

(No. 23.)



1872.

SESSION II.

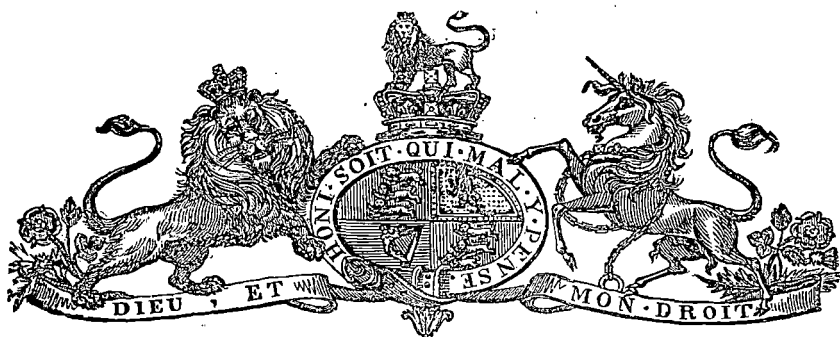
TASMANIA.

HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY.

INTERCOLONIAL CONFERENCE.

FURTHER CORRESPONDENCE.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, December 12, 1872.



INTERCOLONIAL CONFERENCE.

Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 29th October, 1872.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to request your early consideration to the proposition contained in the annexed copy of a letter addressed by this Government to the Government of New South Wales, recommending that joint action should be taken by the Australasian Colonies in entering into a new arrangement with the Imperial Government for a Mail Service via Suez.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

(Copy.)

Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 26th October, 1872.

SIR,

WITH reference to a proposal for a new Postal Service with the Australian Colonies on the termination of the existing Contract with the Peninsular and Oriental Steam Navigation Company, contained in Treasury letter of 14th August, 1872, covered by Despatch from the Secretary of State for the Colonies under date 4th September, 1872, I take the earliest opportunity of informing you that this Government, availing itself of the telegraphic line now in communication with England, has already intimated its willingness to accept the proposals of the Imperial Government, and its desire to co-operate with the other Governments of the several Australian Colonies and New Zealand in making the necessary arrangements.

Immediate action is necessary in order that sufficient time may be given to Colonial and other Steam-ship Companies that may be desirous of entering into competition for the performance of the Service. It is therefore indispensable that immediate steps should be taken for agreeing upon and making known as extensively as possible the conditions of Contract; and with this object in view the Government of Victoria is prepared to submit to you, on your expressing a desire for co-operation, the terms on which it is proposed to call for tenders for the required service (monthly and fortnightly) as early as possible; and to forward instructions on the subject, if practicable, to the Agent-General for Victoria by the next mail which leaves Melbourne on the 8th of next month.

The opinion of the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury in favor of at least a four-weekly service by the Suez route is so forcibly expressed; and it is so plainly stated that the aid of the Imperial Government will only be extended in support of a Mail Service to the Australian Colonies on condition that the Mails are conveyed at least once a month to Point de Galle in connection with the Suez and China Packets, that this Government does not anticipate unwillingness on the part of the other Colonies in adopting the proposed arrangement, and feels confident that the strong desire to act in cordial co-operation with the other Colonies which is felt by the Government of Victoria will be duly reciprocated.

That you may be fully informed of the views of this Government on the whole question of postal communication with Europe, I enclose copy of the *Argus* of the 23rd instant, showing the statements made in the Legislative Assembly of the 22nd by the Minister of the Post and Telegraph Department.

I have the honor to request your attentive consideration of this subject, and the favor of your views thereon at your earliest possible convenience.

A copy of this letter has been forwarded to the Governments of Queensland, South Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, and Western Australia.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

FORWARDED to the Honorable the Treasurer.

J. M. WILSON.
1 Nov. 1872.

FORWARDED to the Secretary to the Post Office with a Memorandum on the subject.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN.
Tuesday, 4th November, 1872.

Colonial Treasury, 4th November, 1872.

MEMORANDUM.

THE accompanying letter from the Chief Secretary of Victoria, dated 29th of October, on the subject of Postal communication with the United Kingdom, &c. only reached this Department this morning, and as I have tendered the resignation of my office to His Excellency, I deem it right to leave the subjects referred to to be dealt with by my successor; but in doing so I feel it my duty to state that, in my opinion, the Government of Tasmania should agree to co-operate with the Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, Queensland, Western Australia, and New Zealand in the establishment and maintenance of a four-weekly or fortnightly Mail Service between Galle and Melbourne on the terms proposed by the British Government, and on the understanding that the cost of the branch Packet Service between Melbourne and Launceston shall be considered as part of the cost of the whole service, and on the further understanding that the Government of Tasmania shall contribute towards the cost of the whole service in proportion to the number of letters received and despatched by such Mail Service.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN, *Postmaster-General.*

The Secretary General Post Office.

SUBMITTED to the Honorable the Postmaster-General, together with the Memorandum referred to above.

The Secretary begs to recommend that, in replying to the letter (annexed hereto) from the Chief Secretary of Victoria, the conditions contained in the Memorandum in question form the basis upon which the Government of this Colony will agree to the proposals of the Government of Victoria respecting the English Mail Service via Suez.

A. C. DOUGLAS, *Secretary.*

General Post Office, 5th November, 1872.

THE following Telegram sent by Postmaster-General to the Chief Secretary, 6th Nov. 1872, 1 P.M. :—

Reply to letter 26th ult. Just in office; favourable, subject to conditions for branch service which may be made with other Colonies: will write.

(Signed) F. M. INNES, *Postmaster-General.*

By ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Melbourne, 6th November, 1872. 6.40.

GLAD you concur in our immediate acceptance of Imperial offer for Suez Mail Contract, and readily agree in every reasonable facility for delivery of Tasmanian letters. Please communicate your wishes in detail. Are endeavouring to obtain united action of all Colonies.

J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

Tasmania,
General Post Office, Hobart Town, 6th November, 1872.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo, to which a short reply was this day forwarded per Telegram, directed to the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, requesting consideration of a proposition contained in a letter of the 26th ultimo, (copy of which you enclosed) addressed by the Government of Victoria to the Government of New South Wales.

recommending that joint action should be taken by the Australasian Colonies in entering into a new arrangement with the Imperial Government for a Mail Service *viâ* Suez. In reply I beg to inform you that the Government of this Colony agrees to co-operate with that of Victoria and the other Australian Colonies (including New Zealand) in the proposed English Mail Service *viâ* Galle, once monthly each way, which it is proposed shall commence on the 1st January, 1874,—half the cost of the branch service to and from Galle and Australia being borne by the Colonies.

In notifying the concurrence of the Tasmanian Government with the proposed service, it is to be understood that the cost of the necessary branch service between Launceston and Melbourne forms part of the cost of the whole service, and the contribution of this Colony thereto shall be in proportion to the number of letters received and despatched by such Mail Service.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) F. M. INNES, *Postmaster-General*.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

Sydney, 31st October, 1872.

SIR,

In reference to the Circular Despatch from the Secretary of State,* September 4, covering the proposal of the Imperial Government for a new Contract for the conveyance of the Mails between Point de Galle and Australia, and to the precipitate and extraordinary course pursued by the Government of Victoria on receipt of this Despatch, to the prejudice, as it is conceived, of the other Colonies, I have the honor to transmit for your information copy of a letter which has been addressed by this Government to Mr. Francis on the subject.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) HENRY PARKES.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary of Tasmania, Hobart Town.

(Copy.)

Colonial Secretary's Office, Sydney, 31st October, 1872.

SIR,

I AM directed by His Excellency Sir Hercules Robinson to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th instant, inviting attention to Lord Kimberley's Circular Despatch of the 4th September, covering a letter from the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury dated the 14th August, by which it is proposed that the Australasian Colonies, in combination, should provide the Mail service "between Point de Galle and whatever port or ports in Australia the Colonies may themselves consider most expedient." In further reference to this subject you inform me that the Government of Victoria, availing itself of the electric telegraph now in communication with England, "had already intimated its willingness to accept the proposal of the Imperial Government."

2. The character of the extraordinary step taken by your Government in this matter is further explained by your intimating to New South Wales, that "you are prepared to submit to us, on our expressing a desire for co-operation, the terms on which it is proposed to call for tenders for the required service."

3. In reply, I have to express the surprise of this Government at the nature of the communication I have had the honor to receive. The proposal of the Imperial Government is made not to the Colony of Victoria, but to the Australian Colonies in common,—not in the interest of Victoria but in the interest of the whole Empire. It is sufficiently apparent that the Imperial Government in undertaking to carry the Australian Mails between England and Point de Galle free of all expense, and in offering to contribute a part of the Australian subsidy for a four-weekly or fortnightly service, is desirous of meeting the wants and serving the interests of all the Australasian Colonies equally; and it is equally clear that unless this general object were accomplished, the Mail Service would not be of equal advantage to Great Britain. This object is placed beyond doubt by the expressed wish of the Lords of the Treasury that the Colonies should enter into the new arrangement in combination, or by a substantial majority.

4. This Government, therefore, cannot but believe that your precipitate course of action has been adopted without due consideration; and it feels confident that, in order to afford time and opportunity for the Colonies to act conjointly—the course to which they are invited by the Imperial Government—you will readily retire from the position you have mistakenly assumed.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) HENRY PARKES.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

P.S.—The views of this Government have been communicated by telegram to the Secretary of State.

(Signed) H. P.

* House of Assembly Paper, No. 1, and Legislative Council Paper, No. 3.

Tasmania,
Colonial Secretary's Office, 12th November, 1872.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 31st ultimo, transmitting a copy of your letter of the same date addressed to the Chief Secretary of Victoria, upon the subject of the course pursued by the Government of that Colony on receipt of Lord Kimberley's Despatch covering the proposal of the Imperial Government for a new Contract for the conveyance of the Mails between Point de Galle and Australia.

The importance of combined action on the part of the Australasian Colonies as regards any Contract for the conveyance of Mails between them and Point de Galle is, in the opinion of this Government, so manifest, that I trust the question will be postponed for the consideration of the approaching Conference as suggested in your letter of the 6th August.

It is, of course, understood that the cost of branch mail services to this Colony and New Zealand shall form part of the cost of the whole service, otherwise it is evident that the conditions upon which the Imperial Government undertake to contribute their quota would not be equitably fulfilled.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. R. SCOTT.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Tasmania,
Colonial Treasury, 13th November, 1872.

NAME Colonies engaged to send representatives to Conference 9th December.

(Signed) F. M. INNES, *Colonial Treasurer.*

Colonial Secretary, N.S. Wales.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Sydney, 14th November, 1872, 10.46 A.M.

QUEENSLAND only Colony that has signified intention not to send Representatives. New Zealand anxious to be represented, but wishes postponement to middle of January. We yet hope Queensland will be represented.

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

Tasmania,
Colonial Treasury, 13th November, 1872.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to request a telegraphic message for the information of this Government, stating whether it is the present intention of the Victorian Government to send Representatives to the Intercolonial Conference to be held on the 9th proximo at Sydney.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) F. M. INNES.

The Hon. J. G. FRANCIS, Chief Secretary, Victoria.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Melbourne, 15th November, 1872, 6 P.M.

RECEIVED your letter of 13th instant, and will reply in course of to-morrow; meanwhile may state that New Zealand desires Conference postponed till January, and this Colony cannot pledge itself to send Representatives to Sydney on ninth proximo.

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. Colonial Secretary.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Melbourne, 18th November, 1872.

In reply to a telegram from New South Wales, we have sent telegram as follows:—

“South Australia and Tasmania concur in fixing middle of January for Conference. This Government further suggests that, as an issue has unfortunately been raised between this Colony and New South Wales in reference to the Suez contract, the Conference should be held in Hobart Town.

“This would be a compliment to Tasmania, and be agreeable to this Government as well as to that of South Australia. New Zealand, no doubt, would readily concur.”

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. F. M. INNES, Hobart Town.

Victoria,

Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 20th November, 1872.

SIR,

REFERRING to my telegram of the 15th instant, I have the honor to transmit herewith copies of further telegraphic messages between New South Wales and this Colony on the same subject.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

Telegram from the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales, to the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

Sydney, 19th November, 1872.

THIS Government is quite agreeable to postponement of Conference until middle of January. There is one objection to change the seat of Conference. We have, in defence of* other Colonies, postponed time of meeting because their Parliaments were in Session, and it was not convenient for Ministers to be absent; the Parliament of this Colony is in session now, supplying the same reason against Ministers being absent from Sydney.

(Signed) COLONIAL SECRETARY, New South Wales.

* Sic.

Telegram from the Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

YOUR telegram informs us your one objection to Conference meeting middle of January in Tasmania is, that your Parliament may be then in session.

In reply I would point out to you it is usual to adjourn from before Christmas to well over the new year, and that, if requisite, Victoria, and no doubt the other Colonies, will meet earlier in January, to suit the convenience of your representatives.

J. G. FRANCIS.

19 | 11 | 72.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Melbourne, 21. 11. 72. 4.5 P.M.

I HAVE received following telegram, N. S. Wales, and promised reply by first steamer. Copy will be sent to you.

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary.

(Copy.)

Sydney, 20th November, 1872.

THIS Government regrets that the one reason given against change of seat of Conference is not accepted as sufficient. There are several others which it was hoped it would not be necessary to advance. First,—the Conference to meet in Sydney is postponed until middle of January at the request of New Zealand: it would be little short of trifling with that Colony to lead her representatives to make a voyage of a thousand miles to Sydney, and then another voyage of equal length to Hobart Town, of which she was not previously informed. Second,—in the correspondence on this subject it has been tacitly agreed by the several Governments that the Conference should meet in

Sydney. Third, there is not sufficient reason arising from geographical or other objections to place of meeting to support the proposed change: the objection now taken is not in favour of Hobart Town but against Sydney. Fourth,—the only reason on which your suggestion is founded could not be entertained without an admission prejudicial to the conduct of the Government which, with every desire for friendly and honorable co-operation, we cannot be expected to make. I need not remind you the last three Conferences were held in Melbourne.

(Signed) COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Telegram from the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand, to the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

*New Zealand,
Nelson, 4th November, 1872.*

I SUBJOIN copy of telegram sent to Sydney this day. New Zealand Government would be obliged if you could use your influence in favour of postponement of Conference.

Copy of Telegram sent to Colonial Secretary, Sydney, herewith.

"Hon. Colonial Secretary, Sydney.

"New Zealand Government is desirous of being represented at proposed Intercolonial Conference, but month of December would be exceedingly inconvenient to us. We shall be glad if you arrange postponement until middle of January. Please reply early."

JOHN HALL, Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Melbourne.

Letter from the Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

*Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 19th November, 1872.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 4th instant, requesting this Government to use its influence in effecting a postponement in the time of the meeting of the Intercolonial Conference until the month of January, so that New Zealand may be represented at it.

You will perceive from the accompanying copy of a telegraphic message which was forwarded from this to Sydney yesterday that the Government of Victoria is making exertions in the direction you desire.

You will further observe that it is now proposed by this Government that the Conference should be held at Hobart Town. Although there has been no opportunity for consulting you on this point, we believe that in proposing that place we have made a suggestion that will meet with your concurrence.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

BY ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH.

Sydney, 20th November, 1872, 9 P.M.

YOUR letter of the 12th received. We are anxious for combined action and the most friendly relations with all the Colonies. We learn from Victoria that you concur in postponement of Conference in Sydney until the middle of January to meet the wishes of New Zealand.

COLONIAL SECRETARY.

The Colonial Secretary, Hobart Town.

Telegram from Chief Secretary, South Australia, to Chief Secretary, Victoria.

Adelaide, 21st November, 1872.

YOUR telegram received. This Government would willingly meet at Hobart, if convenient to other Governments. Suppose Queensland and New Zealand prefer Sydney. We cannot object to meet at latter place, as we have already consented. Have pointed out to Mr. Parkes Hobart would be convenient to us. There is a strong desire on all Governments to be represented at Conference. Western Australia has requested to be represented.

(Signed) H. AYERS.

The Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

*Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 21st November, 1872.*

SIR,

I ACKNOWLEDGED by telegram this forenoon the receipt of yours of the 20th instant, in which, in reply to mine of the previous day, you enumerate several other reasons, not previously referred to, against holding the Conference anywhere else than in Sydney.

I regret that the new arguments brought forward were not presented to us at an earlier period. We were in hopes that we had satisfactorily shown the way of surmounting what you expressed as the *one* difficulty in the way of changing the place of meeting to Hobart Town; and you will not be surprised if the fact of new obstacles being now started, so soon as the prior one was disposed of, has caused this Government to view the question in a somewhat different light.

From your last Telegram, and the character the correspondence is now assuming, this Government has arrived at the conclusion that underlying other and minor issues is the question of the terminus of the Suez Mail Line in Australia. As there need be no reservation regarding the intentions and views of this Government on that point, I may as well inform you that the very much larger sum this Colony will contribute as her proportion of the subsidy; her central position; the approaching completion of a dry dock at Williamstown specially constructed for the purpose of receiving the largest mail steamers; taken in connection with the superior magnitude of her commerce and population in comparison with those possessed by any of the other Colonies, all combine, as her Government contends, in giving Victoria a paramount claim to have her capital selected as the terminus.

But although we claim this for Victoria, we fully admit the rights of the sister Colonies to require her assistance in securing the economical transmission of their mails to and from Melbourne. Should, therefore, the question of terminus be conceded, the Government of Victoria will undertake on its side that she will bear her due share in any reasonable arrangements that may be proposed so as to ensure the mails being forwarded by branch services in the most efficient manner.

You will understand from the foregoing that it is our desire to set frankly before you, prior to any meeting taking place to discuss the new postal arrangements, that this Government will regard it as an indispensable condition in any future contract for postal services *via* Galle in which Victoria takes part that Melbourne shall be the terminus of the line; and it will consequently be evident to you that no conference in which this colony joins can be satisfactory to us unless this understanding be accepted as a condition precedent. But, at the same time, we wish it to be clearly understood that this Government is perfectly ready to leave a full representation of all the other interests, to deal with the contract itself in all its various branches, including the settlement of the amount of the contributions by the several colonies; and that it will be our wish to meet in a liberal and generous spirit any propositions that may be brought forward for mail services in which other colonies may have a more leading and direct interest than Victoria.

Having now made you cognizant of the views of this Government on the question of the terminus, I can only say, in conclusion, that we do not find in your telegram sufficient reasons why the conference should necessarily be held at Sydney.

As a steamer for Wellington direct is about to leave to-day, I propose to take the opportunity afforded by it of requesting the Government of New Zealand to agree to meet at Hobart Town. And, as it may be some days before another mail leaves, it is also my intention to lay before that Government, at the same time, our views regarding the claims of Melbourne to be the terminus of Suez line, and our views on the subject generally as expressed in this letter.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

P.S.—To save trouble, we have had the Correspondence printed, and I enclose a copy, and purpose also to send copies to the other colonies.

(Signed) J. G. F.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Honorable the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

*Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 21st November, 1872.*

SIR,

REFERRING to my letter of the 19th instant, I now do myself the honor to enclose for your better information a full copy of the Mail Service correspondence to date.

I desire especially to invite the concurrence of the Government of New Zealand in the proposition of the Government of Victoria that the Conference shall meet at Hobart Town. Apart from other reasons in favor of Hobart Town, this Government regards it as highly expedient that, in the event of controversy on the subject of terminus, the question should be debated on neutral ground.

As time will hardly allow of further preliminary intercommunication, I shall be much obliged if you will be so good as to favor me with your reply to this letter as speedily as possible, acquainting me of the earliest day in January which it would be convenient to your Government to fix for the assembling of the Conference.

Permit me further to suggest that the Government of New South Wales should likewise be advised of your views with the least possible delay.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary New Zealand.

The Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

*Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 21st November, 1872.*

SIR,

IN reference to the accompanying copy of a telegram received from the Government of New South Wales, since the papers enclosed in my other letter of this date were placed in the hands of the printer, I think it will be manifest from it and from the tone of the previous correspondence that underlying the other and minor issues is the question of the site of the terminus of the Suez Mail Line in Australia. As there need be no reservation regarding the intentions of this Government on that point, I may inform you that the larger contribution of this Colony to the subsidy, her central position, and the approaching completion of a magnificent dock at Williamstown, made specially capable of receiving the largest mail steamers, taken in connection with the superior magnitude of her commerce and population compared with those of any of the other Colonies, all combine, as we contend, to give Victoria a paramount claim to having her capital made the terminus of the line.

On the other hand, if this point is conceded, the Government of Victoria will be prepared to make any reasonable arrangement that may be proposed so as to ensure the forwarding of the mails from Melbourne to the other Colonies by branch services in the most efficient manner.

You will understand, therefore, from what I have stated, that it is our desire to set frankly before you, prior to any meeting on this subject, that we shall regard it as an indispensable condition in any future contract for a Postal Service *via* Galle, in which Victoria takes a part, that the terminus of the line shall be at Melbourne; and that, consequently, it will be evident that no Conference can have a satisfactory termination in which this Colony joins, unless this understanding be accepted beforehand as a condition precedent.

But, at the same time, we wish it to be equally clearly understood that we are most desirous that a full representation of all the other interests should deal with the contract itself, and all matters arising out of it, including the settlement of the amounts of the contributions by the other colonies. It will also be our anxious wish to meet in a liberal spirit all propositions that may be made for Mail Services in which other Colonies may have a more leading and direct interest.

Under all the circumstances of the case, as shown in the correspondence previously forwarded to you, I have merely to inform you, in conclusion, that, relying on the expressed willingness of the colonies of South Australia and Tasmania to meet at Hobart Town, it is our intention to persevere in the proposition to adopt that course in preference to meeting in Sydney or at Melbourne; and I trust you will join with us in making such representations to New South Wales as will induce that colony to agree with the views of the majority.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon. the Colonial Secretary, New Zealand.

NOTE.—The telegram referred to in this letter is that of the 20th instant, *ante*.

The Chief Secretary, Victoria, to the Colonial Secretary, Queensland.

*Victoria,
Chief Secretary's Office, Melbourne, 22nd November, 1872.*

SIR,

REFERRING to my telegram of yesterday's date, I do myself the honor to forward for your information a copy of my letter to New South Wales, together with other correspondence on the Mail Service to date.

I would express a hope that the Government of Queensland may find it practicable to accept the suggestion of this Government that the proposed Conference shall meet at Hobart Town.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) J. G. FRANCIS.

The Hon the Colonial Secretary, Queensland.

Telegram from the Colonial Secretary, Queensland, to the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

Brisbane, 23rd November, 1872.

HAVE received your telegrams *re* Conference, Hobart Town. Shall defer answer until you have agreed with New South Wales.

(Signed) A. H. PALMER, *Colonial Secretary.*

Telegram from the Treasurer, Tasmania, to the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

Hobart Town, 25th November, 1872.

WE abide your further action *in re* Conference. Much flattered by your proposal to meet in Hobart Town, but wish no difficulty on that point. Period satisfactory.

(Signed) F. M. INNES.

The Colonial Secretary, Western Australia, to Chief Secretary, Victoria.

*Western Australia,
Colonial Secretary's Office, Perth, 1st November, 1872.*

SIR,

I AM directed by His Excellency Governor Weld to bring to the notice of the Government of Victoria, that he understands it is in contemplation to convene a meeting of delegates from the various Australian Colonies to confer on matters connected with the future Ocean Postal Service between England and Australia; and that he hopes an opportunity may be afforded to allow a Representative from this Colony to attend at any Conference held on this subject, in which Western Australia is so deeply concerned.

I have, &c.,

(Signed) FRED. P. BARLEE.

The Hon the Chief Secretary, Melbourne, Victoria.