal Union, and that in a short time it will comprehend almost all civilized nations with the exception of Australia and the South African Colonies.

In the hope that some solution may be found of the difficulties which have hitherto prevented the Australian and South African Colonies coming into the Union System, Dr. Stephan has made a proposal that the delegates of Great Britain and Germany, who will shortly meet at a Postal Conference in Paris, should be instructed to discuss the question; but Mr. Fawcett has informed him that the matter in no way depends upon this department, and that the decision must rest with the Colonies themselves.

At

At the same time Mr. Fawcett has undertaken to lay Dr. Stephan's letter before the Earl of Kimberley, with a request that he will bring it to the notice of the Colonies concerned, and I am to request that you will move his Lordship accordingly to forward a copy of it to each of the Colonial Governments.

I am, &c.,

ALGERNON TURNER.

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

The Postmaster-General, Berlin, to The Postmaster-General, London.

Sir,

Berlin, W., 12 September, 1880.

Since the conclusion of the Treaty of Paris, 1st June, 1878, the number of the countries belonging to the Universal Postal Union has increased considerably. There have joined the said Union in the meantime :—

1. The following British Colonies : The Bahama Islands, British Honduras, Newfoundland, the Gold Coast, Gambia, Lagos, Sierra Leone, the Falkland Islands, Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Kitts, the Virgin Islands.

2. Bulgaria.

3. The Republic of Liberia.

4. The Republic of Honduras.

5. Venezuela.

6. Uruguay.

7. Ecuador.

Moreover, the entrance of the Republic of San Domingo into the Union is to occur on the 1st of October next, and that of the Republic of Hayti will take place on the 1st of April, 1881, consequently the Universal Postal Union will soon comprehend *almost all civilized nations of the Globe*, with the sole exception of *Australia* and the *South African Colonies*, which as yet are not members of the Union. Regarding the great advantages, however, which have resulted from the foundation of the Universal Postal Union for the countries partaking in it, and which have been welcomed and gladly approved by the public in all the spheres of life, there can be no doubt that the entrance of the said British Colonies into the Union would be highly desirable for the population of the countries concerned. Apart from the interests of general civilization, this measure would also be most recommendable from an economical point of view, as I need not explain further, because this side of the question falls into the dominion of your Excellency's special scientific researches, and will have met already with your full appreciation. I feel convinced, from the same reason, that your Excellency will fully value the injury inflicted upon the important commercial interests of those Colonies and the Mother Country, if their mutual correspondence, this potent and indispensable lever of civilization and commercial intercourse, is subject continually to more unfavourable conditions than that of other adjoining countries. I beg to refer in this respect, for instance, to the concessions made to the correspondence between Europe and the Dutch possessions in East India, especially the Sunda Islands, owing to these islands being members of the Universal Union. Though the injury done to a steady and complete development of the commercial and industrial relations by the state of things now existing with regard to Australia and the Cape Colony, is not to be seen in its full extent from the beginning, it becomes, according to experience, very evident in the course of time. Nay, I think, and I believe to meet with your agreement in this regard, that it may become impossible to amend at all the neglects of this kind (unless they are of a very transitory character) as the commercial traffic is notoriously not easily diverted from the course which it has once taken.

On the other hand, I underrate by no means the many difficulties which may have hitherto hindered the solution of this question in consequence of the present condition of the Colonial Legislation.

Perhaps it might contribute to a promotion of this affair, if an oral discussion about it would take place between the delegates of either administration, who will meet on the Postal Conference in Paris, in October next. If your Excellency should think this way expedient, I beg you will kindly furnish the delegates of your Department for the said Conference with instructions as to the object in view, while I, in case of your assent to my proposal, will provide the delegates of this office with the necessary orders for that purpose.

Your Excellency will permit me to give expression to my confidence that your Excellency, whose energetic endeavours are directed towards the improvement and higher development of the postal and telegraph services in their several branches, will find the means to bring this question, now already in suspense since some years, to a successful conclusion, and will remove thereby a state of things, which as I feel sure is considered by your Excellency too as abnormal at present.

I am, &c.,

DR. STEPHAN.

To His Excellency the Postmaster-General,
H. Fawcett, Esq., London,

Circular.

Sir,

Downing-street, 13 December, 1882.

I have the honor to transmit to you, for your information and guidance, and for communication to your Ministers, a copy of a letter from the Postmaster-General, drawing attention to certain proposed alterations in the rates for sea service fixed by the Postal Union, and to the conditions upon which, if at all, the South African and Australian Colonies might offer to join the Union.

I have, &c.,

KIMBERLEY.

The Officer administering the Government of
New South Wales.

6 November,
1883.

The

Sir,

The Postmaster-General understands that there is every probability of the South African Colonies of the Cape and Natal applying for admission next year to the Postal Union, and that the calculations upon which the new contracts between those Colonies and the two Companies conveying the mails between this Country and South Africa have been framed are based upon the tariffs of the Convention of Paris, at present regulating the affairs of the Union.

This proposal is to reduce the rates payable by one Country to another for the conveyance of Mails over distance of more than 300 miles by sea,

from	{ 15 francs a kilogramme for Letters and Post-cards,
	and
	{ 1 franc a kilogramme for other articles,
to	{ 5 francs a kilogramme for Letters and Post-cards,
	and
	{ 50 centimes a kilogramme for other articles,

If this proposal were actually brought before the Lisbon Congress, there is little doubt that it would be carried, seeing that the large majority of the countries of the Postal Union have no interest in maintaining, but a strong interest in lowering, the present rates for sea transit; and the same majority, having obtained a reduced sea transit rate, would be in a position to lower their postage without loss; whereas this country and France, by whom in the main the sea service of the world is at present performed, would lose enormously on both sides of the reduction.

The Cape Colony and Natal are, in their degree, equally interested in opposing the German scheme ; and, now that the British Colonies are beginning to support the Mail Packet Services of their own, the question becomes one of large Colonial, as well as Imperial concern.

Mr. Fawcett thinks it would be wise therefore if, when the application is made, it were coupled with two stipulations:—

- (1.) That the rates of payment for sea transit, and the surtaxes, fixed by the Convention of Paris, shall not be reduced, at all events until after the next quinquennial Congress to that of 1884, and
- (2.) That the South African group of Colonies shall have a separate voice in the affairs of the Postal Union.

A similar preference will probably apply to the Australasian Colonies if they decided to apply for admission to the Union; and the present opportunity may fitly serve to point out that the success of the German scheme would upset the whole of the calculations connected with the question of their adherence, just as it would those relating to the adherence of the Cape and Natal.

I am, &c.,
S. A. BLACKWOOD.

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

REPORT OF PERMANENT HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS, ACCOMPANYING THE DELEGATES.

In compliance with instructions contained in a Resolution of the Honorable the Ministers, Delegates to the Postal Union Conference, we beg to annex the following Returns:—

1. Showing estimated amounts of contribution and loss by each of the Australasian Colonies, under arrangement (A) proposed in Mr. Berry's memorandum based upon the weight of letters carried in 1882.
2. Showing estimated amounts of contribution and loss by each of the Australasian Colonies under the alternative proposal (B).
3. Showing estimated amounts of contribution by each of the Australasian Colonies under proposed arrangement (A) based upon the population of each Colony in 1881.
4. Showing the position of each Colony under present arrangements as compared with their position under the foregoing proposals.

We have experienced some difficulty in obtaining all the statistics required to furnish fully and accurately the information requested, especially with reference to mails by the Torres Straits route; but after the most careful investigation it was in our power to make, the figures supplied will, we believe, be found approximately correct.

It is, however, necessary to point out that the returns being based upon the weight of mails despatched and received during 1882, when varying rates were collected—9d., 8d., and 6d.—for transmission of letters by the same route, afford no satisfactory indication of the extent to which the respective routes would be availed of were differential rates abolished, which, in the interests of the general public, we consider to be in the highest degree desirable.

No return has been prepared of the contribution and loss based upon the population of the several Colonies under the proposed arrangement B, as this provides for the payment by the non-contracting Colonies of fixed transit rates to the Colonies maintaining the services, the latter paying all Union transit charges.

We may perhaps be permitted to observe that, while contributions based on population would be a fair arrangement if the three mail routes were equally serviceable for postal purposes to all the Colonies, it is otherwise in the present case; for instance, on the population basis, South Australia, which makes little or no use of the Torres Straits route, would have to pay a larger amount towards that service than Queensland.

We deem it our duty also to bring under notice the fact that the London Office, regarding the existing arrangement for the division of postage between the United Kingdom and the Australasian Colonies as unnecessarily complicated and inconvenient, has notified, in a Despatch addressed to the Government of Victoria, its intention to cancel the present agreement, and substitute an arrangement of a much more simple character.

According to the present plan, Victoria and Queensland retain the whole of the homeward letter postage, and pay half the packet and newspaper postage to the United Kingdom.

On the outward mails the United Kingdom accounts to Victoria and Queensland for 2½d. per letter, and retains the whole of the postage on packets and newspapers, defraying the cost of transit across the continent of Europe both ways.

Other Colonies retain the whole of the postage on homeward letters, packets, and newspapers, and are credited on outward mails with two-thirds of the letter postage (4d.), and about half the postage on other articles, Victoria (or Queensland, as the case may be), repaying to Great Britain the difference between the amounts credited to and retained by Victoria (or Queensland), and the other Colonies respectively.

Colonies maintaining the 8d. rate *viâ* Brindisi are charged the cost of homeward transit through Europe, and the amount is paid over to Victoria (or Queensland).

On mails sent *viâ* San Francisco the Colonies retain the whole of the postage they collect, and the United Kingdom credits them with two-thirds of the British postage on letters and half the postage on packets and newspapers.

The non-contracting Colonies pay to those maintaining the several services the following rates on all mails carried in both directions:—

Letters ...	...	...	...	...	...	1s. 7d. per oz.
Packets...	...	...	...	...	...	1s. 6d. per lb.
Newspapers	...	...	...	...	...	0s. 6d. „

except in the case of South Australia, which pays Victoria for mails *viâ* Ceylon:—

Letters ...	...	...	...	...	...	1s. 4d. per oz.
Packets...	...	...	...	...	...	1s. 0d. per lb.
Newspapers	...	...	...	...	...	0s. 6d. „

It is now proposed by the London Office—

- (a) That the Colonies should retain the whole of the postage collected on homeward correspondence.
- (b) That on the outward mails the United Kingdom should account to all the Colonies alike for 2d. per letter only, keeping the balance of the letter postage on packets and newspapers, and defraying the cost of European transit both ways.

We

We have thought it desirable to refer to this, as should it be decided not to join the Union, the adoption of the London proposal would entail additional loss upon most of the Colonies.

It may be further mentioned, that so far as we have been able to ascertain from a close examination of the accompanying statistics, the *increased* loss that would be sustained by joining the Union over and above that incurred under present arrangements on account of steam postal communication with Europe (the cost being now much below that which has been borne during many years past) would be somewhat considerable, but in compensation for this immediate loss, the public would derive the benefit of a cheaper and uniform rate of postage.

Although it is distinctly laid down in the memorandum from the London Office, dated April, 1880, already before the Conference, that no higher rate than 5d. can be collected, a doubt has been raised, which is strengthened by the tenor of a published communication dated 17th July, 1881, from Dr. Stephan, the Postmaster-General of Germany, addressed to the Melbourne Office—as to whether under the Paris Convention it would not be possible to charge 6d. on letters to and from Australasia. If, therefore, the loss of a certain amount of revenue should be regarded as a serious obstacle to these Colonies joining the Union, this question might be determined by telegraphing to London for the decision of the International Bureau of the Postal Union at Berne. Extract appended.

Should it be ascertained that the sixpenny rate could still be retained, the loss to each Colony would be reduced by nearly one-sixth.

As bearing upon the question of rates and transit charges, the suggestion of Mr. Fawcett that if the Colonies enter the Union they should, in view of the proposition of Germany to reduce the rates for sea conveyance, insist as a preliminary upon adequate representation at future Congresses, will no doubt receive the due consideration of the Delegates.

We venture to add, as the result of our long experience in postal matters, that reduced uniform charges would tend very speedily to increase the correspondence to such an extent as to make up any temporary loss that might be sustained, apart from other direct and indirect advantages which, we think, would certainly be secured.

S. H. LAMBTON,
Secretary, Post Office Department, New South Wales.

CHARLES TODD,
Postmaster-General, South Australia.

T. W. JACKSON,
Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.

J. E. PACKER,
Ministerial Secretary, Tasmania.

Sydney, 7th May, 1883.

(*Extract referred to from letter of Dr. Stephan.*)

From another statement in the same report I see that, in your opinion, a rate of 6d. might be maintained after the entrance of Australia into the Universal Postal Union on letters conveyed by Brindisi; but that on letters conveyed by San Francisco or by steamers not under contract only a rate of 5d. would be allowed, and you apprehend that an essential abatement of postal revenue might result from the introduction of the last-mentioned rate of 5d. I beg to intimate, however, that in regard of the rates on letters conveyed by San Francisco or by steamers not under contract, there seems to be a mistake in the interpretation of the regulations of the Paris Convention on your hand; for Art. 5 of the said convention prescribes:—

“Il peut être perçu, en sus des taxes et des minima fixés par les paragraphes précédents:—

“2do. Pour tout objet transporté par des services dépendant d'administrations étrangères à l'Union, ou par des services extraordinaires dans l'Union, donnant lieu à des frais spéciaux, une surtaxe en rapport avec ces frais”;

Or in English—

“There may be raised, in addition to the taxes and the minima fixed by the preceding clauses:—

“2do. On every object of correspondence conveyed by any service dependent on administrations beyond the Union, or by any extraordinary service within the Union causing special expenses; a rate proportionate to these expenses.”

Besides it is stipulated in Art. III of the detailed regulations for the execution of the Convention of Paris:—

“Les services extraordinaires de l'Union, donnant lieu à des frais spéciaux dont la fixation est réservée par l'article 4 de la convention à des arrangements entre les administrations intéressées, sont exclusivement:—

“1o. Ceux qui sont entretenues pour le transport territorial accéléré de la Malle dite des Indes ;
“2do. Celui que l'administration des Postes des Etats-Unis d'Amérique entretient sur son territoire pour le transport des dépêches closes entre l'Océan Atlantique et l'Océan Pacifique”;

Or in English—

“The extraordinary services within the Union causing special expenses, the fixation of which is reserved under Article 4 of the treaty to an understanding between the administrations concerned, are exclusively the following :—

“1o. The service maintained for the speedier territorial conveyance of the so-called Indian Mail (Brindisi) ;

“2o. The service maintained by the United States of America on their territory for the transport of closed mails between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans (San Francisco).”

From the stipulations quoted above there can be no doubt that, on all letters originating in Australia and conveyed by Brindisi or San Francisco, whether by vessels under contract or not under contract, an extra rate for the extraordinary service in addition to the rate of 5d., or a total fee of 6d., may be raised on each single letter.

I should be very glad if this circumstance would contribute to accelerate the entrance of the Australian Colonies into the Union. At all events, it will be desirable for the Colonies to be already represented at the next Postal Congress, which is to take place at Lisbon in 1884, for, in that case, they would be in the position to watch themselves their interests in that assembly.

No. 1.

RETURN showing estimated annual amounts of Contribution and Loss or Gain by each of the Australasian Colonies under the proposed arrangement (A) for entering the Postal Union, based upon the weight of letters transmitted in 1882.

Colony.	Ceylon.		San Francisco.		Torres Straits.		Remarks.
	Contribution.	Loss.	Contribution.	Loss or Gain.	Contribution.	Loss.	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Victoria	44,800	26,800*	586	314 gain	304	285	* In the net loss to Victoria, on the Ceylon service, no account is taken of the sums paid by that Colony for premiums on arrival of mails in less than contract time, which payments during the last three years amounted to £4,100.
New South Wales	9,735	8,185	8,060	4,651	672	630	
South Australia	7,235	6,415	139	14.	64	60	
New Zealand.....	4,200	3,970	14,634	4,182	176	165	
Tasmania	2,080	1,900	48	12 gain	112	105	
Queensland	1,375	1,245	203	47 gain	47,996	45,590	
Western Australia	1,375	1,115	10	7 gain	176	165	

No. 2.

RETURN showing estimated annual amounts of Contribution and Loss by each of the Australasian Colonies under proposed Arrangement (B) for entering the Postal Union, based upon the weight of letters transmitted in 1882.

Colony.	Ceylon.		San Francisco.		Torres Straits.		Remarks.
	Contribution.	Loss.	Contribution.	Loss.	Contribution.	Loss.	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Victoria	41,000	23,000	2,689	1,646	200	187	
New South Wales	13,365	8,210	7,524	3,024	312	292	
South Australia	10,988	7,650	691	526	29	27	
New Zealand.....	6,705	5,400	11,734	2,554	82	77	
Tasmania	3,325	2,200	257	169	52	49	
Queensland	2,025	1,330	867	517	51,743	46,291	
Western Australia	2,138	1,240	49	31	82	77	

No. 3.

RETURN showing annual contributions to net cost of Mail Service on the basis of population.

Contributions of the several Colonies towards the estimated net cost of the £52,000 in connection with Ceylon Service, apportioned on the basis of population would be as follows :—

Colony.	Population.	Annual Contributions.
		£ s. d.
Victoria.....	882,232 = 0·3114	16,192 16 0
New South Wales	781,265 = ·2757	14,336 8 0
South Australia	293,297 = ·1035	5,382 0 0
New Zealand	500,910 = ·1768	9,193 12 0
Tasmania	118,923 = ·0420	2,184 0 0
Queensland	226,968 = ·0801	4,165 4 0
Western Australia	30,013 = ·0105	546 0 0
	2,833,608 = 1·0000	52,000 0 0

But

But in consideration of the fact that Victoria sends and receives one-half of the whole mail matter forwarded *via* Ceylon, Mr. Berry proposes that that Colony shall pay one moiety of the net loss, or £26,000. The remaining moiety, therefore, would be apportioned amongst the other Colonies, taking population as the basis of calculation, as follows :—

Colony.	Population.	Annual Contributions.
New South Wales	781,265 = 0·4003	£ s. d. 10,407 16 0
South Australia	293,297 = 0·1503	3,907 16 0
New Zealand	500,910 = 0·2567	6,674 4 0
Tasmania	118,923 = 0·0610	1,586 0 0
Queensland	226,968 = 0·1163	3,023 16 0
Western Australia	30,013 = 0·0154	400 8 0
	1,951,376 = 1·0000	26,000 0 0

The net cost of the service *via* San Francisco, under the new contract, will be about £10,000 per annum, which, apportioned amongst the different Colonies on the basis of population, would make the respective contributions as under :—

	£ s. d.
Victoria.....	3,114 0 0
New South Wales	2,757 0 0
South Australia	1,035 0 0
New Zealand	1,768 0 0
Tasmania	420 0 0
Queensland	801 0 0
Western Australia	105 0 0
	10,000 0 0

Contributions towards net loss on the Torres Straits' Service (taken at £47,000 per annum) calculated on the basis of population :—

	£ s. d.
Victoria.....	14,636 0 0
New South Wales	12,958 0 0
South Australia	4,865 0 0
New Zealand	8,310 0 0
Tasmania	1,974 0 0
Queensland	3,764 0 0
Western Australia	493 0 0
	£47,000 0 0

No. 4.

RETURN showing estimated loss or gain to each Colony under present arrangements and under arrangements A and B, and on the basis of population.

Colony.	Present arrangements.				Arrangement A.				Arrangement B.				Contribution on population basis.				Present arrangements under existing 'Frisco' contract.				
	Via Ceylon.	Via 'Frisco. (new contract.)	Via Torres Straits.	Total.	Via Ceylon.	Via 'Frisco.	Via Torres Straits.	Total.	Via Ceylon.	Via 'Frisco.	Via Torres Straits.	Total.	Via Ceylon.	Via 'Frisco.	Via Torres Straits.	Totals.	Via Ceylon.	Via 'Frisco.	Via Torres Straits.	Total.	
Victoria	£ 15,600	£ 1,864	£ 29	£ 17,493	£ 26,800	£ 314 gain	£ 285	£ 26,771	£ 23,000	£ 1,646	£ 187	£ 24,833	£ 16,192 26,000	£ 3,114	£ 14,636	£ 33,942	£ 43,750	£ 15,000	£ 1,864	£ 29	£ 16,893
N. S. Wales ...	*4,237	2,652 } net gain	27	1,612	8,185 4,651 }	630	13,466	8,210	3,024	292	11,526	14,336 10,407 }	2,757	12,958	30,051	26,122	*4,237	20,232	27	24,496	
S. Australia ...	1,663	421 }	6	2,090	6,415 14 }	60	6,489	7,650	526	27	8,203	5,382 3,907 }	1,035	4,865	11,282	9,807	1,663	421	6	2,090	
New Zealand...	*3,364	†6,000 } net gain	16	2,620	3,970 4,182 }	165	8,317	5,400	2,554	77	8,031	9,193 6,674 }	1,768	8,310	19,271	16,752	*3,364	†3,700 net gain	16	320 }	
Tasmania ...	1,070	200 }	10	1,280	1,900 12 }	105	1,993	2,200	169	49	2,418	2,184 1,586 }	420	1,974	4,578	3,980	1,070	200 }	10	1,280 }	
Queensland ...	1,244	600 }	44,500	46,344	1,245 47 gain	45,590	46,788	1,330	517	46,291	48,188	4,165 3,023 }	801	3,764	8,730	7,588	1,244	600	44,500	46,344	
W. Australia...	950	30 }	16	996	1,115 7 gain	165	1,273	1,240	31	77	1,348	546 400 }	105	493	1,144	998	950	30 }	16	996 }	

* Exclusive of cost of conveyance to and from Melbourne.
† Exclusive of interprovincial services, mail agents, &c., £7,400.

REPORT OF SECRETARY, POST OFFICE, SYDNEY.

In view of the Conference to be held next month in Sydney, it may be useful both to the Postmaster-General and as a matter of record for future reference to give the following summary, showing the steps taken from time to time to secure the entry of the Australasian Colonies into the Universal Postal Union.

The question of joining the Union was first brought under the notice of the Colonies in a despatch of the Secretary of State, dated 11th December, 1874, enclosing copy of the Convention itself, and of the Regulations—as signed at Berne on the 9th October previously. This despatch, however, not only contained no special invitation to the Australasian Colonies to join, but hinted that the Home Government would regard a reconsideration of the proportions of the charge for packet services borne by the Imperial and Colonial Exchequers as a necessary preliminary to their sanctioning such a step, which would entail considerable diminution of the receipts of the Post Office. No action therefore was taken upon this, beyond making a rough calculation of its effect upon our present postal arrangements, the result showing that we should only be able to levy a postage of 4½d. per half-ounce; whilst, in the case of the Suez line, having to pay Victoria 6d., and in the case of San Francisco line having to pay a very heavy subsidy; and it was therefore considered that too great a loss would be sustained if we were at present to join.

The matter was next brought under notice by a despatch from the Secretary of State, dated 1st June, 1875, transmitting a copy of the Treaty, as ratified at Berne, whereupon the then Postmaster-General, Mr. Burns, asked for the approximate loss of revenue this Colony would have to bear if it joined the Treaty. It was estimated that the total loss involved would be not less than *£4,000 a year in addition to that already sustained in maintaining the ocean mail services.

The matter was next brought under the attention of the Government by a despatch from the Secretary of State, dated the 1st April, 1876, giving a quantity of detailed information with reference to the Union; but no action was called for from this Colony.

In March, 1877, another despatch was received from the Secretary of State, enclosing amongst other things a copy of the modified Convention signed at Berne on the 27th January, to come into operation on the 1st July following, which modified arrangement was designed to admit into the Union British India, and the French Colonies, who had apparently stood out for the same reason that was operating with the Australasian Colonies, namely, the maintenance at great cost of extensive ocean mail services. This arrangement permitted the countries named, and others which might be disposed to join the Union, to retain the usual rate of 6d. per ½ ounce on letters, 2d. per 4 ounces on newspapers, and 1d. an ounce on packets, in addition to which, a rate could be charged to cover the cost of European and Continental transit.

While this despatch was under consideration a further one from the Secretary of State, dated the 25th May, 1877, came to hand, enclosing correspondence with the Berlin Post Office, in which the latter submitted the desirability of all British Colonies joining the Union before the meeting of the Congress appointed to take place in Paris in 1878. The Postmaster-General of Berlin had been made aware of the difficulties in connection with the Colonies joining, but took exception to this view, contending that postal subsidies were granted as much in the general interests of trade and commerce as for postal purposes, and therefore suggesting that the Colonies who had hitherto abstained from joining the Union should be invited to reconsider their decision. Looking at the probability of all foreign countries seeking admission to the Union, the Colonies, rather than stand alone, would he thought be prepared to make some financial sacrifices for the sake of promoting the great advantage which would result from the universal character of the system. This despatch seems to have aroused the attention of the Postal authorities of several of the Colonies besides ourselves, and a suggestion emanated from this office that the question of Australasia joining the Union should be discussed at a conference of departmental officers, as the arrangements of the Union involved matters of complicated detail, and as the Conference at Berne was conducted by similar officers. Several of the Colonies had intimated their acquiescence to fall in with this suggestion, but a change of Ministry having occurred at the close of the year (1877) the proposed arrangement was not completed; and in March of the following year (1878) it was ultimately decided, in view of the fact that an Intercolonial Conference was shortly to be held, to postpone further consideration until that time, the then Postmaster-General, Mr. Burns, expressing an opinion that as the terms on which the Colonies could enter the Union had been so much relaxed in favour of the Colonies he was disposed to recommend that we should join. No definite agreement was come to, however, at this Conference, which, it may be said, was one ostensibly for dealing with another question, and was held at Melbourne, and subsequently continued in New Zealand.

Although the Postmaster-General of Berlin has been most indefatigable in pressing on the Post Office of this Colony, and, presumably, of the other Australasian Colonies, the great advantages of joining the Union, and has written several times on the subject, no further action of a decided character was taken until July, 1879, when, at the instance of this Department, the various Australasian Colonies were informed that the Postmaster-General was then prepared to recommend that this Colony should join the Union, it being at that time understood that we should be able not only to charge the existing postage rates (*i.e.*, the 6d. rate), with extra rates for special Continental transit, but that the other Colonies would be at liberty to continue their existing arrangements for the use of each other's subsidized mail services, *i.e.*, paying them the equivalents for the full rates of 6d. per ½ oz. for letters, 1d. for newspapers, and 1d. an ounce for packets. In the telegram inviting the concurrence of the Colonies it was suggested by us that they should simply acquiesce, and leave it to the Imperial Government to arrange the date on which the whole of the Colonies could join, and, on this intimation having been made to the Imperial Government, that a conference of departmental officers might then take place to arrange details. The proposal met with general approval by the Colonies, some of them, however, proposing that the Conference should precede the intimation to London of our acquiescence, and suggesting that we should further stipulate for continuance of the then existing arrangements with the Imperial Government, by which the Colonies were allowed ½ths of the postage on letters, ¾ths of that on packets, and half that on newspapers

* This did not include, as hereafter explained, any loss that might result from the Colonies having to convey the mails of other Colonies at Union rates, as at that time it was supposed that existing arrangements could be continued.

† The equivalents are—Letters, 1s. 7d. per oz.; packets, 1s. 6d. per lb; newspapers 6d. per lb.

uniform 5d. rate would tend to encourage correspondence, and hence that some portion of the loss of postage owing to the reduced rate would be recouped by the additional number of letters posted; but the question of a reduction of postage to a lower rate than 6d. seems nevertheless deserving of careful consideration, in view of the responsibility undertaken by the Australasian Colonies in maintaining almost at their own cost three Ocean Mail Services.

This appears the proper place to remark that Victoria, who has during the past two years been moving somewhat energetically towards inducing the Colonies to join the Union, distinctly stipulates that the Colonies joining should share the loss it (Victoria) sustains on its present Galle contract, or, in other words, that they share the subsidy with Victoria in proportion to the use they make of the line—Victoria, of course, offering to do the same with regard to the contracts of her neighbours. (The Victorian Government put forward the claim of their Galle line as one that should be generally supported by the Australasian Colonies, as they argue it is maintained exclusively for postal purposes, and is undeniably the most expeditious contract mail line.) The effect of this, however, would be that in addition to our subsidy *via* San Francisco we should have to pay to Victoria in aid of her Galle line a sum of about £8,000 or £9,000 a year, whilst what we should get from Victoria as her contribution to the San Francisco line would be, under the present subsidy, about £1,800, or, under the reduced subsidy, very much less; in fact, it would be almost infinitesimal. The correspondence published in the Victorian Report of 1881 (extract herewith) goes very fully into this matter from the Melbourne point of view, and its perusal in connection with this paper would be useful.

This paper might properly conclude with a brief statement of the advantages of joining the Union:—

1. The establishment by the civilized nations of the world of what is termed a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of correspondence between their Post Offices.
2. The establishment as nearly as possible of uniform rates of postage and regulations, while recognizing the claims of countries providing special services to payments for the same.
3. The utilization of the means provided by other countries of the Union, both by sea and land, for their mail purposes, at the lowest possible scale of charges.

Under the second head might be mentioned a variety of detailed regulations framed for the purpose of securing improved postal facilities, such as the reduction of the registration fee; securing acknowledgments of receipt from the persons to whom letters are registered; optional prepayment of letters; compensation to a certain extent for loss of money transmitted by post; providing uniform regulations for the transmission of book, sample, and other packets; and perhaps the most desirable advantage is that any country in the Union has the option of sending a delegate to the periodical conferences which are held, when any suggestions for the improvement of postal administration coming from him or the Department he represents would receive consideration, thus, as it were, enabling each country of the Union to get the benefit of the ideas of the other civilized parts of the world.

While alluding to the establishment of an International Bureau in connection with the Universal Postal Union, from which is to be disseminated all the postal knowledge acquired in conducting the postal business under the Union, it is right to remark that hitherto the complimentary copies of documents have been furnished to this Department printed in French; and it would perhaps be well, if the Colonies agree to enter the Union, to suggest that, as the operations of the Union extend over an immense territory of the English-speaking community, these documents should be authoritatively published in English as well as in French.

The despatch recently received from the London Post Office will not be overlooked. It is in reference to the proposal to be made at the Congress at Lisbon in 1884, by the German Postmaster-General, to reduce the sea transit rate for distances over 300 miles. The London Post Office strongly advises that any Colonies contemplating joining the Union should object to do so if any reduction of the kind were made, as such reduction would detrimentally affect England and her Colonies, who to a very much greater extent than any other countries provide the cost of sea transit.

With regard to the principal stipulation under which Victoria proposed, in 1881, that the Colonies should join the Union, viz., that the various Colonies using the line should share the net loss sustained by Victoria in the maintenance of the Suez Mail Service—our share of such loss being computed by them at £8,860 per annum,—it may be right to mention that, owing to the increased use this Colony seems to have made of the Victorian line, the net cost to us last year was about £4,700, showing that an agreement to the proposed Victorian terms would really only entail an additional burden upon this Colony of about £4,100 per annum, which, if we joined the Union, would, as far as can be estimated, represent the net cost of our Ocean Mail Services, as the Imperial Government would, in the manner already described, make up the loss consequent on the different arrangements to be made for the division of their postage; whilst the smaller cost at which the San Francisco contract is proposed to be renewed would leave little expense in connection with that service, and any contract with the Orient Company would doubtless also provide against any actual loss.

13/4/83.

S. H. LAMBTON.

(Extract from the Report of the Postmaster-General of Victoria for the year 1881.)

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

In the report for 1880 reference was made to the origin and design of the Universal Postal Union, and to the several International Postal Conventions entered into at Berne in 1874 and 1876, and at Paris in 1878.

The probable financial effect of the entry of Victoria into the Union was also indicated, but it should be explained that, in the correspondence which took place with the Imperial Post Office upon the subject during 1880 and preceding years, it was stated that, if the Australian Colonies joined the Postal Union, the 6d. rate *via* Brindisi might be maintained, also that there would be no necessity to disturb existing arrangements with the United Kingdom for division of the postage collected, and the observations then made were based upon this supposition.

In March, 1881, however, a communication was received, through the Secretary of State for the Colonies, from the Postmaster-General, proposing an entirely new arrangement, full particulars of which will be found in the Appendix.

From this correspondence it will be seen that the highest rate of postage that could be charged on letters sent *via* Brindisi would be 5d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. letter, also that payment for transmission of the mails would

These amounts, however, would not be absolute, but would be regulated by the extent of correspondence each year.

The Colonies would, of course, in like manner pay their shares of the net cost of the San Francisco and Torres Straits Services upon the same basis, that is to say, according to the extent to which they are used respectively for postal purposes.

As the Australian Colonies are almost the only places of importance not included in the Universal Postal Union (which now comprises even the petty states of South America), there can be little doubt that, considering the recognized position they have attained, they will be obliged sooner or later to notify their adhesion to the Postal Union Convention, notwithstanding that some loss of revenue must necessarily accrue whenever that step may be taken: and if some such arrangement as that above indicated were agreed to, it is thought that the advantages to the public of a uniform and reduced rate of postage would fully compensate for the additional loss incurred, which, it may be assumed, would be subject to a gradual reduction by the increased extent of correspondence that would naturally result from the establishment of lower postal charges.

In connection with the Postal Union question, however, it is necessary to consider not only how postage rates and arrangements would be affected in regard to correspondence transmitted between Australia and the United Kingdom and foreign countries, with which the despatch alone deals, but also what alteration would have to be made in the rates of postage on correspondence interchanged between the Colonies themselves. In the event of the rules of the Paris Convention of 1878 being strictly adhered to, there would be no necessity to reduce the postage on letters and newspapers, which is already as low as that fixed by the treaty, but the postage on intercolonial packets could not exceed $\frac{1}{4}$ d. per 2-oz.—one-fourth of the present rate.

If this reduction were confined to packets despatched to other Colonies, the loss of revenue would not be material, but the inland packet postage, being double the above rate, would have to be reduced also, in order to avoid the anomaly of a higher rate being charged on packets posted for delivery within the Colony than would be collected on intercolonial packets.

It would not be desirable for the Colony at present to incur the considerable loss of revenue which would be involved, especially as no public demand exists for the establishment of such extremely low rates, and it is not improbable that a similar objection would be raised by the neighbouring Colonies.

If, therefore, the Colonies should decide to enter the Postal Union, some arrangement should be made either for maintenance of existing rates of packet postage or such modification as might be mutually deemed advisable. There would not appear to be any ground for objection to this course, as it would not be a matter affecting the Union generally, and Article 15 of the Paris Treaty expressly provides that "the present Convention does not restrict the right of the contracting parties . . . to maintain and establish more restricted unions."

The Postmaster-General begs to recommend that the foregoing proposals be communicated to the several Colonial Governments, and their concurrence invited therein, so as to admit of all the Australian Colonies joining the Postal Union at an early date, and that they may be no longer excluded from participation in a comprehensive postal scheme which, by establishing reduced and uniform rates of postage, could not fail to be of advantage to the public, and would tend largely to promote the extension of social and commercial intercourse between the several communities of Australasia and all other parts of the civilized world.

G. D. LANGRIDGE,
Acting Postmaster-General.

Post Office and Telegraph Department,
Melbourne, 19th May, 1881.

Up to the present time only two replies have been received, viz., from the Governments of Western Australia and of Queensland, the former of whom has notified its approval of the proposed arrangement; but the Government of Queensland, who has recently adopted a scheme of postal charges directly opposite in character to the principles laid down in the Postal Union Convention, has declined to entertain the proposal.

In order, therefore, to bring the matter again under the consideration of the several Colonial Governments, with a view to ascertain whether any other plan could be suggested which might meet with general acceptance, the following memorandum has been addressed to the Honorable the Premier:—

Memorandum for the Honorable the Premier.

The memorandum of the late Acting Postmaster-General, dated the 19th May, 1881 (copy attached), containing proposals with a view to admit of the Australian Colonies participating in the advantages of the International Postal Union, having failed to produce any satisfactory result, the Postmaster-General is induced to revert to the subject from a conviction of its great importance as affecting the position of these Colonies in their relation to other countries, and having a material bearing upon the interests and convenience of the public generally.

A copy of the above-mentioned memorandum, embodying the views of the Government, was transmitted by the Chief Secretary to each of the neighbouring Colonies, with a request to be favoured with any suggestions for promoting prompt and united action in the matter referred to.

No replies have been received from New South Wales or South Australia. New Zealand forwarded an acknowledgment only. Tasmania acknowledged receipt of the communication, with the promise of early and careful consideration. Queensland replied that it would be inadvisable for that Colony to acquiesce in the propositions submitted. Western Australia answered, stating that the proposals were deemed fair and reasonable, and expressing willingness to enter the Union if the other Australian Colonies were prepared to do so.

The following is an extract from a letter dated the 12th August last, received from the General Post Office, London:—
"The Postmaster-General has received through the Colonial Office, a copy of the memorandum, dated 19th May last, which you have drawn up on the subject of the proposed entry of the Australian Colonies into the Universal Postal Union, under the conditions of the Convention of Paris of the 1st June, 1878. Mr. Fawcett has read your remarks with interest, and he hopes that the step taken by the Government of Victoria, in addressing proposals to the other Australian Governments, with the view to concerted action, will prove successful. He quite agrees with you in the opinion that the matter is one which requires concurrent action on the part of the several Governments, as it would be almost impossible to adopt the measure partially in Australasia."

Regarding it as most undesirable that this question should be allowed to remain as it is in abeyance, the Postmaster-General begs to urge that the Governments of the neighbouring Colonies be again communicated with, in the hope that some equitable means may be devised for removing the difficulties hitherto preventing the conjoint action necessary to bring about the inclusion of Australia in the Universal Postal Union, which is designed, by the adoption of reduced and uniform rates on international correspondence of every kind, to ensure more free and extended communication with other parts of the world.

If there is any question upon which all the Colonies of Australasia should be able cordially to agree, it is one such as that under consideration, viz., the means of facilitating intercourse with distant countries, and especially the populous cities of the Northern Hemisphere.

In order to provide in the best possible manner for this necessity, Victoria has undertaken the pecuniary liability of an eight years' contract for a fortnightly mail service to and from Ceylon connecting with Europe and the East, which is being performed with unprecedented expedition and regularity; and, while all the Colonies to a greater or less extent share the advantages it affords, Victoria sustains an annual loss amounting in 1880 to over £18,000.

It is taken for granted that the other Colonies would not expect Victoria to carry their correspondence at the extremely low Union rates without repayment in some shape of at least a portion of the difference between those rates and the present transit charges, otherwise they would derive a substantial profit by the change at the expense of this Colony, which is, however, as already intimated, prepared to bear a largely increased loss in order to secure to the general public the benefits proffered by the Postal Union.

It may be urged that New South Wales, New Zealand, and Queensland have also entered into contracts on account of which heavy pecuniary obligations have been incurred, but neither the San Francisco nor the Torres Straits line can be regarded as postal services established for the benefit of all the Colonies in the same light as the Galle contract, the first-mentioned being advantageous chiefly for correspondence addressed to the United States of America, Canada, the West Indies, &c., and the second for correspondence to the Indian Archipelago, China, &c., mails for Europe not being transmissible by either route so frequently or expeditiously as *via* Galle and Brindisi.

Moreover, in both cases the contracts were designed to serve in a subsidiary degree other objects, such as the extension of commercial relations with America in one instance, and conveyance of immigrants at a low rate by a direct line from England in the other.

It is also pointed out that the cost of the San Francisco contract (which will terminate within two years of the present time) is divided between the two wealthy Colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand, and the Torres Straits contract, under which the steamers call at the Northern Ports of Queensland, has been entered into in the interests of that Colony alone.

Victoria, however, while expecting that a special payment will be made for mails carried by the Galle contract steamers computed according to the extent of correspondence so transmitted, likewise proposes to make a precisely similar allowance—calculated on the same basis—to the other Colonies, for Victorian correspondence conveyed by their contract steamers.

From the foregoing it will appear that the chief, if not indeed the only, obstacle to the Australian Colonies joining the Union is the financial loss that would be occasioned to their respective revenues.

It should, however, be borne in mind that an immediate and appreciable gain would result to the individual members of the community in the reduced rates of postage they would have to pay; and, apart from this, it is a point worthy of consideration whether the direct and indirect benefits that may be expected to follow would not far more than counterbalance the additional expenditure entailed.

The value of increased postal facilities with all other parts of the civilized world cannot be determined by a mere monetary standard; and Australia has now attained to such a recognized status that, whatever extra outlay within fair and reasonable limits may be involved, this should no longer be a bar in the case of any one of the Colonies to incorporation in the Universal Postal Union, now embracing almost every other British possession, every country of Europe, the United States of America, Canada, India, Persia, Japan, the minor states of Central and South America, and it has lately been notified that even the Sandwich Islands have been added to the list.

The Home Government has evinced an earnest desire to assist in bringing about a settlement of this matter; and in the despatch forwarded in December last it is intimated that, as upon these Colonies joining the Union an annual gain of about £30,000 would accrue to the Imperial Exchequer, the Lords of the Treasury will consent to forego during the term of the present postal contracts their claim to this amount, which it is proposed to divide among the Colonies providing the branch sea services; and it may confidently be assumed that a similar disposition will be manifested by the neighbouring Colonies in dealing with this aspect of the case so far as it may affect their interests respectively. There will then be no doubt of a mutual and satisfactory agreement being speedily arrived at.

Upon a careful review of the proposals contained in Mr. Langridge's memorandum, and the reasons given in support of them, the Postmaster-General is of opinion that they offer a fair solution of the difficulties surrounding this question.

Victoria does not desire to be relieved in any way whatever of her responsibility with regard to the Galle contract, or hesitate to pay her due proportion of its cost, but most reasonably proposes that, in addition to the Union rates to be paid for the sea transit during the currency of existing contracts, a contribution shall also be paid by the several Colonies as at present according to the extent of correspondence forwarded by each mail route.

If the other Governments deem it advisable to enter the Union, and are prepared, as a first step, to notify such a desire, upon their submitting any modification of the suggested arrangement, or any other plan which they may think preferable, the same would receive due consideration.

Failing this, the Postmaster-General can only further suggest that a Conference be held of representatives of the Postal Departments, who might meet to discuss the matter fully, and submit a report embodying some practicable scheme for accomplishing this important object, in which the people of all the Colonies are equally concerned.

HENRY BOLTON,
Postmaster-General.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Melbourne, 5th December, 1881.

It may be added there can be little doubt that the Governments of the contracting Colonies for the San Francisco and Torres Straits Services are apprehensive that if the same or nearly the same rates of postage were charged for correspondence *via* Brindisi as by the other mail routes, a very large portion of their homeward correspondence would be forwarded *via* Galle, by which route mails can be transmitted to and from any part of Australia more expeditiously than *via* San Francisco or *via* Torres Straits; and doubtless this furnishes an explanation of the failure hitherto to obtain the concurrence of the Colonies generally in some mutual arrangement respecting the contract mail services which would admit of their entry into the Postal Union.

When, however, it is clearly understood that Victoria does not desire in any way to be relieved of her full and fair measure of responsibility in connection with the Galle Service, and is prepared to pay a due proportion of whatever loss may be incurred, it is hoped that the Australian Colonies may at an early date be induced to assent to some arrangement which would permit them without delay to enter the Universal Postal Union, and so obtain for the public of Australia generally the advantages of reduced and uniform rates of postage upon correspondence sent to and from all parts of the world.

The interest taken in this subject by foreign administrations is shown by the following letters received from Dr. Stephan, the Postmaster-General of Berlin, the originator of the Postal Union system, and also from another of the heads of the Post Office Department of the German Empire.

Der Staatssecretair des Kaiserlich Deutschen Reichs-Postamts,
Berlin, W., the 17 July, 1881.

Sir,

From a press telegram just received, I see that you have been entrusted with the important office of Postmaster-General to the Colony of Victoria. In offering you my sincerest congratulations on that account, I beg to express a hope that the relations between our administrations may develop satisfactorily.

To promote this end nothing would be more conducive, in my opinion, but the accession of the Colony of Victoria, together with the other Australian Colonies, to the Universal Postal Union. I was, therefore, very glad to learn from the printed copy of the "Report upon the affairs of the Post Office and Telegraph Department for the year 1880," that the question regarding the entrance of the Australian Colonies into the Universal Postal Union has been carefully considered already by the offices concerned, and that the Post Office Department of Victoria, especially, is fully alive to the substantial benefits that would result from the territory of the Colony being included among the States participating in the comprehensive scheme, offered by the Convention of Paris, for facilitating commercial and social intercourse between all civilized communities. Nor was the information less gratifying that efforts have already been made to bring about a reduced and uniform charge on correspondence for foreign parts, in order to prepare the way for the accomplishment of this end at no distant day; and that, although loss of postal revenue perhaps to a large amount would be involved by entering the Union, it is not to be expected from the recognized position the Colonies of Australasia have attained, that they will long allow any mere monetary consideration to exclude them from an international arrangement promising so many immediate and prospective advantages.

In perusing the afore-mentioned report, I find that the rates of postage which will be chargeable in accordance with the Convention of Paris of the 1st June, 1878, on behalf of the Australian Colonies, are stated perfectly correct as follows:—

On Letters.....	5d. per half-ounce,
Post-cards	1½d. each,
Newspapers.....	2d. per four ounces,
Book-packets	1d. per two ounces,
Patterns	1d. per two ounces,
Legal and Commercial Papers	2½d. for four ounces; every additional two ounces, 1d.,
Registration fee	5d.,

to which the Brindisi transit charges may be added.

From another statement in the same report I see that in your opinion a rate of 6d. might be maintained after the entrance of Australia into the Universal Postal Union on letters conveyed by Brindisi; but that on letters conveyed by San Francisco, or by steamers not under contract, only a rate of 5d. would be allowed, and you apprehend that an essential abatement of postal revenue might result from the introduction of the last-mentioned rate of 5d. I beg to intimate, however, that

that in regard of the rates on letters conveyed by San Francisco or by steamers not under contract, there seems to be a mistake in the interpretation of the regulations of the Paris Convention on your hand; for Art. 5 of the said convention prescribes:—

“Il peut être perçu, en sus des taxes et des minima fixés par les paragraphes précédents :—

“2do. Pour tout objet transporté par des services dépendant d'administrations étrangères à l'Union, ou *par des services extraordinaires dans l'Union, donnant lieu à des frais spéciaux*, une surtaxe en rapport avec ces frais”;

Or in English—

“There may be raised, in addition to the taxes and the minima fixed by the preceding clauses :—

“2do. On every object of correspondence conveyed by any service dependent on administrations beyond the Union, or by any extraordinary service within the Union causing special expenses, a rate proportionate to these expenses.” Besides, it is stipulated in Art. III of the detailed regulations for the execution of the Convention of Paris :—

“*Les services extraordinaires de l'Union, donnant lieu à des frais spéciaux*, dont la fixation est réservée par l'article 4 de la convention à des arrangements entre les administrations intéressées, sont exclusivement :—

“1o. Ceux qui sont entretenues pour le transport territorial accéléré de la Malle dite des Indes ;

“2do. Celui que l'administration des Postes des Etats-Unis d'Amérique entretient sur son territoire pour le transport des dépêches closes entre l'Océan Atlantique et l'Océan Pacifique”;

Or in English—

“The extraordinary services within the Union causing special expenses, the fixation of which is reserved under Article 4 of the treaty to an understanding between the administrations concerned, are exclusively the following :—

“1o. The service maintained for the speedier territorial conveyance of the so-called Indian Mail (Brindisi) ;

“2do. The service maintained by the United States of America on their territory for the transport of closed mails between the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans (San Francisco).”

From the stipulations quoted above, there can be no doubt that on all letters originating in Australia and conveyed by Brindisi or San Francisco, whether by vessels under contract or not under contract, an extra rate for the extraordinary service in addition to the rate of 5d., or a total fee of 6d. may be raised on each single letter.

I should be very glad if this circumstance would contribute to accelerate the entrance of the Australian Colonies into the Union. At all events, it will be desirable for the Colonies to be already represented at the next Postal Congress, which is to take place at Lisbon in 1884, for, in that case, they would be in the position to watch themselves their interests in that assembly.

Finally, I beg to invite your attention to the circumstance that the sphere of action of the Universal Postal Union has been essentially extended by the Convention for the exchange of ordinary parcels up to the weight of three kilogrammes inclusive, concluded at Paris on 3rd November last, a copy of which is here enclosed.

There is no doubt that the advantages produced by this Convention will particularly benefit the countries beyond the sea.

I feel convinced that you would render a great service to your country if you should succeed in accomplishing by your energy and skill the accession of the Australian Colonies to the Universal Postal Union.

Henry Bolton, Esq., Postmaster-General,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

I have, &c.,
DR. STEPHAN.

Kaiserlich Deutsches Reichs-Postamt,
Berlin, W., the 4th March, 1882.

Sir,
I beg to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of one copy of the Annual Report upon the affairs of the Post Office and Telegraph Department under your management for the year 1880, which accompanied your letter dated the 30th December last, No. 1306.

I have been very glad to see from this Report that your Department is fully appreciating the many benefits that would result from the entry of the Colony into the Universal Postal Union, and that it is with lively interest that the efforts are watched here which are made by your Administration to overcome the difficulties opposing such a measure as yet. I sincerely hope that these endeavours will meet with full and speedy success.

To the Postmaster-General,
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia.

I have, &c.,
For the Post Office Department of the German Empire,
DAMBACH.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

FURTHER suggestions of the Postmaster-General of Victoria relative to the admission of the Australian Colonies to the Universal Postal Union.

Memorandum for the Honorable the Chief Secretary.

Adverting to previous correspondence upon the subject of the Universal Postal Union, the Postmaster-General begs to draw attention to the fact that no definite answer has yet been returned to Lord Kimberley's despatch, dated 20th October, 1880, with enclosures, from the Imperial Treasury and Post Office Departments, relative to the Australian Colonies joining the Union, and dealing generally with this important question.

On receipt of the above despatch, this Department, regarding the matter as one that demanded prompt attention, caused a communication, dated 19th May, 1881, to be addressed to the Government of each of the neighbouring Colonies, whose concurrent action is deemed essential, submitting a proposal whereby, with due regard to existing contract obligations, the several Colonies might at once enter the Union, and thus secure to these communities the undoubted benefits derivable therefrom.

No favourable replies having been received from any of the Colonies except Western Australia, a further communication, dated 5th December, 1881, was forwarded, requesting that consideration should be given to the subject, and inviting the other Governments to submit any modification of the suggested arrangement, or any other plan for accomplishing so desirable an object, in which the people of all the Colonies are equally concerned; but up to the present time the proposals of this Government have not been attended with any satisfactory result.

The Postmaster-General, believing that the importance of this question is not generally recognized, or that the difficulties in dealing with it are over-estimated, is induced to request that the Governments of the neighbouring Colonies may be again asked to unite with Victoria in a reciprocal arrangement to admit of their joining the Union with as little delay as possible.

All past experience proves that the imposition of high rates of postage, by restricting commercial and social intercourse, is detrimental to the public welfare, and it is therefore in accordance with the spirit and tendency of the age to reduce and simplify these rates as much as possible; but the present excessive and anomalous charges on foreign correspondence must, in a very special manner, affect injuriously the Colonies of Australasia, whose interests demand the amplest facilities of communication with other parts of the world, and more particularly with the thickly populated countries of continental Europe, from which such extensive emigration to newer lands annually takes place.

Owing,

Owing, however, to the complete ignorance commonly prevailing among the masses of the people respecting Australia and its resources, comparatively few—instead of many who would otherwise, by their skill and industry, add materially to the growth and progress of these Colonies—find their way hither; and even with the better informed the maintenance of the high rates of postage levied here on correspondence addressed to foreign countries, and in foreign countries on letters, &c., addressed to Australia, as compared with the rates prevailing throughout the whole extent of the Postal Union, must have a deterrent effect, and induce the inference that, in other things as in this respect, these communities are not actuated by the progressive spirit of the time.

The longer continuance of high and irregular rates of postage on letters, &c., to and from Europe is the more to be regretted from the fact that, consequent upon the International Exhibitions recently held in Sydney and Melbourne, and at other places where the Colonies have been represented, attention has been called in a more prominent manner than ever before to the favourable prospects they present for settlement and trading enterprise; and it is probably owing to this that no less than three new monthly steam packet services have been, or are about to be, established between Europe and Australia.

A contract has been entered into by the French Government with the Messageries Maritimes Co. for a regular monthly service between Marseilles and Australia, thence to New Caledonia; the Belgian Government has contracted for a monthly steam service between Antwerp and Australia, calling at Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney; and the Postmaster-General of Germany has notified that a line of steamers starting from Hamburg is to run monthly, calling also at the three chief Australian ports above mentioned.

These new services, in addition to the existing lines of fast steaming vessels running to and from the United Kingdom, will connect Australia with the older countries of the globe far more intimately than has been possible at any former time, and the means thereby afforded of extending our commercial relations must tend materially to the advancement of the Colonies.

To admit, however, of the opportunities thus presented being utilized to their fullest extent, restrictions upon the interchange of postal correspondence should, as far as practicable, be removed, in order to allow of information respecting the Colonies being widely disseminated through these new and direct channels of communication.

The objections which have induced the Governments of the neighbouring Colonies to withhold their assent to the propositions submitted by Victoria are probably the special contribution beyond the Union rates required to be made on account of the Galle contract, and the financial loss that would result from the reduced postage rates to be collected.

Respecting the former, it has already been intimated that Victoria does not seek to be relieved of any part of her responsibility under the contract, but, at the same time, as must be conceded, reasonably expects that the other Colonies shall bear some portion of the charge for carrying the mails to and from Ceylon proportioned to the extent of their correspondence so conveyed, and is prepared favourably to consider any other arrangement that may be devised for equitably apportioning the net cost of the service.

With respect to the money loss that would be entailed by entering the Union, it is pointed out that the additional cost would be comparatively trifling if a due proportion were borne by each of the Colonies concerned; and, regarding the whole financial aspect of the case, it may fairly be questioned whether the prospect of an immediate pecuniary loss, whatever the estimated amount may be, should be raised as an insuperable obstacle to the adoption of a scheme everywhere acknowledged to be highly conducive to the public good.

Some such sacrifice is generally called for in order to secure other public advantages, and in the matter of postal reforms, when a monetary loss is at first sustained, a more than commensurate benefit is at once realized, and the revenue quickly recovers from its temporary decline.

If it be, as usually allowed, a judicious policy to expend, or even borrow to expend, money for useful and reproductive works, it may be confidently assumed that it is at least equally prudent to appropriate funds for foreign postal purposes, which would assuredly yield a profitable return in manifold directions.

The rapid and continued progress of Australia has, on several occasions, suggested to leaders of public opinion the desirableness of promoting a closer alliance between the several Colonies, in order to their more general recognition and the advancement of their common interests. Presuming such a desire to exist, the establishment of a postal federation, of the nature above indicated, would be a first step to the attainment of that end, the taking of which should be easy of accomplishment.

As previously mentioned, the Colonies cannot act separately in this matter. With a view, therefore, to bring it to a practical issue, and avoid the inevitable delay occasioned by correspondence with so many different places in the ordinary official course, the Postmaster-General recommends, as the best and speediest means of arriving at a mutual understanding, that the several Colonial Governments be requested to state if they will agree to a Conference being held in Melbourne (or Sydney or Hobart, if preferred) in March or April next, to consist of the Ministers in charge of the Postal Departments, to deal with this subject, and, if possible, obtain an early settlement thereof, which, it is certain, will give great satisfaction, not only to the people of these Colonies, but also to the Imperial Government and British and Foreign States, who have long been desiring and anticipating the incorporation of Australia into the Union.

Copies of the previous memoranda prepared by this Department will be found attached.

HENRY BOLTON,
Postmaster-General.

Post Office and Telegraph Department,
Melbourne, 29th December, 1882.

LETTERS FROM CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE OF NEW SOUTH WALES
AND VICTORIA, ON THE SUBJECT OF POSTAL AND TELEGRAPHIC
RATES.

(1.) Sydney Chamber of Commerce.

The Hon. F. A. Wright, M.L.A., Postmaster-General.

Sir,

Sydney Chamber of Commerce, 2 May, 1883.

I have the honor, on behalf of the Chamber of Commerce, to bring under your notice the restrictions placed upon trade by the high rates charged on intercolonial and foreign telegrams.

At a special meeting of the Chamber, held on the 30th instant, it was resolved that, in the opinion of the Chamber, the charges made for intercolonial and foreign telegrams are excessive, and that the Government should be urged to reduce them. It is considered that the rate for intercolonial messages should be reduced to 1s. for ten words, or that the number of words should be increased to twenty for the present rate of 2s. The rates would be even then 100 per cent. higher than those of the United Kingdom, where the charge is 6d. for ten words.

With regard to the charges for home and foreign telegrams, the Chamber is of opinion that, as the Colonies have recently contributed a large subsidy to the Cable Company on account of the duplication of the cable between Port Darwin and Bangowangie, and as the business has been considerably increased, the rates for the transmission of private telegrams should be reduced; a concession that would be to the advantage of the Company, as the increased business would more than compensate them for any loss created by the reduction of rates.

I have also been requested to urge, on behalf of the Chamber, that a uniform rate of 1d. postage should be adopted throughout the Colony.

As the meeting of the Postal Conference affords a favourable opportunity for considering these questions, I have respectfully to ask that you will cause them to be submitted for its consideration, and to express the hope that the Conference will signalize its meeting by taking such action in relation to them as will tend to the promotion of commercial relations between the Colonies.

I have, &c.,
CHAS. H. HAYES,
Secretary.

(2.) Melbourne Chamber of Commerce.

Sir,

3 May, 1883.

I have the honor, by direction of the Committee of this Chamber, to forward to you a copy of a resolution, passed this day, with the request that you will lay the same before the Postal Conference.

The Secretary,
Postal Conference, Sydney.

I have, &c.,
J. H. HAYDON,
Acting Secretary.

EXTRACT from the Minutes of a Special Meeting of the Melbourne Chamber of Commerce, held on the
3rd of May, 1883.

“Resolved, that the Victorian Representatives at the Postal Conference now being held in Sydney be requested by this Chamber to urge upon the Conference the desirability of reducing the charge on intercolonial telegrams to the uniform rate of one shilling for every ten words for all the Colonies; and also of substantially reducing the rates on English and foreign cablegrams, as is deemed reasonable considering the large subsidy paid by these Colonies for the reduplication of the cable.”

The above is a true copy,—

J. H. HAYDON,
Acting Secretary.

LETTER

LETTER FROM STEAM COMPANIES AND OTHERS, SYDNEY, URGING
THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A FEDERAL QUARANTINE.

Messrs. John Frazer & Co., Gibbs, Bright, & Co., and others, to The Colonial
Treasurer.

Sir,

Sydney, 30 April, 1883.

We have the honor to say that we have read with much interest the suggestions on "Federal Quarantine" made by the "Health Officer and Medical Adviser to Government," dated 6th April, 1883, as follows:—

"FEDERAL QUARANTINE.

"Not only would I advise the maintenance and strict administration of our quarantine law, but I would go a step further, and urge upon the Government the desirability of seeking the co-operation of the other Colonies in establishing stations at various parts of the continent distant from the great centres of population; for instance, at Thursday Island on the north and at King George's Sound on the west, so that vessels approaching the continent with infectious disease on board might land the sick persons at as early a period as possible, and then proceed to their destination. These stations might form a sort of Federal Quarantine, and be maintained by a contribution from each Colony in proportion to the number of its population."

We have the honor to suggest that the subject be brought before the Postal Conference about to meet in this city.

Although it may be foreign to the subject for which the Conference has been invited, we trust its importance will be considered sufficient to entitle it to consideration.

We are advised that the total initiatory and annual cost would be quite trifling in amount.

We have, &c.,

JOHN FRAZER & CO.

GIBBS, BRIGHT, & CO.

J. WEIR,

Agent, P. & O. Co.

G. SKELTON YUILLE,

Manager, Orient Line of Steamers

YOUNG & LARK.

DALGETY, BLACKWOOD, & CO.

pro GEO. R. STEVENS & CO.

W. WHEELER.

PARIS POSTAL CONVENTION.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION

CONCLUDED BETWEEN

Germany, the Argentine Republic, Austro-Hungary, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark and the Danish Colonies, Egypt, Spain and the Spanish Colonies, the United States of North America, France and the French Colonies, Great Britain and certain British Colonies, British India, Canada, Greece, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, the Netherlands and the Netherlands Colonies, Peru, Persia, Portugal and the Portuguese Colonies, Roumania, Russia, Servia, Salvador, Sweden, Switzerland, and Turkey.

CONVENTION.

The undersigned, plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the countries above enumerated, being assembled in Congress at Paris, by virtue of Art. XVIII of the treaty constituting the General Postal Union, concluded at Berne on the 9th October, 1874, have, by common consent, and subject to ratification, revised the said treaty conformably to the following stipulations:—

Article I.

The countries between which the present Convention is concluded, as well as those which may join it hereafter, form under the title of "Universal Postal Union" a single postal territory for the reciprocal exchange of correspondence between their post offices.

Article II.

The stipulations of this Convention extend to letters, post-cards, printed papers of every kind, commercial papers and patterns or samples of merchandise, originating in one of the countries of the Union, and intended for another of those countries. They also apply, as far as regards conveyance within the Union, to the exchange by post of the articles above mentioned between the countries of the Union and countries foreign to the Union, whenever that exchange makes use of the services of two of the contracting parties at least.

Article III.

The postal administrations of neighbouring countries, or countries able to correspond directly with each other, without borrowing the intermediary of the services of a third administration, determine by common consent the conditions of the conveyance of their reciprocal mails across the frontier, or from one frontier to the other.

Unless any contrary arrangement be agreed upon, the direct sea conveyance between two countries by means of packets or vessels depending upon one of them shall be considered as a third service; and this conveyance, as well as any performed between two offices of the same country, by the intermediary of sea or territorial services maintained by another country, is regulated by the stipulations of the following article.

Article IV

The right of transit is guaranteed throughout the entire territory of the Union.

Consequently the several postal administrations of the Union may send reciprocally through the intermediary of one or of several of them as well closed mails as correspondence *à découvert*, according to the wants of the traffic and the requirements of the postal service.

The correspondence exchanged, whether *à découvert* or in closed mails, between two offices of the Union, by means of the services of one or of several other administrations of the Union, is subject to the following transit charges, to be paid to each of the countries traversed, or whose services participate in the conveyance, viz.:—

1. For territorial conveyance, 2 francs per kilogramme of letters or post-cards, and 25 centimes per kilogramme of other articles.
2. For sea conveyance, 15 francs per kilogramme of letters or post-cards, and 1 franc per kilogramme of other articles.

It is, however, understood—

1. That wherever the transit is already gratuitous at present, or subject to more advantageous conditions, such state of things is maintained, except in the case provided for in paragraph 3 following:
2. That wherever the rate of sea conveyance has hitherto been fixed at 6 francs 50 centimes per kilogramme of letters or post-cards, such rate is reduced to 5 francs:
3. That every sea conveyance not exceeding 300 nautical miles is gratuitous if the administration concerned is already entitled, on account of mails or correspondence benefiting by this conveyance, to the remuneration applicable to territorial transit; in the contrary case, payment is made at the rate of 2 francs per kilogramme of letters and 25 centimes per kilogramme of other articles:
4. That in the case of sea conveyance effected by two or more administrations, the expenses of the entire transport cannot exceed 15 francs per kilogramme of letters or post-cards, and 1 franc per kilogramme of other articles; those expenses are, in such case, shared between the administrations in proportion to the distances traversed, without prejudice to other arrangements between the parties interested:
5. That the rates specified in the present article do not apply either to conveyance by means of services depending upon administrations foreign to the Union, or to conveyance within the Union by means of extraordinary services specially established or maintained by one administration in the interest or at the request of one or several other administrations. The conditions of these two categories of conveyance are regulated by mutual consent between the administrations interested.

The

The expenses of transit are borne by the administration of the country of origin.

The general accounting of those expenses takes place on the basis of statements prepared every two years, during a month to be determined on, in the detailed regulations referred to in Article XIV hereafter.

The correspondence of the postal administrations with each other, articles re-directed or missent, undelivered articles, acknowledgments of delivery, post-office money orders or advices of the issue of orders, and all other documents relative to the postal service, are exempt from all charges for transit, whether territorial or by sea.

Article V.

The rates of postage for the conveyance of postal articles throughout the entire extent of the Union, including their delivery at the residence of the addressees in the countries of the Union where a delivery is or shall be organized, are fixed as follows :—

1. For letters, 25 centimes in case of pre-payment, and double that amount in the contrary case, for each letter and for every weight of 15 grammes or fraction of 15 grammes.
2. For post-cards, 10 centimes per card.
3. For printed papers of every kind, commercial papers, and patterns or samples of merchandise, 5 centimes for each article or packet bearing a particular address, and for every weight of 50 grammes or fraction of 50 grammes, provided that such article or packet does not contain any letter or manuscript note having the character of an actual and personal correspondence, and that it be made up in such a manner as to admit of its being easily examined.

The charge on commercial papers cannot be less than 25 centimes per packet, and the charge on patterns or samples cannot be less than 10 centimes per packet.

In addition to the rates and the minima fixed by the preceding paragraphs, there may be levied—

1. For every article subjected to sea transit rates of 15 francs per kilogramme of letters or post-cards, and 1 franc per kilogramme of other articles, a surcharge which may not exceed 25 centimes per single rate for letters, 5 centimes per post-card, and 5 centimes per 50 grammes or fraction of 50 grammes, for other articles. As a temporary arrangement, there may be levied a surcharge up to 10 centimes per single rate for the letters subjected to the transit rate of 5 francs per kilogramme.
2. For every article conveyed by services maintained by administrations foreign to the Union, or conveyed by extraordinary services in the Union giving rise to special expenses, a surcharge in proportion to those expenses.

In case of insufficient pre-payment, correspondence of every kind is liable to a charge equal to double the amount of the deficiency, to be paid by the addressees.

There shall not be forwarded—

1. Articles other than letters which are not pre-paid at least partly, or which do not fulfil the conditions required above in order to enjoy a reduction of charge.
2. Articles of a nature likely to stain or injure the correspondence.
3. Packets of patterns or samples of merchandise which have a saleable value, or which exceed 250 grammes in weight, or measure more than 20 centimètres in length, 10 in breadth, and 5 in depth.
4. Lastly, packets of commercial papers, and printed papers of every kind the weight of which exceeds 2 kilogrammes.

Article VI.

The articles specified in article V may be registered.

Every registered article is liable, at the charge of the sender—

1. To the ordinary prepaid rate of postage on the article, according to its nature.
2. To a fixed registration fee of 25 centimes at the maximum in European States, and of 50 centimes at the maximum in other countries, including the issue of an acknowledgment of posting to the sender.

The sender of a registered article may obtain an acknowledgment of the delivery of such article by paying in advance a fixed fee of 25 centimes as the maximum.

In case of the loss of a registered article, and except in the case of force majeure, there is to be paid an indemnity of 50 francs to the sender, or, at his request, to the addressee, by the administration of the country in the territory or in the maritime service of which the loss has occurred, that is to say, where the trace of the article has ceased.

As a temporary measure, the administrations of the countries beyond Europe, whose legislation is actually opposed to the principle of responsibility, are permitted to postpone the application of the preceding clause until the time when they shall have obtained by legislative enactment authority to subscribe to it. Up to that time the other administrations are not bound to pay an indemnity for the loss, in their respective services, of registered articles addressed to or originating in the said countries.

If it is impossible to discover the service in which the loss has occurred, the indemnity is borne in equal proportions between the two corresponding offices.

Payment of this indemnity is made with the least possible delay, and, at the latest, within a year dating from the date of application.

Every claim for an indemnity is excluded if it be not made within one year, counting from the date on which the registered article was posted.

Article VII.

Those countries of the Union which have not the franc for their monetary unit fix their charges at the equivalents in their respective currencies, of the rates determined by Articles V and VI preceding. Such countries have the option of rounding off the fractions in conformity with the table inserted in the *règlement* mentioned in Article XIV of the present Convention.

Article

Article VIII.

Pre-payment of postage on every description of article can be effected only by means of postage stamps valid in the country of origin for the correspondence of private individuals.

Official correspondence relative to the Postal Service, and exchanged between Postal Administrations, is alone exempted from this obligation, and from liability to charge.

Article IX.

Each office keeps the whole of the sums which it collects by virtue of the foregoing Articles V, VI, VII, and VIII; consequently there is no necessity on this head for any accounts between the several administrations of the Union.

Neither the sender nor the addressees of letters and other postal packets are called upon to pay, either in the country of origin or in that of destination, any tax or postal duty other than those contemplated by the articles above mentioned.

Article X.

No supplementary postage is charged for the redirection of postal packets within the interior of the Union.

Article XI.

It is forbidden to the public to send by post—

1. Letters or packets containing gold or silver bullion, pieces of money, jewelry or precious articles :
2. Any packets whatever containing articles liable to Customs duty.

In the event of a packet falling under one of these prohibitions being delivered by one administration of the Union to another administration of the Union, the latter proceeds according to the manner and forms prescribed by its legislation, or by its inland regulations.

There is, moreover, reserved to the Government of every country of the Union the right to refuse to convey over its territory, or to deliver, as well articles liable only to a reduced rate, in regard to which the laws, ordinances, or decrees which regulate the conditions of their publication or of their circulation in that country have not been complied with, as correspondence of every kind which may evidently bear inscriptions forbidden by the legal enactments or regulations in force in the same country.

Article XII.

The offices of the Union which have relations with countries beyond the Union admit all the other offices to take advantage of these relations for the exchange of correspondence with the said countries.

The correspondence exchanged *à découvert* between a country of the Union and a country foreign to the Union, through the intermediary of another country of the Union, is treated, as regards the conveyance beyond the limits of the Union, in conformity to the conventions, arrangements, or special provisions governing the postal relations between the latter country and the country foreign to the Union.

The rates chargeable on the correspondence in question consist of two distinct elements, viz :—

1. The Union rate fixed by articles V, VI, and VII of the present Convention.
2. A rate for the conveyance beyond the limits of the Union.

The first of these rates is assigned—

- a. For correspondence originating in the Union and addressed to foreign countries, to the despatching office in case of pre-payment, and to the office of exchange in case of non-prepayment.
- b. For correspondence originating in foreign countries and addressed to the Union, to the office of exchange in case of pre-payment, and to the office of destination in case of non-pre-payment.

The second of these rates is, in every case, assigned to the office of exchange.

With regard to the expenses of transit within the Union, the correspondence originating in or addressed to a foreign country is assimilated to that from or for the country of the Union which maintains relations with the country foreign to the Union, unless such relations imply obligatory and partial pre-payment, in which case the said Union country has the right to the territorial transit rates fixed by Article IV preceding.

The general settlement of the rates of postage chargeable for the conveyance beyond the limits of the Union takes place on the basis of statements, which are prepared at the same time as the statements drawn up by virtue of Article IV preceding, for the calculation of the expenses of transit within the Union.

As regards the correspondence exchanged in *closed mails* between a country of the Union and a country foreign to the Union, through the intermediary of another country of the Union, the transit thereof is subject—

- Within the limits of the Union, to the rates fixed by Article IV of the present Convention.
- Beyond the limits of the Union, to the conditions resulting from the special arrangements concluded or to be concluded for that purpose between the administrations interested.

Article XIII.

The exchange of letters of declared value and that of post-office money orders form the subject of special arrangements between the various countries or groups of countries composing the Union.

Article

Article XIV.

The postal administrations of the various countries composing the Union are competent to draw up, by common consent, in the form of a *règlement*, all the measures of order and detail which are judged necessary.

The several administrations may, moreover, make amongst themselves the necessary arrangements on the subject of questions which do not concern the Union generally, provided that those arrangements are not contrary to the present Convention.

The administrations interested are, however, permitted to come to mutual arrangements for the adoption of lower rates of postage within a radius of 30 kilomètres, for the conditions of the delivery of letters by express, as well as for the exchange of post-cards with paid answers. In this latter case the answer when sent to the country of origin enjoys the exemption from transit charges stipulated by the last paragraph of Article IV of the present Convention.

Article XV.

The present Convention does not involve alteration in the postal legislation of any country as regards anything which is not provided for by the stipulations contained in this Convention.

It does not restrict the right of the contracting parties to maintain and to conclude treaties, as well as to maintain and establish more restricted Unions, with a view to the improvement of postal relations.

Article XVI.

There is maintained, under the name of the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union, a central office, which is conducted under the surveillance of the Swiss Postal Administration, and the expenses of which are borne by all the offices of the Union.

This office continues to be charged with the duty of collecting, collating, publishing and distributing information of every kind which concerns the international postal service; of giving, at the request of the parties concerned, an opinion upon questions in dispute; of making known proposals for modifying the acts of the Congress; of notifying alterations adopted; and, in general, of considering and working out all questions in the interest of the Postal Union.

Article XVII.

In case of disagreement between two or more members of the Union as to the interpretation of the present Convention, the question in dispute is decided by arbitration. To that end, each of the administrators concerned chooses another member of the Union not directly interested in the matter.

The decision of the arbitrators is given by an absolute majority of votes.

In case of an equality of votes, the arbitrators choose, with the view of settling the difference, another administration equally uninterested in the question in dispute.

Article XVIII.

Countries which have not taken part in the present Convention are admitted to be parties to it upon their demand.

This adhesion is notified diplomatically to the Government of the Swiss Confederation, and by that Government to all the countries of the Union.

It implies, as a matter of right, accession to all the clauses, and admission to all the advantages stipulated by the present Convention.

It devolves upon the Government of the Swiss Confederation to determine, by common consent with the Government of the country interested, the share to be contributed by the administration of this latter country towards the expenses of the International Bureau, and, if necessary, the rates to be levied by that administration in conformity to Article VII preceding.

Article XIX.

Congresses of plenipotentiaries of the countries participating in the Convention, or simple administrative conferences, according to the importance of the questions to be solved, are held, when a demand for them is made or approved by two-thirds, at least, of the Governments or Administrations, as the case may be.

Nevertheless, a Congress shall be held at least once in every five years.

Each country may be represented either by one or several delegates, or by the delegation of another country; but it is understood that the delegate or delegates of one country can be charged with the representation of two countries only, including the country they represent.

In the deliberations each country has one vote only.

Each Congress fixes the place of meeting of the following Congress.

For conferences, the administrations fix the places of meeting according to the proposal of the International Bureau.

Article XX.

In the interval which elapses between the meetings, any postal administration of a country of the Union has the right to address to the other administrations belonging to it, through the intermediary of the International Bureau, proposals concerning the business of the Union; but in order to become binding, those proposals must obtain—

1. Unanimity of votes, if they involve any modification of the stipulations of Articles II, III, IV, V, VI, and IX, preceding.
2. Two-thirds of the votes, if they involve a modification of the stipulations of the Convention other than those of Articles II, III, IV, V, VI, and IX.
3. A simple absolute majority, if they involve either the interpretation of the stipulations of the Convention, except the case of dispute contemplated by Article XVII preceding.

The binding decision is sanctioned in the first two cases by a diplomatic declaration, which the Government of the Swiss Confederation is charged with the duty of preparing and transmitting to all the Governments of the contracting countries, and in the third case by a simple notification from the International Bureau to all the administrations of the Union.

Article XXI.

The following are considered as forming, for the application of Articles XVI, XIX, and XX, preceding, a single country or administration as the case may be:—

1. The Empire of British India.
2. The Dominion of Canada.
3. The whole of the Danish Colonies.
4. The whole of the Spanish Colonies.
5. The whole of the French Colonies.
6. The whole of the Netherland Colonies.
7. The whole of the Portuguese Colonies.

Article XXII.

The present Convention shall come into operation on the 1st April, 1879, and shall remain in vigour during an indefinite period; but each contracting party has the right of withdrawing from the Union by means of a notice given, one year in advance, by its Government to the Government of the Swiss Confederation.

Article XXIII.

After the date on which the present Convention takes effect, all the stipulations of the treaties, conventions, arrangements, or other acts previously concluded between the various countries or administrations, in so far as those stipulations are not in accordance with the terms of the present Convention, are abrogated, without prejudice to the rights reserved by Article XV.

The present Convention shall be ratified as soon as possible. The acts of ratification shall be exchanged at Paris.

In faith of which the plenipotentiaries of the countries above enumerated have signed the present Convention at Paris, the first of June, one thousand eight hundred and seventy-eight.

UNIVERSAL POSTAL UNION.

CONVENTION OF PARIS.

Final Protocol.

The undersigned, plenipotentiaries of the Governments of the countries which have this day signed the Convention of Paris, have agreed as follows:—

I. Persia, which forms part of the Union, being unrepresented, will nevertheless be allowed to sign the Convention hereafter, provided that country confirms its adhesion by a diplomatic act with the Swiss Government, before the 1st April, 1879.

II. The countries foreign to the Union, which have deferred their adhesion or which have not yet come to a decision, shall enter the Union on fulfilling the conditions specified in Article XVIII of the Convention.

III. In case one or other of the contracting parties should not ratify the Convention, this Convention shall nevertheless be binding on the parties to it.

IV. The various British Colonies, other than Canada, and British India, which are parties in the Convention, are, Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Labuan, Hong Kong, Mauritius and dependencies, Bermuda, British Guiana, Jamaica, and Trinidad.

In faith of which the plenipotentiaries hereunder mentioned have drawn up the present final protocol, which shall have the same force and the same value as if the stipulations which it contains were inserted in the Convention itself, and they have signed it in one single instrument, which shall be deposited in the archives of the French Government, and a copy of which shall be delivered to each party.

Paris, 1st June, 1878.

[Here follow the signatures of the delegates of the Governments of Great Britain and certain British Colonies, Germany, the Argentine Republic, Austria, Hungary, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark and the Danish Colonies, Egypt, Spain and the Spanish Colonies, the United States of North America, France, the French Colonies, British India, Canada, Greece, Italy, Japan, Luxemburg, Mexico, Montenegro, Norway, the Netherlands and Netherland Colonies, Peru, Portugal and the Portuguese Colonies, Roumania, Russia, Salvador, Servia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey.]

TELEGRAMS FROM GOVERNMENTS OF NEW ZEALAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA ON THE SUBJECT OF THE POSTAL UNION REGULATIONS.

Telegram from New Zealand.

THE New Zealand Government, after giving the question of joining the Postal Union full consideration, have come to the conclusion that it would not be expedient to do so at present.

14/5/83.

THOMAS DICK,
Colonial Secretary.

Telegram from Western Australia.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA is willing to co-operate in the Postal Union, but as the other proposals appear to suggest fresh matter, it must be on the terms that Colonies are prepared to consult convenience of this Colony, in making King George's Sound a port of call and final departure. Our Administrator expects to be in Sydney, and will willingly see you on the subject, if it will facilitate.

14/5/83.

MALCOLM FRASER,
Colonial Secretary.

REPORT OF MESSRS. TODD, LAMBTON, JACKSON, AND PACKER, ON THE SUBJECT OF PACKET REGULATIONS.

IN compliance with the resolution of the Honorable the Delegates to the Postal Conference, we respectfully submit a draft of Amended Packet Regulations, which, after careful consideration, we think would, if adopted, be found conducive to the general convenience of the public.

We are unanimous in our opinion that the regulations relating to packets should, as far as practicable, be made uniform throughout the Colonies. It is, however, necessary to point out that the adoption of these regulations would affect the revenue of those Colonies at present charging letter rates for many articles now proposed to be transmitted; but as these articles have for some time been allowed to pass in certain Colonies, any change involving payment of increased postage would cause dissatisfaction. For example, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania allow bank-notes to be forwarded at packet rates, if registered, while New South Wales treats them as letters. Victoria, South Australia, and New Zealand do not insist upon articles of merchandise, &c., being restricted to *bonâ fide* patterns or samples having no intrinsic value of their own, while in other Colonies such packets are strictly confined to patterns or samples.

It is understood that the Regulations as to packets may be varied, or added to, so far as regards the inland conveyance of the respective Colonies, the main object being to secure uniformity of rates and regulations in the case of packets posted for transmission to other Australasian Colonies, the United Kingdom, and Foreign Countries.

Should the Conference approve of these Regulations, we suggest that they be submitted to the Colonies not represented for their consideration.

CHARLES TODD,
Postmaster-General, South Australia.

S. H. LAMBTON,
Secretary, General Post Office, New South Wales.

T. W. JACKSON,
Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.

J. E. PACKER,
Ministerial Secretary, Tasmania.

Sydney, 15th May, 1883.

PACKETS.

PACKETS.

1.—Inland.						£	s.	d.
Not exceeding 2 ounces	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	1
Exceeding 2 ounces, and not exceeding 4 ounces	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	2
Every additional 2 ounces, or fraction of 2 ounces	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	1

2.—Places beyond the Colony.

Not exceeding 1 ounce	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	1
Exceeding 1 ounce, and not exceeding 2 ounces	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	2
Every additional 2 ounces, or fraction of 2 ounces	...	...	...	...	...	0	0	2

Foreign Countries.

Packets addressed to Foreign Countries are subject to special rates (*See* Table A) and regulations published from time to time in the Postal Guide.

INLAND AND INTERCOLONIAL REGULATIONS.

Weight and dimensions.

1. No packet, other than a book packet, may exceed one pound in weight, nor be of greater dimensions in any way than 2 feet in length, 1 foot in width, and 1 foot in depth. Book packets may be sent up to 3 pounds in weight.

What articles are allowed to pass at packet rates]

2. Packets may contain any of the following articles, if posted in accordance with the regulations, viz. :—

Accounts
Acceptances
Affidavits
Bankers' packets, containing bank-notes (if so described and registered), orders, cheques, drafts, or pass-books, sent by or to any Bank. [In New South Wales, Queensland, and Tasmania, bank-notes and cheques must bear letter rates of postage, and be registered]
Bills of exchange
Bills of lading and ship's manifest
Books, written, printed, or plain
Briefs
Cards, either plain or bearing printed matter or pictures without writing
Catalogues, printed
Circulars, *i.e.*, letters wholly printed, engraved, or lithographed, intended for transmission, in identical terms, to several persons
Deeds, or copies thereof
Depositions
Drafts
Drawings
Engravings or prints
Invoices or bills of parcels [An invoice may be receipted, may advise when or how goods are forwarded, but may contain no other written matter]
Legal documents, not being of the nature of letters
Magazines, periodicals, reviews, and pamphlets
Manuscripts of books

Maps
Music, written or printed
Notices of meetings, of subscriptions or premiums due, printed, engraved, or lithographed—names, dates, or amounts only to be inserted in writing
Paintings
Paper, writing or music
Parchment or vellum
Pass-books or cards, connected with any Bank, Society, &c.
Patterns or samples of merchandise
Pay-sheets
Photographs, when not on glass or in cases containing glass
Placards
Plans
Policies of insurance, including documents of insurance, not being of the nature of letters
Powers of attorney
Prices current, printed, but prices of articles included therein may be filled in in writing
Printed matter
Printers' proofs
Prospectuses, printed
Receipts
Recognizances
Returns or periodical statements on Government service
Scrip
Seeds, in packets not exceeding 8 ozs. *see* clause 5
Specifications
Stock-sheets
Way-bills.

Additional articles that can be posted.
Books, maps, &c.

3. In addition to the foregoing, small parcels of merchandise, samples of ore, or other miscellaneous articles not forbidden in clause 9, can be sent by post as packets.

4. Books or other publications, prints, maps, &c., may be either printed, written, engraved, lithographed or plain, or a mixture of these, but no printed matter or prints will be allowed, except such as may be printed on paper, parchment, or vellum. Further, all legitimate binding, mounting, or covering of a book, &c., or of a portion thereof, is allowed, whether such binding, &c., be loose or attached, as also rollers (in the case of prints or maps), markers (whether of paper or otherwise), in the case of books, and in short, whatever is necessary for the safe transmission of such articles or usually appertains thereto.

Packets, &c., must be open for inspection.

*5. Every packet, parcel, circular, invoice, &c., must be sent either without a cover—in which case it must not be fastened whether by means of gum, wafer, sealing-wax, postage stamp or otherwise—or in a cover sufficiently open at one or both ends or sides to admit of the contents being easily withdrawn for examination. For the greater security of the contents, the packet may be tied with string, but in such cases the Postmaster is authorized to cut the string, though if he do so he must again tie up the packet as before. Except where disallowed by the Postal Regulations of any Foreign Country, seeds, drugs, samples of ores, and so forth, which cannot be sent in open covers may be enclosed in boxes or bags of linen or other material fastened in such a manner that they can be readily opened, or in the case of bags tied round the neck, entirely closed and sealed, provided such bags are transparent, so as to enable the officers of the department readily to satisfy themselves as to the nature of the contents. 6.

* NOTE.—Envelopes must be wholly open at one or both ends, or otherwise unfastened.

6. Every packet must bear on the cover the words "Packet without letter," together with the name and address of the sender. Endorsement.
7. No packet must contain any letter or any communication of the nature of a letter, whether separate or otherwise, unless the whole of such letter or communication be printed. In the case of books or printed matter, however, entries merely stating who sends the book, &c., or to whom it is given, are not to be regarded as a letter; indeed, as respects the name and address of the sender, not only is the writing permitted, but it is even recommended, so that if the cover comes off, or if for any other reason the packet cannot be forwarded, it may be returned to the sender. Must not contain anything of nature of a letter.
8. Packets containing patterns must not bear any writing other than the name and address of the persons for whom they are intended, the name and address of the sender, a manufacturer's or trade-mark, number, and price of the article. Patterns.
9. Packets containing glass, any perishable substance such as leeches, game, fish, flesh, fruit, vegetables, and so forth, any liquid, matches or other inflammable or explosive substance, or poison, or any matter or thing which might, by pressure or otherwise, be or be rendered in any way injurious to, or endanger the contents of the mail bags, or the officers of the Post Office, shall not be transmitted by the post, whether as a packet or otherwise; and Postmasters must refuse to transmit by post any packet which shall contain, or be reasonably suspected to contain, any such things. Articles which must not be sent through post.
10. The transmission of packets or letters containing articles of value, or anything liable to Customs duty, through the post to places beyond the limits of the Colony is prohibited; and any packet or letter containing any such article posted in violation of the Post Office Statute or any Act of the Customs must be sent to the Dead Letter Office. Packets liable to Customs duty.
11. Any packet received from Great Britain, the British Colonies, or foreign countries, which may be suspected to contain any article or articles forwarded in violation of any Act or regulation of the Customs, or on which a Customs duty should be paid, will be detained in the General Post Office, and opened in the presence of the person to whom it is addressed, and should it contain any such article or articles, it or they will be forwarded to the Collector of Customs, to be dealt with in the usual manner. Packets liable to Customs duty.
12. When, owing to a great number or unusual influx of letters, packets, and newspapers, the transmission or delivery of letters would be delayed if the whole of the mail were dealt with without distinction, packets and newspapers may be kept back until the next despatch or delivery. Letters to be sorted before packets and newspapers.
13. Insufficiently prepaid packets are subject on delivery to double the amount of deficient postage. Insufficiently prepaid packets.
14. Any packet closed against inspection contrary to clause 5, is subject to letter rates, and any such packet, not being fully prepaid at letter rates will be treated as an insufficiently paid letter, the deficient postage together with a fine equal to the single inland letter rate being collected on delivery. Packets closed against inspection to be surcharged.
15. Packets containing or having on the outside anything profane, obscene, or libellous will not be forwarded, but will be sent to the Dead Letter Office, to be there destroyed or otherwise dealt with in accordance with the provisions of the Post Office Act. Packets bearing obscene addresses, &c.
16. Articles liable to injury by stamping, or by being pressed into mail bags, should not be sent through the post. Articles liable to injury should not be sent.
17. Gold, silver, and articles of jewelry must bear letter rates of postage, and be registered. Gold, silver, &c., to bear letter rate of postage.
18. In any case where a Postmaster may have good grounds for suspecting any infringement of the foregoing regulations he is to open the packet, and if any irregularity has occurred, he is to treat the packet as an insufficiently paid letter, and charge postage accordingly; or, should it appear desirable, he may forward it to the head office. Should the contents be such as are not allowed to pass through the post, he is to retain the packet and report the circumstance to the head office. On all packets so opened the Postmaster is to write "Opened by —," and affix his initials. Postmaster authorized to open packets should he suspect infringement of regulations.

PACKETS FOR PLACES BEYOND THE AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

1. All articles enumerated in clause 2 of the Inland and Intercolonial Regulations may be sent to places beyond the Colonies, subject to the preceding and following regulations.
2. Patterns and samples of merchandise may be forwarded at same rates as book-packets, these rates being specified in Table A; but, as in the case of packets for the United Kingdom, articles of merchandise can only be sent as samples or patterns to all places beyond the Australasian Colonies, and such articles must not have any intrinsic value of their own apart from their mere use as samples or patterns.
3. Packets for such places must (except where prepayment in full is required by the Postal Regulations of the country to which the packet is addressed) bear at least a single rate. The deficiency, together with a fine, will be charged on delivery.

BOOK-PACKETS AND TRADE PATTERNS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM are also subject to the following conditions:—

1. No packet can be forwarded at the lower rate, unless it be strictly a pattern, sample, or book-packet; photographs on glass, when properly secured in morocco cases, are considered book-packets.
2. The patterns must not bear any writing, other than the address of the persons for whom they are intended, a manufacturer's or trade mark, numbers, and the prices of the articles.
3. The patterns or packets must be sent in covers open at the ends, so as to be easy of examination. Samples, however, of seeds, drugs, and so forth, which cannot be sent in open covers, may be enclosed in transparent bags of linen or other material.
4. The rule which forbids the transmission, through the post, of any article likely to injure the contents of the mail bags, or the person of any officer of the Post Office, would of course be applicable to patterns, and anything of the kind would be stopped and not sent to its destination.
5. If such a packet be not sufficiently prepaid according to its weight, but nevertheless bear postage stamps of the value of a single book rate, it will be forwarded, charged with the deficient book-postage and an additional book-rate (*i.e.* 4d.) as a fine. In the event of a book-packet being posted altogether unpaid, or paid less than a single rate, it will be detained and sent to the Dead Letter Office.
6. Book-packets can only be forwarded by the regular mail packets.
7. Patterns of intrinsic value, or articles of cutlery, cannot be sent through France.
8. The postage must be prepaid by means of postage stamps, and the value of the stamps affixed to a packet will be taken as an indication of the choice of route on behalf of the sender. The

The places to which book-packets may be sent *via* the United Kingdom, and the rates chargeable thereon, will be found in Table A of the Postal Guide.

The following is the limitation of size of sample or pattern packets addressed to countries that have joined the Postal Union :—

“While the limit of weight for such samples remains as before, viz., 8ozs., under a postal convention which came into force on the 1st of April last, a limitation as to size has been fixed, and no packet of patterns or samples addressed to any country of the Postal Union (named in list below) is admissible if exceeding 8 in. in length, 4 in. in width, 2 in. in depth.”

List of Countries comprising the Postal Union.—Argentine Confederation, Austro-Hungary, Belgium, Brazil, Bulgaria (Principality of), Canada, Chili, Columbia, Costa Rica, Denmark, Danish Colonies, Egypt, France, French Colonies, Germany, Gibraltar, Great Britain, British Colonies (in addition to those separately mentioned), viz., Barbadoes, Bermuda, British Guiana, Ceylon, Hong Kong, Jamaica, Labuan, Mauritius and dependencies, St. Vincent, Straits Settlements, Trinidad, British Honduras, Gold Coast, Gambier, Lagos, Sierra Leone, Falkland Islands, Newfoundland and the Leeward Islands (comprising Antigua, Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Kitts, and Portola); Greece, Guatemala, Hayti, Honduras (Republic of), India, Italy, Japan, Liberia, Luxemburg, Malta, Mexico, Netherlands, Netherlands Colonies, Nicaragua, Norway, Paraguay, Persia, Peru, Portugal, Portuguese Colonies, Roumania, Russia, Salvador, Servia, Spain, Spanish Colonies, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United States.

Pattern or sample packets posted otherwise than in compliance with the above conditions will be returned to the senders.

EXTRACT FROM DR. MACKELLAR'S REPORT ON "QUARANTINE," WITH RESPECT TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "FEDERAL QUARANTINE."

FEDERAL QUARANTINE.

Not only would I advise the maintenance and strict administration of our quarantine law, but I would go a step further and urge upon the Government the desirability of seeking the co-operation of the other Colonies in establishing stations at various parts of the continent distant from the great centres of population, for instance, at Thursday Island on the north, and at King George's Sound on the west, so that vessels approaching the continent with infectious disease on board might land the sick persons at as early a period as possible, and then proceed to their destination. These stations might form a sort of Federal Quarantine, and be maintained by a contribution from each Colony in proportion to the number of its population.

I think that I need hardly pursue this matter further. We have recently had bitter experience in our own city of the difficulty and expense which inevitably attend the eradication of an infectious sickness once established in a community, and we can hardly flatter ourselves that our attempts to stamp out disease will always meet with the success which crowned the efforts of the Government in the late epidemic of small-pox in this Colony.

CHARLES K. MACKELLAR, M.B.,

Health Officer and Medical Adviser to the Government.

Health Office, Sydney, 6th April, 1883.

CHILD-DESERTION.

CHILD-DESERTION AND ABSCONDING PARENTS.

The Secretary to Industrial and Reformatory Schools to The Chief Secretary,
Victoria.

No. 2170.

Sir,

12 May, 1883.

Observing that the subject of making provision to arrest absconding fathers from other Colonies has been touched on at the Conference, and may possibly be again considered, I have the honor to enclose for your information a Return which will show the extent to which child-desertion took place during last year in Victoria.* It will be seen that, as regards 517 children committed to the Schools (I. and R.) during the year, 266 parents had deserted them or were undiscoverable.

I have, &c.,

The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY.

GEO. GUILLAUME,
Secretary.

1882.

No. of Children committed to I. and R. Schools	...	...	...	...	...	517
No. of Parents deserted or undiscoverable	...	...	...	...	Father.	Mother.
					26	26
					98	11
					20	5
					144	42
					20	1
					10	1
					15	15
					197	69
Total fathers	...	...	...	...	69	
						266 in all.†

* It is impossible to say how many of the deserting fathers have crossed the border, but doubtless a large number.—G.G. † A similar state of things obtains yearly.—G.G.

[Enclosure.]

TABLE showing particulars relative to parentage of children admitted into the Industrial and Reformatory Schools during the year 1882.

Schools.	No. committed.	Both Parents alive.						One Parent alive.						Both dead.	Both unknown.
		Born in Colony.	Both deserted.	One deserted.		One unknown.		Father.	Mother.	One deserted.		One unknown.			
				Father.	Mother.	Father.	Mother.			Father.	Mother.	Father.	Mother.		
Industrial Schools.....	432	99	25	90	10	27	1	40	76	19	5	9	1	15	15
Reformatory School, Ballarat	71	40	...	6	...	1	...	12	8	1	...	1	...	2	.....
Jika Reformatory School	10	2	...	2	1	...	...	1	3	...	...	...	...	1	.....
Abbotsford Reformatory	4	2	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	.....
Total Reformatory Schools ...	85	44	1	8	1	1	...	13	11	1	...	1	...	4	.....
Total	517	143	26	98	11	28	1	53	87	20	5	10	1	19	15

SUMMARY.

Schools.	No. admitted.	Both parents alive.	One parent alive.		Parents dead.	Parents unknown.
			Father.	Mother.		
Industrial	432	252	68	82	15	15
Reformatory	85	55	15	11	4	.....