

1882.

QUEENSLAND.

COPIES OF CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING THE RATES OF POSTAGE
BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND QUEENSLAND.

Presented to both Houses of Parliament by Command.

COPY OF MINUTE OF PROCEEDINGS OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL ON 31ST DECEMBER, 1880, *in re*
RATES OF POSTAGE ON CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Approved. His Excellency the Governor, at the instance of the Honourable the Postmaster-
(Signed) General, proposes to the Council that the Rates of Postage on correspondence for the
A. E. KENNEDY. United Kingdom, as shown in the accompanying memorandum, be adopted on the
31-12-80. re-establishment of the Torres Straits Service.

The Council advise, as recommended, immediate action.

A. V. DRURY,
Clerk of the Council.

The Honourable the Postmaster-General, etc.

The Postmaster-General proposes that the undermentioned Rates of Postage shall come into force
on the re-establishment of the Torres Straits Mail Service.

	LETTERS.		NEWSPAPERS.		PACKETS.			
	Not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz.	Not exceeding 4 ozs.	Every additional 4 ozs. or part of 4 ozs.	Not exceeding			Every additional 4 ozs. or part of 4 ozs.	
				1 oz.	1 to 2 ozs.	2 to 4 ozs.		
On correspondence for the United Kingdom, specially marked—	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	
1. <i>Via</i> Torres Straits and Brindisi	6	2	1	1	2	4	4	
2. <i>Via</i> Melbourne and Brin- disi	9	2	1	2	4	6	6	
3. <i>Via</i> San Francisco ...	8	2	1	2	4	6	6	

Correspondence not specially marked or not fully prepaid, or if bearing postage at the following
rates, shall be sent *via* Torres Straits and London :—Letters not exceeding $\frac{1}{4}$ oz., 4d.

Newspapers, 1d. each, not exceeding 4 ozs.

Packets—1 oz., 1d.; 1 to 2 ozs., 2d.; 2 to 4 ozs., 4d.; and every additional 4 ozs., 4d.

All correspondence received by any of the routes on which the postage has not been prepaid at
the above rates to be charged the deficiency. No fine to be inflicted for three months after the
commencement of the Torres Straits Service.

B. D. M.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 30th December, 1880.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE, to THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, LONDON.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 31st December, 1880.

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose a schedule of the Postage Rates lately approved, which will come
into operation on the re-establishment of the Torres Straits Mail Service in February next, and beg to
direct your attention to the low rate proposed for letters by the direct service between Queensland and
London, which has been fixed at 4d. per half-ounce.

As

As the direct sea route will not involve the London office in any transit expenses as in the Brindisi Service, it is submitted that the sum of 3d. out of each 4d. collected in the United Kingdom on each half-ounce letter to be despatched by this route should be credited to the colony, and that the arrangement as regards postages on printed papers and packets which formerly obtained in connection with the Southampton route should be renewed in favour of the long sea service *via* Torres Straits.

As Queensland is the first colony to reduce so materially the cost of postal transit to and from the mother country, and has by so doing conferred a substantial benefit upon the public generally, and as such reduction is quite in accord with the action of the British Government, whose policy for many years past has been to reduce postal rates, I would fain hope that the Imperial authorities will meet us in a broad and liberal spirit.

With regard to the increased rates by the Melbourne-Suez and San Francisco Services, it will perhaps be necessary to explain that there is a transit rate between Queensland, Sydney, and Melbourne, which has not hitherto been charged to the public, the loss having been borne by this Department. It is, therefore, considered advisable that a charge should now be made, which will, to a certain extent, recoup this colony.

The necessity for the extra charge will no doubt be apparent to the Imperial authorities, and it is hoped that the present arrangement as regards the Brindisi route will remain unaltered in connection with the service *via* Melbourne-Suez.

The Honourable the Premier, Mr. McIlwraith, who leaves Brisbane for London by to-day's steamer, will have the honour of waiting upon you with reference to this matter, and I would express the hope that the result of the interview will be satisfactory both to the Imperial and Colonial Governments.

I have, etc.,

BOYD D. MOREHEAD.

The Right Honourable the Postmaster-General, London.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, WASHINGTON, U.S.

Post and Telegraph Department,

11th January, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to Article 3 of the Convention which fixes the rate to be charged on letters in the United States and Queensland at twelve cents for each place respectively, I am directed to say it is found that the transit rate between Brisbane and Sydney involves a loss which has led to the postage by the San Francisco Service being raised to eight pence per half-ounce, and to suggest that the Convention Article 3 be amended by the substitution of sixteen cents for twelve cents, the latter rate to remain in force until arrangements have been completed.

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

The Postmaster-General, Washington, U.S.A.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE UNDER COLONIAL SECRETARY, BRISBANE.

Post and Telegraph Department,

Brisbane, 11th January, 1881.

MEMO. :

I am directed to request you to be good enough to cause the undermentioned telegram to be forwarded to the Agent-General to-day.

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

The Under Colonial Secretary, Brisbane.

Copy of Telegram :—Postage London Brisbane first direct steamer eleventh February Letters four pence papers penny Brindisi Singapore first mail twenty fifth February rates unaltered Correspondence marked *via* Melbourne from to-day letters nine papers two pence and San Francisco letters eight papers two pence Inform postmaster.

HIS EXCELLENCY'S PRIVATE SECRETARY to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Toowoomba, 30th January, 1881.

SIR,

I am directed by His Excellency the Governor to forward for your information copy of a telegram received yesterday from the Earl Kimberley.

His Excellency will be glad for any information you can afford him on this subject and the answer you propose to be sent.

I have, &c.,

CORNS. O'CALLAGHAN,

Private Secretary.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary,
etc., etc., etc.

The Under Secretary, General Post Office.

R. GRAY.

B.C.—31-1-81

[Enclosure.]

TELEGRAM, THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND.

London, 28th January, 1881.

Twenty-eight January Post Office object to rates proposed in telegram to Agent-General twelfth instant and cannot consent vary existing uniform rate outward correspondence.

KIMBERLEY.

TELEGRAM, THE AGENT-GENERAL, LONDON, to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, BRISBANE.

London, February 2, 1881.

Colonial Office advises to-day Post Office objects proposed rates.

MACALISTER.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 10th February, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to a telegram received by His Excellency the Governor from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in which it is stated that the Imperial Post Office objects to rates proposed in the Telegram to Agent-General of 12th ultimo and cannot consent to vary existing uniform rate, I am directed to inform you that the Premier of this colony has been requested to interview the Postmaster-General, with the view of inducing him to alter his decision in this matter, and I am to express a hope that the representations of Mr. McIlwraith will have the desired effect.

The Amended Postage Rates are set forth in the schedule attached hereto.

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL,
Under Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

[Enclosure.]

SCHEDULE OF POSTAGE RATES.

Vide Executive Minute, dated 31st December, 1880.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL to THE PREMIER.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 11th February, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a telegram received by His Excellency the Governor from the Secretary of State for the Colonies, intimating that the Imperial Post Office "cannot consent to vary existing uniform rate on outward correspondence," and I have to request you to be good enough to urge on the Imperial authorities the necessity of reconsidering their decision.

The accompanying statement shows the annual loss which this colony is subjected to by the so-called uniform rate, and it would appear that, while Queensland is maintaining, entirely at her own expense, a through service between Brisbane and London, as well as connecting with the Peninsular and Oriental steamers at Singapore or other port, the colony is expected to continue to bear this loss, while the colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand charge the special rate which was formerly general throughout the colonies; and South Australia, which has no Ocean mail service of her own, also has a special rate *viâ* Brindisi, as well as *viâ* the Orient steamers and Naples.

It should further be borne in mind that this Government is desirous of establishing a very low rate by the long sea route as compared with that *viâ* Brindisi, and, as this is in accord with the policy of the Imperial Post Office, it is submitted that our action should receive cordial support rather than opposition.

With regard to the increase in the rates *viâ* Melbourne and San Francisco, it should be impressed on the Imperial Government that the additional amounts are only intended to cover transit charges arising from the vessels of the Melbourne-Galle, San Francisco, and Orient line services not making Moreton Bay a port of arrival and departure.

You are, of course, aware that the alteration in the postal tariff was made after careful consideration, and in consequence of the loss resulting to the colony through the existing rates; but, as all the surrounding circumstances in connection with this matter are so well known to you, it is not necessary to address you at greater length, and I feel sure that your representations will induce the Imperial authorities to fall into our views.

I have, &c.,

The Honourable Thomas McIlwraith.

BOYD D. MOREHEAD.

STATEMENT showing the ESTIMATED NUMBER OF LETTERS, PACKETS, and NEWSPAPERS which will be RECEIVED and DESPATCHED by the Various ENGLISH MAIL ROUTES, and the PAYMENTS. (Returns 1880.)

Route.	LETTERS.				PACKETS.				NEWSPAPERS.			
	Number.	Amount of Postage.		Number.	Amount of Postage.		Number.	Amount of Postage.				
		Old Tariff.	New Tariff.		Old Tariff.	New Tariff.		Old Tariff.	New Tariff.			
Long Sea Route	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	16,023	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...	271,783	£ s. d. ...	£ s. d. ...			
Torres Straits and Brindisi	{ 4,646 7 0 } 1,565 9 0	{ 3,180 18 0 } 1,565 9 0	5,341	{ 66 15 3 } 22 5 1	{ 66 15 3 } 22 5 1	90,592	{ 1,132 8 7 } 377 9 4	{ 1,132 8 7 } 377 9 4			
Melbourne and Brindisi	704 9 6	1,058 14 3	2,403	10 0 3	20 0 6	40,768	169 17 4	339 14 8			
San Francisco	469 12 1	682 2 9	1,602	6 13 6	13 0 7	25,178	104 18 2	209 16 4			
Orient Steamers	391 7 0	456 11 6	1,335	5 11 3	11 2 6	22,648	94 7 4	188 14 8			
Total Postage Receipts { Old tariff New	7,827 4 7	6,875 15 6	...	111 5 4	133 3 11	...	1,879 0 9	2,248 3 7			
Payments to London on Outward Cor- respondence only	...	2,041 16 11	77 0 10	1,354 3 9	...			
Payments to Melbourne on Inward and Outward Correspondence	...	704 9 6	704 9 6	...	10 0 3	10 0 3	...	169 17 4	169 17 4			
Payments to Sydney on Inward and Outward Correspondence	...	469 12 6	469 12 6	...	6 13 6	6 13 6	...	104 18 2	104 18 2			
Transit Charges on Inward and Outward Correspondence	...	260 18 2	260 18 2	...	22 5 0	22 5 0			
Net Receipts	3,476 17 1	2,393 8 11	...	115 19 7	65 18 2	...	1,628 19 3	779 12 10			
	...	4,350 7 6	4,481 16 7	...	{ 4 14 3 } Loss.	{ 67 5 9 } Gain.	...	250 1 6	1,468 10 9			

It is estimated that if the fid. rate be continued no letters would be sent by the long sea route. The reduction of postage from 6d. to 4d. causes a difference to appear in the estimated receipts, under the new tariff, of £1,565; but it is expected that the greater part of the correspondence now sent by the Orient line will probably be sent under the new tariff by the long sea route, and that there will also be a considerable increase in correspondence by that route.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, WITH ENCLOSURES A, B, and C.

1, Westminster Chambers,
Victoria street,
London, 1st February, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to confirm my telegram of to-day to you, as follows:—
“Colonial Office advises to-day Post Office objects proposed rates;”
and I beg to forward you enclosed herewith the following copies, viz.:—
1. Of a letter from the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies;
2. Of a telegram from the Earl of Kimberley to the Governor of Queensland;
3. Of a letter from the General Post Office to the Colonial Office;
all of which relate to the proposed rates for the New Queensland Mail Service.

I have, &c.,

A. MACALISTER,
Agent-General.

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary, Brisbane.
Postmaster-General,
B.C.—A.H.P.—29-3-81.

[Enclosure A.]

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Downing Street,
31st January, 1881.

SIR,

I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th instant, enclosing a telegram from the Colonial Secretary of Queensland respecting the rates between London and Brisbane under the new Mail Service.

In reply, I am to transmit to you the accompanying copies of a letter from the Post Office, to which Department your letter was communicated, and of a telegram which Lord Kimberley has addressed to the Governor of Queensland on the subject.

I am to add that copies of the correspondence will be forwarded in a despatch to the Governor.

I am, &c.,

JOHN BRAMSTON.

The Agent-General for Queensland, London.

[Enclosure B.]

Telegram.—THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND.

Vide Enclosure with the Private Secretary's letter to the Colonial Secretary, 30th January, 1881.

[Enclosure C.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

General Post Office,
London, 21st January, 1881.

SIR,

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 17th instant, enclosing copy of a telegram which has been sent by the Government of Queensland to the Agent-General for that colony in London for communication to this Department relative to the rates of postage to be charged between the United Kingdom and Queensland.

It appears that simultaneously with the commencement of the new contract which the Government of Queensland has made for the conveyance of its mails between London and Brisbane, *via* Torres Straits, the Colonial Government desires to establish new and varying rates of postage for letters and newspapers, according to the routes by which they may be conveyed. The proposed rates are no less than four in number, viz.:—

	Letters per ½ oz.	Newspapers each.
1. By direct packet	4d.	1d.
2. <i>Via</i> Brindisi and Singapore	6d.	1d.
	(present rates).	
3. <i>Via</i> Melbourne	9d.	2d.
4. <i>Via</i> San Francisco	8d.	2d.

Not being acquainted with the reasons which have induced the Colonial Government to propose these various rates of postage, the Postmaster-General feels himself quite unable to recommend the Lords Commissioners of Her Majesty's Treasury to sanction the new rates, more particularly when it is remembered that, so recently as the 1st of March last, after much deliberation and at some pecuniary sacrifice on the part of the Imperial Revenue, the postage rates were made uniform to all the Australian Colonies, and by all routes.

Mr. Fawcett would be most reluctant, under any circumstances, to disturb the system of uniform postage rates to Australia which now prevail, much to the convenience both of the public and of the Post Office, and he hopes that no change such as that contemplated by the Government of Queensland will be pressed until the whole of the Australian Colonies shall be prepared to enter into the Postal Union, when a general re-arrangement of the rates will necessarily take place.

I am, &c.,

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

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

THE CLERK OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL *to* THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Executive Council Office,
Brisbane, 20th April, 1881.

MEMORANDUM :

To The Honourable the Postmaster-General.

Herewith, copy Despatch No. 11, of 4th February, 1881—Telegrams *in re* new postal rates between London and Brisbane—for the information of the Honourable Postmaster-General.

A. V. DRURY,
Clerk of the Council.

[Enclosure.]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES *to* THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND, WITH ENCLOSURES A AND B.

Queensland,
No. 11.
SIR,

Downing Street,
4th February, 1881.

With reference to my telegram of 28th ultimo, respecting the postal rates between London and Brisbane under the new Mail Service, I have the honour to transmit to you, for your information and for that of your Government, the accompanying copies of a correspondence between this Department and the Agent-General for the Colony of Queensland on the subject.

Governor Sir A. E. Kennedy, K.C.M.G., C.B.,
etc., etc., etc.

I have, &c.,
KIMBERLEY.

[Enclosure A.]

THE AGENT-GENERAL FOR QUEENSLAND *to* THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Queensland Government Offices,
32, Charing Cross,
London, 13th January, 1881.

MY LORD,

I have the honour to transmit herewith copy of a telegram received this morning from the Colonial Secretary of Queensland respecting the rates of postage to be charged between London and Brisbane under the new Mail Service, and I shall be glad if you will be good enough to cause the Right Honourable the Postmaster-General to be advised accordingly.

I have, &c.,

A. MACALISTER,
Agent-General.

The Right Honourable The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

[Enclosure.]

TELEGRAM, THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, BRISBANE, *to* THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Vide letter from Under Secretary to the Under Colonial Secretary, 11th Jan., 1881.

[Enclosure B.]

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES *to* THE AGENT-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURES.

Vide Agent-General's letter to the Colonial Secretary, dated 1st Feb., 1881.

THE SUPERINTENDENT OF FOREIGN MAILS, WASHINGTON, *to* THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE.

Post Office Department,
Office of Foreign Mails,
Washington, 23rd March, 1881.

SIR,

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acknowledge the receipt of your communication of 11th January last, in which you state that the transit rate between Brisbane and Sydney involves a loss which has led to the postage by the San Francisco service being raised to eight pence per half-ounce, and suggest that the Postal Convention between the United States and Queensland, Article 3, be amended by the substitution of sixteen cents for twelve cents; the latter rate to remain in force until arrangements have been completed.

In

In reply, I am to state that the Postmaster-General regrets that there should be a necessity for any increase of the letter postage between Queensland and the United States, particularly as the existing single rate of twelve cents for letters is high compared with the postage charges established with the most distant countries and colonies of the world embraced in the Universal Postal Union. But if the transit rate between Brisbane and Sydney makes it necessary for your Department to increase the postage to eight pence per single rate on letters forwarded to this country by the San Francisco route, the Postmaster-General is not disposed to object to such action on the part of Queensland, but is unwilling, for the reason above stated, to increase the rate of postage as established by said convention on letters mailed in the United States and forwarded to Queensland.

I am therefore to express the hope that the levying in Queensland of an increased rate of eight pence on letters for the United States will be only a temporary measure, and that the convention rate of six pence (12 cents) may be restored at the earliest practicable date. In view of the probable temporary character of this arrangement, I am also to suggest that it be considered as mutually agreed to, without executing a formal article for that purpose.

I am, &c.,
JOSEPH H. BLACKFORD,
Superintendent Foreign Mails.

The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

MESSRS. GORDON AND GOTCH to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Brisbane, 10th May, 1881.

SIR,

We consider we are entitled to some official explanation why the sum of £4 5s. 9d. was demanded from us before the delivery of the papers by the P. and O. mail yesterday was allowed?

The notice intimating the increased rates of postage was dated March 31st; as the latest date of the said papers was March 25th, it appears to us that the extra charge was not intended to apply to papers, etc., in transit.

We have, &c.,
GORDON AND GOTCH.

The Honourable The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 20th June, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to my letter of the 20th instant regarding the alterations in the postage rates between this colony and the United Kingdom, I am to suggest, in the event of your objecting to charge a differential rate, that all correspondence insufficiently prepaid and not marked by any particular route be forwarded to the colony in the *direct* mails from London *via* Torres Straits, and that notification to this effect be made in the United Kingdom.

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

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 20th June, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to the alterations made in the postal rates between the United Kingdom and Queensland in January last, I am directed to inform you that the Postmaster-General is desirous that these rates should be made known to the public.

With this object in view, I am to request you to be good enough to ascertain whether there is any objection on the part of the Imperial Post Office authorities to publish these rates, and if such is the case, it is considered desirable that you should take steps to make them known throughout the United Kingdom by notification in the newspapers and otherwise.

It should also be notified that upon all correspondence sent *via* Melbourne and San Francisco deficient postage will be collected on delivery, according to the rates fixed upon by the Government of this colony.

It is considered that, in order to induce the London office to send letters by the direct mail route, the public should be advised, as an additional precaution, that letters may be marked "*via* direct route to Queensland," or the name of the steamer can be given, the latter not to be compulsory.

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

The Agent-General for Queensland, London.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

Post and Telegraph Department,

Brisbane, 20th June, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to the letter dated the 31st December last to the Postmaster-General, London, relative to the alteration of the rates of postage *via* Melbourne and Galle, and to the objection raised by the Imperial Government to such alteration, which was evidently caused by the impression that a uniform rate obtained throughout the Australian Colonies, I am directed to furnish a statement showing the rates which were in force in the various Australian Colonies previous to the date on which the alteration was made, as follows:—

RATES OF POSTAGE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1880.

	Letters.	Registration Fee.	Newspapers.	Packets.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Victoria, <i>via</i> Brindisi	6	6	1	1
" " San Francisco	6	4	1	1
New South Wales, <i>via</i> San Francisco	6	4	1	1
" " Torres Straits and Brindisi	8	4	} 4 oz. 2d.; 1d. each additional 4 oz. or fraction. }	2
" " Melbourne and Brindisi	8	4		
" " Naples	6	6	1	1
New Zealand, <i>via</i> San Francisco	8	6	2	2
" " Brindisi	6	4	1	1
South Australia, <i>via</i> private steamer	8	4	1	2
" " Naples or Brindisi	8	4	2	2
Tasmania, <i>via</i> Brindisi	6	4	1	1
Queensland, by all routes	6	4	1	1
Western Australia, <i>via</i> Brindisi	6	4	1	1

It will be seen by the foregoing that there was no *uniform* rate, and the following statements will show that this colony was losing considerably on correspondence sent *via* Melbourne and San Francisco.

POSTAGE BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1880.

Via MELBOURNE AND GALLE.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Victoria.	Transit between Brisbane and Sydney.	Loss to Queensland.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	6	3½	6	1	} 5½
" Queensland to United Kingdom	6	...	6	1	
	12	3½	12	2	
Newspapers, each.	—	England.	Victoria (Estimated).	Transit.	Estimated loss to Queensland.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	1	1	1	0	} 1½
" Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0½	1	0	
	2	1½	2	0	
Packets, per oz.	—	England.	Victoria (Estimated).	Transit (Estimated).	Estimated loss to Queensland.
	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	1	1	1½	0½	} 2½
" Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0½	1½	0½	
	2	1½	2½	0½	

On outward letters alone the loss was 4½d. per half-ounce letter.

Via SAN FRANCISCO.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	N. S. Wales.	Transit Brisbane and Sydney.	Loss to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 1	} <i>d.</i> 4
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	6	0	6	1	
	12	2	12	2	
Newspapers, each.	—	England.	N. S. Wales (Estimated).	Transit Brisbane and Sydney.	Estimated loss to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 1	Nil	} Nil
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0	1	Nil	
	2	0	2		
Packets, per oz.	—	England.	N. S. Wales. (Estimated.)	Transit. (Estimated.)	Estimated Loss to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 1½	<i>d.</i> ¼	} <i>d.</i> 2¼
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0	1½	¼	
	2	0	2¼	½	

On outward letters alone the loss was 3d. per ½-oz. letter.

The new rates are intended, as stated in the previous letter of the 31st December last, simply to recoup the colony for the expenses incurred in sending mails by other routes while subsidising a mail service of her own, and the apportionment of the rates, as shown in the following tables, indicates that the charges are equitable and leave but a small margin above the actual expenditure, which, it is submitted, is following the principle adopted in the United Kingdom, France, and Italy, where the receipts from postages, as a general rule, not only cover expenditure but also contribute largely to the general revenue.

Amended rates of postage between Queensland and the United Kingdom, 1881 :—

Via MELBOURNE AND GALLE.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Victoria.	Transit between Brisbane and Sydney.	Credit to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 9	<i>d.</i> 3½	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 1	} <i>d.</i> ½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	9	0	6	1	
	18	3½	12	2	
Newspapers, each.	—	England.	Victoria (Estimated).	Transit (Estimated).	Estimated credit to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 1½	<i>d.</i> 1	Nil	} <i>d.</i> ½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	2	...	1	Nil	
	4	1½	2		
Packets, per oz.	—	England.	Victoria (Estimated).	Transit (Estimated).	Estimated loss to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 1½	<i>d.</i> 1½	<i>d.</i> ¼	} <i>d.</i> ¼
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	2	...	1½	¼	
	4	1½	2¼	½	

Via SAN FRANCISCO.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	N. S. Wales.	Transit, Brisbane, Sydney.	Credit to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 8	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 1	} Nil
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	8	...	6	1	
	16	2	12	2	Nil

Newspapers, each.	—	England.	N. S. Wales (Estimated).	Transit (Estimated).	Estimated credit to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	d. 2	d. ...	d. 1	d. ...	} 2
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	2	...	1	...	
	4	...	2	...	2

Packets, per oz.	—	England.	N. S. Wales (Estimated).	Transit (Estimated).	Estimated credit to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	d. 2	d. 0½	d. 1½	d. ¼	} 1½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	2	...	1½	¼	
	4	0½	2½	½	1½

Via TORRES STRAITS AND BRINDISI.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	...	d. 6	d. 2½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	...	6	6
		12	8½

Newspapers, each.	—	England.	Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	...	d. 2	d. 1
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	...	2	1½
		4	2½

Packets, per oz.	—	England.	Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland...	...	d. 1	d. 0
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	...	1	0½
		2	0½

DIRECT ROUTE via LONDON, AND PROPOSED DIVISION.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland...	...	d. 4	d. 3
„ Queensland to United Kingdom...	...	4	4
		8	7

Newspapers each.	—
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	d. 1
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1
	2

Packets per oz.	—
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	1
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1
	2

The arrangement as regards postages on printed papers and packets which formerly obtained in connection with the Southampton Route to be renewed in favour of the Long Sea Service, via Torres Straits.

It appears that no publication of these alterations has been made in the United Kingdom; consequently correspondence is received *via* Melbourne and San Francisco, on which deficient postage has to be charged (*for the present without a fine*), and the public here naturally complain that no notice has been given to their correspondents to enable them to comply with our requirements.

If there is an objection, as it is presumed there must be, to the publication of the differential rates in the United Kingdom, it appears to the Postmaster-General necessary that the public should be informed that a further charge will be made at this end, and I am to request you to be good enough to take the necessary action accordingly.

I am also to append statements showing the former and present charges by the Orient steamers, the new rate having been made to cover transit charges and, as far as desirable, restore to the colony the amount she is entitled to under her sea and inland rate.

RATES OF POSTAGE BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1880.
Via ORIENT STEAMER.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit Brisbane and Sydney.	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 6	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 1	} <i>d.</i> 3
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	6	0	1	1	
	12	6	1	2	
Newspapers, each.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit Brisbane and Sydney.	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 0	} <i>d.</i> 1
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0	0	0	
	2	1	0	0	
Packets, per oz.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit (Estimated).	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 0½	} <i>d.</i> ½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0	0	0½	
	2	1	0	0½	

ALTERED RATES OF POSTAGE BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM, 1880.
Via ORIENT STEAMERS.

Per ½-oz. Letter.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit Brisbane and Sydney.	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 8	<i>d.</i> 8	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 1	} <i>d.</i> 5
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	8	0	1	1	
	16	8	1	2	
Newspapers, each.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit.	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 2	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 0	} <i>d.</i> 2
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	2	0	0	0	
	4	2	0	0	
Packets, per oz.	—	England.	Orient Co.	Transit.	Gain to Queensland.
Postage, United Kingdom to Queensland	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 1	<i>d.</i> 0	<i>d.</i> 0½	} <i>d.</i> ½
„ Queensland to United Kingdom	1	0	0	0½	
	2	1	0	0½	

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 23rd July, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to my letter dated the 20th June last, I am directed to forward enclosed herewith a copy of a letter addressed to this office by Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, news agents, Brisbane, complaining of the charge made on parcels of newspapers transmitted to them from London by the Melbourne-Galle route, and stating that their agents at that place were informed at your office that no change had been made in the rates to this colony, and to point out the inconvenience to which people are subjected by reason of the unusual and unexpected course taken by your Department.

It would appear that correspondents have very good reason for complaint in this matter, and I am therefore to request that such action be taken as will prevent a recurrence of complaints.

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

[Enclosure.]

MESSRS. GORDON AND GOTCH to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Brisbane, 20th July, 1881.

SIR,

We have the honour to again address you on the subject of the charges made by the Department on mail matter by the P. and O. route.

We sent definite instructions to our London house as to the way in which our newspapers were to be forwarded.

They write us on May 13th that it was not necessary to follow them, as they had enquired at the General Post Office and were informed that there was no change whatever in the postal rates, and that newspapers were forwarded at the usual rate of 1d. for 4 ounces (*vide* letter enclosed).

We respectfully submit that under these circumstances it is scarcely just that we should be mulcted to the extent of £4 to £5 each fortnight for postage, which could not be paid when the papers were posted, and which would not have been sent by the P. and O. route had it been known that a surcharge would be made.

We have, &c.,

GORDON AND GOTCH.

The Honourable The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

[Enclosure.]

GORDON AND GOTCH, LONDON, to GORDON AND GOTCH, BRISBANE.

London, 13th May, 1881.

Book Depot.

DEAR SIRS,

Yours of March 25th to hand, contents noted.

Re your memo. requesting only certain papers to be posted, we do not understand, as we are not aware of any alteration in the postal rates. We made inquiry at the General Post Office on receipt of your letter, and were informed the rate was one penny for newspapers under the $\frac{1}{4}$ -lb. to any part of Australia, so that, until we learn there is an alteration of rates, we conclude you will wish for your papers posted as heretofore.

We are, &c.,

GORDON AND GOTCH.

To Messrs. Gordon and Gotch, Brisbane.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, BRISBANE, WITH ENCLOSURE.

1, Westminster Chambers,

Victoria street, London,

2nd June, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to transmit to you herewith copies of a letter received at this office from the Colonial Office, and of a letter to the latter from the General Post Office, from which you will perceive that the Lords of the Treasury are not disposed to allow any alteration in the existing rates of postage between this country and Queensland.

I have, &c.,

CHAS. S. DICKEN,

Pro Agent-General.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Brisbane.

Postmaster-General,

A.H.P.—19-7-81.

[Enclosure.]

[Enclosure.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE AGENT-GENERAL FOR QUEENSLAND, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Downing Street,
25th May, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage between Queensland and Great Britain, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you, for your information, a copy of a letter which has been received in this Department from the General Post Office on the subject.

I am, &c.,

ROBT. G. W. HERBERT.

The Agent-General for Queensland.

[Enclosure.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

157.—G.

General Post Office,
London, 16th May, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to Mr. Bramston's letter of the 29th of March, I am directed by the Postmaster-General to state that Mr. McIlwraith, the Premier of Queensland, came to this office on the 6th ultimo, and personally discussed the proposals recently made by his Government for the establishment of rates of postage varying according to the route of transmission for correspondence exchanged between the United Kingdom and Queensland. Having duly considered all the arguments put forward by Mr. McIlwraith in support of the proposal, the Postmaster-General submitted the whole question to the decision of the Lords of the Treasury, at the same time pointing out to their Lordships the grave objections which in his opinion there are to the desired alterations, and I am now to state that he has received a letter from their Lordships, dated the 12th instant, intimating that they are not able at present to agree to any alteration in the rates of postage between Queensland and this country.

I am, &c.,

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

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

THE CLERK OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Executive Council Office,
Brisbane, 8th September, 1881.

MEMORANDUM :

To the Honourable the Postmaster-General.

Herewith copy of Despatch, No. 36, 6th June, 1881.

Proposed alteration in the rates of postage between Queensland and Great Britain.

For the information of the Honourable the Postmaster-General.

A. V. DRURY,
Clerk of the Council.

[Enclosure.]

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND, WITH ENCLOSURES A AND B.

Downing Street,
6th June, 1881.

SIR,

With reference to your Despatch No. 22 of 23rd of February last, and to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage to be charged on correspondence sent between England and Queensland, I have the honour to transmit to you, for the information of your Government, copies of two letters from the Post Office on the subject.

I have, etc.,

KIMBERLEY.

Governor Sir A. E. Kennedy, G.C.M.G., C.B.,
etc. etc. etc.

[Enclosure A.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to THE COLONIAL OFFICE, 16TH MAY, 1881.

Vide Agent-General's letter to the Colonial Secretary, dated 2nd June, 1881.

[Enclosure B.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE to THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

General Post Office,
London, 26th May, 1881.

SIR,

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday's date, enquiring with reference to the recent decision of the Treasury on the subject of the postage rates between Queensland and Great Britain, whether their Lordships in coming to their decision had before them the despatch from the Governor of Queensland, No. 22, of the 23rd of February last, a copy of which accompanied your letter of the 14th ultimo to this office.

In

In reply, I am directed to state for the information of the Earl of Kimberley, that a copy of your letter of the 14th ultimo and its enclosures was forwarded to the Treasury with Mr. Fawcett's letter bringing matter before their Lordships.

I am, &c.,

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

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

TELEGRAM THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, BRISBANE.

London, 12th September, 1881.

Post Office protest against differential rates Refuse to advertise Colonial Office requests postponement publication of rates till you receive despatch sent by them Instruct.

ARCHER.

To Palmer, Brisbane.

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE.

General Post Office,

London, 20th August, 1881.

SIR,

I am directed by the Postmaster-General to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th of June last, with reference to the objections raised by Her Majesty's Government to the altered rates of postage on letters and other descriptions of correspondence between the United Kingdom and Queensland, which were proposed in your letter of the 31st of December last, and were also communicated by telegraph on the 12th of January to the Agent-General for Queensland in London.

The principal ground on which objection to any such change was taken was, that no longer since than March, 1880, at the instance of one of the Australian Colonies, a uniform rate of postage had been established in this country for correspondence to all those colonies by all routes, and that the arrangement had been fully explained to, and concurred in by, Mr. McIlwraith on the part of Queensland.

The Postmaster-General is quite aware of the fact that some of the Australian Colonies have declined to acquiesce in the plan thus proposed on their behalf, and that they continue to charge 8d. upon letters sent to this country *via* Brindisi, instead of reducing their rate to 6d., as they were expected to do.

Nevertheless, the Imperial Post Office adheres to the plan, and charges sixpence on letters to all the colonies alike, irrespective of route; and the Government have decided to make no change.

It appears that, in Queensland, not only are varying rates levied—according to route—on letters sent to the United Kingdom, but letters sent hence to Queensland by other routes than that of Torres Straits are surcharged on delivery, although they have been duly prepaid 6d. in this country.

The Postmaster-General cannot but regard this action as an infraction of the agreement come to last year by the Premier of Queensland; and, so far from thinking it right to give publicity in this country, as you wish, to the differential rates levied in Queensland, Mr. Fawcett desires to record his protest against the action of your office in surcharging on delivery letters which have been already duly prepaid in Great Britain. Complaints on this subject have already been made to this Department, and the public have been informed that the uniform rate established in March, 1880, on letters to the Australian Colonies is still in force, and that no additional charge in Queensland is warranted.

As it seems to be supposed that the expenses incurred by Her Majesty's Government in maintaining its Postal Services with Australia are covered by the receipts from postage in this country, I am directed to inform you that, according to the latest accounts, it is estimated that the cost to this country of the Mail Services which it provides, *via* Brindisi and *via* San Francisco, amounts to £134,000 a year, while the gross receipts amount to £44,000 only; and that, therefore, a deficiency of £90,000 a year is thus left to be borne by the Imperial Exchequer.

The Postmaster-General hopes that the renewed proposal recently made to the Australian Colonies to enter the Postal Union will, before long, be accepted, and that the present difficulties arising from differential rates of postage will thus be solved by a conformity to general principles.

I am, &c.,

ALGERNON TURNOR.

The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

TELEGRAM THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL AT SYDNEY.

Post and Telegraph Department,

Brisbane, 2nd November, 1881.

A very strong protest from London Post Office against differential rates and surcharges at this end Action considered an infraction of agreement with Premier Evidently no intention of publishing rates If intercolonial reciprocal transit rate lowered to say one shilling per ounce for letters one shilling per pound for packets and fourpence per pound for newspapers the differential rates might perhaps be abolished.

JOHN McDONNELL,

Under Secretary.

To The Honourable B. D. Morehead, Sydney.

TELEGRAM THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL to THE UNDER SECRETARY.

Sydney, 5th November, 1881.

Will consider communication from Post Office on my return. Leave this day week.

B. D. MOREHEAD.

THE

THE CLERK OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Executive Council Office,
Brisbane, 3rd November, 1881.

MEMORANDUM :

The Honourable The Colonial Secretary.

Herewith copy of despatch No. 41, 7th September, 1881—Further correspondence *in re* rates of postage between England and Queensland.

The attention of The Honourable The Colonial Secretary is directed to the Governor's memo. on same.

A. V. DRURY,
Clerk of Council.

[Enclosure.]

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES to THE GOVERNOR OF QUEENSLAND, WITH ENCLOSURES 1, 2, 3, AND 4.

Downing Street,
7th September, 1881.

Queensland,
No. 41.

SIR,

With reference to your despatch No. 49 of the 17th of May last, and to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage on correspondence sent between England and Queensland, I have the honour to transmit to you, to be laid before your Government, a copy of a further correspondence which has taken place on the subject between the Agent-General for the colony, this Department, and the General Post Office.

I trust, that in view of the objections entertained by the Postmaster-General to the imposition of differential rates of postage, your Government will be willing to reconsider their decision in this matter.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) KIMBERLEY.

Governor Sir A. E. Kennedy, G.C.M.G., C.B., &c.

[Enclosure 1.]

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, WITH ENCLOSURES A, B, AND C.

Queensland Government Office,
1, Westminster Chambers,
Victoria street, London, S.W.,
10th August, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to enclose herewith a memorandum of altered rates of postage between Queensland and the United Kingdom *via* Torres Straits, also copies of letters from the Under Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department, Brisbane, on the subject of giving publicity to the same, and to request that the Right Honourable the Secretary of State for the Colonies will be good enough to move the Department of the General Post Office to consent to the publication of those rates in their tables.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) THOMAS ARCHER,
Acting Agent-General.

The Under Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Enclosure A.

MEMO. *re* ALTERATION IN RATES OF POSTAGE BETWEEN QUEENSLAND AND THE UNITED KINGDOM.

The rates of postage between Queensland and the United Kingdom will be as follows on and from the 31st March, 1881:—

ROUTE.	RATES.					
	Letter per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.	Newspapers not exceeding 4 ozs.	PACKETS.			
			Per ounce.	1 to 2 ounces.	2 to 4 ounces.	Every additional 4 ozs. or part of 4 ozs.
Torres Straits—Long Sea Route	d. 4	d. 1	d. 1	d. 2	d. 4	d. 4
Specially marked <i>via</i> Torres Straits and Brindisi	6	2	1	2	4	4
" Melbourne and Galle	9	2	2	4	6	6
" San Francisco	8	2	2	4	6	6
" Orient direct	8	2	2	4	6	6
" Orient <i>via</i> Naples	9	2	2	4	6	6

Alterations

Alterations in rates of postage on correspondence for foreign places can be ascertained at any post office, or by reference to the Monthly Postal Guide, pages 26-34.

[Enclosures B and C.]

THE UNDER SECRETARY, POST AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT, BRISBANE, to THE AGENT-GENERAL,
LONDON.

Vide letters (2) of 20th June, 1881.

[Enclosure 2.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE GENERAL POST OFFICE.

Downing Street,
18th August, 1881.

SIR,

August 10.

With reference to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage on correspondence sent between England and Queensland, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you, for the favourable consideration of the Postmaster-General, a copy of a letter from the Agent-General for the colony, with its enclosures on the subject.

I have, &c.,
(Signed) R. H. MEADE.

The Secretary to the General Post Office.

[Enclosure 3.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE to THE COLONIAL OFFICE, WITH ENCLOSURE.
General Post Office,

London, 29th August, 1881.

No. 11394-81.

SIR,

I have laid before the Postmaster-General your letter of the 18th instant, concerning a copy of a letter which the Earl of Kimberley has received from the Agent-General for Queensland on the subject of the rates of postage upon correspondence exchanged between Great Britain and that colony.

The Agent-General requests on behalf of the colony, that Mr. Fawcett will notify officially to the public in this country the differential rates which have been fixed by the colony for correspondence forwarded by the various routes, announcing at the same time that the colony will enforce certain of these rates by surcharging on delivery letters sent hence by way of Melbourne or San Francisco, unless they are prepaid at the high rates fixed by the Queensland Government.

Having regard to the recent decision of the Treasury communicated to Lord Kimberley in the letter from this office of the 16th May, not to disturb the present rates of postage on correspondence for Queensland, the Postmaster-General does not feel that he should be justified in recognising, by an official notification, the differential rates which the Queensland Government has established in contravention of the arrangement made last year between Her Majesty's Government and Mr. Childers, with the full knowledge and concurrence of Mr. McIlwraith; and I am instructed to enclose for the Earl of Kimberley's perusal, a copy of a letter which Mr. Fawcett has caused to be addressed to the Postmaster-General of Queensland on the subject, in which he has protested against the exaction of any further postage on letters sent to the colony, which have already been duly prepaid at the authorised rate.

The Postmaster-General is aware that the arrangement made with Mr. Childers has not met with universal assent on the part of the Australian Colonies, and that some of them continue to charge the old rate of 8d. for letters sent to this country *via* Brindisi; but although it is known that in some cases the colonies are put to exceptional expense in the transmission of letters otherwise than by the direct route to the colony concerned, Mr. Fawcett has reason to believe that no colony except Queensland has resisted the decision of this country to levy the uniform rate of 6d., or has claimed to recoup itself by making an additional charge on delivery.

Considering the grave inconvenience which must necessarily result to the public from the action taken by the Queensland Government in arbitrarily raising rates of postage which had already been settled by mutual concurrence between the two Governments, and in levying additional charges on letters sent from this country as prepaid, Mr. Fawcett hopes that Lord Kimberley will support him in the remonstrance which he has made, and will endeavour, at least, to bring to an end the practice now followed in Queensland of levying surcharges on letters sent from this country.

I am, &c.,
(Signed) ALGERNON TURNOR.

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

[Enclosure.]

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, LONDON, to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE.
Vide letter dated 20th August.

[Enclosure 4.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE AGENT-GENERAL FOR QUEENSLAND.

Downing Street,
7th September, 1881.

SIR,

29th Aug., 1881.

With reference to your letter of the 10th ultimo, and to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage on correspondence sent between England and Queensland, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to transmit to you a copy of a letter from the General Post Office on the subject.

Having

Having regard to the objections urged by the Postmaster-General to the action of the Queensland Government in imposing differential rates of postage, Lord Kimberley purposes to address the Governor of the colony by the next mail, with the view of obtaining a reconsideration by the Queensland Government of their decision.

His Lordship would, therefore, be glad if you could postpone for the present acting on the instructions conveyed to you from the colony to publish these rates, if the General Post Office objects to undertaking the task, so that time may be afforded for further discussion before this step is taken.

I am, &c.,

The Agent-General for Queensland.

(Signed) R. H. MEADE.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, WITH ENCLOSURES A, B, AND C.

Queensland Government Offices,
1, Westminster Chambers, Victoria street,
London, 30th September, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a letter received from the Colonial Office, and copies of the communications referred to therein from the General Post Office to the Colonial Office, and from the General Post Office here to the Postmaster-General, Brisbane, respecting the proposed differential rates of postage to Queensland. I also have the honour to confirm my telegram of the 12th instant, as follows:—"Post Office protests against differential rates. Refuse to advertise. Colonial Office requests postponement publication of rates till you receive despatch sent by them. Instruct."

The Postmaster-General.
A.H.P.
5-12-81.

In the absence of instructions from you I have informed the Earl of Kimberley that in compliance with his wish I shall refrain from publishing the altered rates until I receive further advice from you.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS ARCHER,
Acting Agent-General.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Brisbane.

[Enclosure A.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Vide letter of 7th September, with despatch No. 41 of same date.

[Enclosure B.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE to THE COLONIAL OFFICE.

Vide letter of 29th August, with despatch No. 41 of 7th September.

[Enclosure C.]

THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE.

Vide letter of 20th August.

MINUTE BY THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL ON THE DESPATCH FROM THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES, DATED THE 7TH SEPTEMBER, ON THE SUBJECT OF THE DIFFERENTIAL POSTAL RATES BETWEEN THE UNITED KINGDOM AND QUEENSLAND.

I see nothing in the correspondence to warrant me recommending the Government to alter the decision arrived at. I have therefore written to the Postmaster-General, London, in reply to his letter of the 20th August, informing him to this effect, and taking exception to his action in the matter. I enclose herewith a copy of the letter. I have also requested the Agent-General to publish the rates established in January last, in the event of the London Office still objecting to do so.

(Signed) BOYD D. MOREHEAD.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 16th December, 1881.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE, to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, LONDON, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 16th December, 1881.

SIR,

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of a letter, dated the 20th August last, referring to the objections raised by the Imperial Government to the altered rates of postage on correspondence between the United Kingdom and Queensland, in which it is intimated that the Imperial Post Office adheres to the uniform rate; that the Government have decided to make no change; and that you object to give publicity, as requested, to the differential rates; and protest against the action of this Department in surcharging, on delivery, letters prepaid in Great Britain.

In reply, I have to express both surprise and regret at the action of the Imperial Post Office in declining to comply with the equitable arrangements made by this office; and I have also to bring under your notice, that when Mr. Mellwraith agreed to the rates in February last year, the present contract for the Torres Straits Service was not in existence, and thus a perfectly changed situation now prevails.

Further, it can hardly be affirmed that Mr. Mellwraith's agreement was binding for all time; and when this colony had pledged itself to a largely increased mail subsidy, it appeared to me that the moment had arrived when a revision of the rates became absolutely necessary.

I would point out that the differential rates are not levied for Revenue purposes, but to prevent the loss that would accrue from the sixpenny rate desired to be charged *via* Melbourne and Sydney.

I would

I would also remark, that if there is anything in the argument that the Imperial Government lose a sum of £94,000 per annum by their mail services to the colonies, the same argument would apply with fiftyfold force to the loss sustained by this colony through its mail services to the mother country, and that this loss, great as it is, has been materially increased by the action of the Home authorities through their refusal to sanction differential rates on their outward correspondence.

I consider that the action taken by the Imperial Post Office is most arbitrary, and would call your attention to the fact that instructions were given to the Agent-General to publish, in the United Kingdom (in the event of the London Office objecting to do so), the alterations made in the postal rates, and the charges that would be made at this end on letters insufficiently prepaid *via* Melbourne and San Francisco.

These instructions were, as you are aware, suspended, pending the receipt of the despatch and correspondence now under consideration, by request of the Colonial Office. But, in the meantime, an advantage was taken by the Imperial Post Office, inasmuch as, although the question of publication, on our part, was in suspense, that Office, by correspondence addressed to persons in the United Kingdom, which correspondence appeared in the newspapers, intimated that no change had been made in the tariff, and referred to what they unfairly termed "the improper action of the Queensland Post Office" in levying an additional charge on delivery.

I strongly protest against this procedure, and had I been aware that such a course would have been taken, the instructions to the Agent-General would not have been for one moment suspended.

Taking all things into consideration, I do not see anything to warrant a departure from the position that this Government has taken up, and instructions have therefore been issued to the Agent-General to make public the differential rates and the additional charge that will be made on delivery of insufficiently prepaid correspondence *via* Melbourne and San Francisco.

However, I trust that this matter, which is one of much importance to this colony, will be reconsidered, and that the Imperial authorities will see their way to agree to the rates fixed by the Government here.

The Right Honourable The Postmaster-General, London.

I have, &c.,

BOYD D. MOREHEAD.

[Enclosure.]

LETTER FROM THE GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON, to SAML. McDOWALL, ESQUIRE, WHICH APPEARED IN "THE TELEGRAPH" NEWSPAPER, BRISBANE, ON 9TH NOVEMBER, 1881.

[Copy.]

SIR,

General Post Office,

London, 24th August, 1881.

In reply to your letter of the 12th instant, I have to inform you that, as far as this country is concerned, the rates of postage for all parts of Australia and New Zealand are the same, irrespective of the route by which letters are forwarded, and that no change has been made since the enclosed notice was issued to the public in February, 1880. But it has come to the knowledge of this Department, that the Queensland Post Office levies an additional charge upon delivery for correspondence from this country prepaid at the authorised British rate. Against this improper course the Postmaster-General has protested, but he is unable to enforce his views, seeing that the Colonial Post Office is not under his control.

I am, &c.,

EDW. H. REA.

To Saml. McDowall, Esquire, Kirkcowan, Wigtonshire.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE SECRETARY, GENERAL POST OFFICE, LONDON.

SIR,

Post and Telegraph Department,

Brisbane, 16th December, 1881.

With reference to the letter from the Postmaster-General of Queensland to the Right Honourable the Postmaster-General, London, of this date, I have the honour, by direction, to inform you that, in accordance with the letter of the 20th June last, action upon which has been held in suspense at the request of the Colonial Office, the Agent-General of this colony has been instructed to publish—in the event of your Office continuing to object to do so, the tariff which has been in force since January last, and to inform the public that deficient postage will be collected in Queensland on letters sent *via* Melbourne, San Francisco, or Orient lines, and that correspondence endorsed with the name of the Torres Straits steamer leaving at the time, and bearing the rate of postage for the direct route—viz., 4d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. for letters, 1d. for newspapers, and 1d. for packets, etc., will be delivered in this colony without further charge, provided it is despatched by that route.

I have, etc.,

JOHN McDONNELL.

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

THE UNDER SECRETARY to THE AGENT-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURE.

SIR,

Post and Telegraph Department,

Brisbane, 16th December, 1881.

With reference to my letter dated the 20th June last, requesting you to publish the amended rates of postage, and your telegram of the 12th September intimating that the Colonial Office had requested the suspension of instructions pending the receipt of a despatch, I have the honour, by direction, to enclose a copy of a letter addressed to the Postmaster-General, London, on the subject, by which you will learn—what probably you were previously ignorant of or you would have taken proper notice of it—that the London Post Office took advantage of the suspension of instructions to you, and informed correspondents that no alteration had been made, which, to say the least of it, was calculated to mislead the public.

As the Government have decided to adhere to the alterations made in January last, I am again to request you, in the event of the London Office still objecting to do so, to be good enough to publish the rates as previously directed, and advise the public they have been in force since the beginning of the year, and that a charge is being made for deficient postage on correspondence *via* Melbourne, San Francisco, and Orient lines.

Also, that correspondence endorsed with the name of the Torres Straits steamer leaving at the time, and bearing the rate for the direct route—4d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. for letters, 1d. for newspapers, and 1d. for packets, &c.—will be delivered in this colony without further charge, provided it is despatched by that route.

A copy of the tariff of rates in force is enclosed.

I have, &c.,

JOHN McDONNELL.

The Agent-General for Queensland, London.

[Enclosure.]

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, BRISBANE, to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, LONDON.

Vide letter of 16th December, 1881.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Queensland Government Office,
1, Westminster Chambers, Victoria street,
London, 27th February, 1882.

Letters and papers received from the Post and Telegraph Department, Brisbane, by the mail arriving this day:—

Date.	No.	Subject.
16 December	...	Enclosing a copy of a letter addressed to the Postmaster-General, London, about Postal Rates to Queensland.

THOS. ARCHER,

Agent-General.

The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL, WITH ENCLOSURE.

Queensland Government Office,
1, Westminster Chambers, Victoria street,
London, 5th April, 1882.

SIR,

Referring to your letter of 16th December last, instructing me to advertise the differential rates of postage in the event of the Post Office objecting to do so, I have the honour to inform you that I wrote to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies, on the 28th February, to move the Right Honourable the Postmaster-General for permission to notify the rates in the Postal Guide and various Post Offices, and enclose herewith a copy of a letter I received on the 30th ultimo from the Colonial Office.

I have had an interview with Mr. Herbert with the view of expediting matters, but until I receive a definite reply I do not feel that I should be justified in advertising the rates adopted by you.

I shall, however, do all in my power to carry out your instructions as early as possible.

I have, &c.,

THOMAS ARCHER.

The Honourable the Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

[Enclosure.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Downing Street,
29th March, 1882.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 28th ultimo, respecting the publication of the differential rates of postage adopted by the Queensland Government, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to inform you that the Postmaster-General has felt it his duty to submit the matter for the decision of the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury, and that Lord Kimberley has caused a letter to be addressed from this Department to the Treasury requesting that the matter may receive the earliest consideration of the Board.

I am, &c.,

EDWARD WINGFIELD.

The Agent-General for Queensland, London.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

Queensland Government Office,
1, Westminster Chambers,
Victoria street, London, 20th April, 1882.

SIR,

Referring to my letter of the 5th instant, I have the honour to enclose herewith a copy of a letter received from the Colonial Office informing me that the Postmaster-General had been instructed by the Treasury to decline to allow notice of the differential rates to be exhibited at the Post Office in this country. Accordingly, I wrote on the 13th instant to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies that, as instructed, I should now advertise the rates adopted by the Queensland Government; but fearing that

that the postal authorities here might decline to forward letters if insufficiently stamped according to the published rates, and the serious consequences that would follow in such an event, I hesitated to advertise until I could ascertain the course that would be pursued. I therefore addressed another letter to the Colonial Office, on the 18th, to make sure that the letters would not be detained through insufficient postage, to which as yet I have received no official reply.

The Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

I have, &c., THOS. ARCHER.

[Enclosure.]

THE COLONIAL OFFICE to THE AGENT-GENERAL.

Downing Street,
6th April, 1882.

SIR,

With reference to the letter from this Department of the 29th ultimo, and to previous correspondence respecting the rates of postage between this country and Queensland, I am directed by the Earl of Kimberley to inform you that a letter has been received from the Treasury stating that the Postmaster-General has been instructed to decline to allow of the differential rates to be exhibited at the Post Offices in this country.

Lord Kimberley has caused a further letter to be written to the Treasury in relation to this matter, and on receiving a reply his Lordship will address a despatch on the subject to the Governor of Queensland.

The Agent-General for Queensland.

I am, &c., JOHN BRAMSTON.

THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

Queensland Government Office,
1, Westminster Chambers,
Victoria street, London, 20th April, 1882.

SIR,

Referring to copies of correspondence relating to the proposed alteration in the rates of postage between this country and Queensland forwarded at different times to the Postmaster-General, Brisbane, I have the honour to report for the information of the Government, that I have endeavoured to press the matter on the attention of the authorities at the Colonial Office and Post Office by obtaining interviews with Lord Kimberley, Mr. Herbert, and the Under Secretary of the Post Office, who manages the Colonial Department of that Office.

Lord Kimberley, with whom I had a long interview yesterday, assured me that he had used every argument to induce the Treasury to meet the views of the Queensland Government in the matter, but without success, and his Lordship added that he had never known a case where the Treasury and Postal authorities seemed more determined not to concede a request made by a colony. He informed me that he had addressed some further arguments that had occurred to him, to the Treasury, no reply to which had as yet been received, but he had no hope that it would be more favourable than before. His Lordship added that he thought it a matter for regret that so important a change should have been determined upon without consultation with or due notice to the Imperial authorities.

From the Under Secretary for the Post Office I ascertained that the letters for Queensland will not be detained in consequence of being insufficiently stamped; yet his Department was determined not to send any mail matter from this country to Queensland by direct Torres Straits mail steamer, but by Brindisi only, charging the extra 2d. and 6d. fine on the delivery of all letters insufficiently stamped. This gentleman added that, although the authorities here did not for a moment dispute the right of the colonies to fix any tariff they choose on postal matters outwards, yet the right of a colony on its own motion to fix the rates to be levied in this country cannot be conceded, because if every colony in the Empire were to exercise that right the confusion would become inextricable and soon bring the whole system to a standstill.

I have addressed a letter (to which no reply has as yet been received) to the Colonial Office, requesting them to obtain an answer from the Post Office as to how letters bearing the 4d. rate only would be treated, as I wish to have an official statement on the subject. But having obtained verbally from the Under Secretary the information that his Department will *not* send mails per direct steamer, and *will* charge an extra rate and fine on delivery, I have thought it prudent further to postpone the insertion of the notice of alteration of rates in the newspapers, as ordered, as that notice would be in direct contradiction of the course avowedly intended to be pursued by the Post Office authorities here, stating as it does that "correspondence endorsed with the name of the Torres Straits steamer leaving at the time and bearing the rate for the direct route will be delivered in this colony without further charge, provided it is despatched by that route." This notice would, in fact, be totally at variance with the course intended to be adopted by the Post Office here, would quite mislead the public, and would bring about a state of confusion not pleasant to contemplate.

I trust that you will, under these circumstances, approve of my action in further postponing the publication of the notice until I receive your reply to a telegram it is my intention to address to you after receiving a reply to my last letter to the Colonial Office.

The Honourable the Colonial Secretary, Brisbane.

I have, &c., THOS. ARCHER.

TELEGRAM FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL to THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.

London, 18th May, 1882.

Post Office firmly decline altered rates Solicitors advise publication would be illegal Letters Compta Roma.

MEMORANDUM

MEMORANDUM FROM THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL to THE HONOURABLE THE COLONIAL SECRETARY, re
LETTER FROM THE AGENT-GENERAL DATED THE 20TH APRIL, 1882, INTIMATING THAT THE
IMPERIAL POST OFFICE OBJECTS TO DIFFERENTIAL RATES AND DIRECT ROUTE.

The action of the London Office in this matter is, to say the least of it, most unusual and arbitrary. It has been the practice for many years for postal authorities to send correspondence as marked or endorsed thereon; and the alteration in this custom, now advised by the Agent-General, has been made without consulting this Office; and probably this is the only colony which is affected by so grave a departure from long-established usage.

The extra rate and fine threatened to be charged on all letters in the United Kingdom marked by the "direct" route, and bearing 4d. the half-ounce, would be collected at this end and be appropriated by us; but the arbitrary action taken by the London Office would undoubtedly frustrate the intentions of the Queensland Government in establishing the "direct" route at a low rate, while this Department would be unfairly debited with the charges *via* Brindisi, amounting to 3½d. per half-ounce on these letters.

The course of procedure indicated by the Imperial authorities is somewhat inconsistent, inasmuch as it is asserted in previous correspondence that we have no right to charge additional postage on letters from the United Kingdom marked *via* Melbourne on which 6d. per half-ounce has been paid in England, while they intend to charge 8d. per half-ounce on letters marked by the "direct" route on which postage is paid at our rate of 4d., and which, *contrary to the expressed wish of the writers as endorsed thereon*, they are determined to send *via* Brindisi. At the same time, the Imperial authorities do not dispute the right of the colonies to fix any tariff they choose on correspondence outwards—*i.e.*, from Queensland to the United Kingdom.

It is much to be regretted that the Imperial authorities persistently refuse to recognise the 4d. rate by the "direct" service—a rate which was adopted by this Government to enable correspondents, to whom money was more an object than rapidity of transit, to communicate with their friends; a class of correspondents I would fain have hoped would have received every consideration at the hands of the present Postmaster-General of England.

I would again point out, and this in answer to a continually iterated assertion from the Imperial Post Office, that this colony does not stand alone as regards differential rates, such rates existing with the acquiescence, and I assume approval, of the English postal authorities, notably in the cases of New South Wales and New Zealand.

I would remark that Mr. Fawcett, whilst admitting the perfect right of this colony to establish the rates complained of, practically destroys that right by exercising a veto which he assumes he possesses.

I would ask you to let the English Postmaster-General know that the logical and consistent course this Government has pursued in the past it intends to follow in the future, and that the blame of any inconvenience the public may suffer must lie upon the shoulders of the Imperial authorities, who, with regard to this colony in particular, have, in the manner previously pointed out, diverged from the path they have followed under similar circumstances in other cases.

In conclusion, I have to ask you to be good enough to show to the Imperial authorities the tabulated statement enclosed, by which they must see that the action of this Government as regards the 4d. "direct" service has been fully endorsed by the public of Queensland, whose friends in Great Britain are at present debarred by the action of the London Office, from enjoying a like privilege.

BOYD D. MOREHEAD.

Post and Telegraph Department,
Brisbane, 22nd June, 1882.

STATEMENT showing the NUMBER OF LETTERS DESPATCHED FROM BRISBANE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM by the
BRITISH-INDIA COMPANY'S STEAMERS, from the commencement of the New Service *via* Torres Straits, on
26th April, 1881, to the end of June, 1882.

Steamer.	Month.	London Direct.	London, <i>via</i> Brindisi.	Percentage by direct Route.
Merkara	April	1,551	4,052	27·68
Roma	May	1,920	3,112	38·15
Almora	June	1,751	2,702	39·32
Chyebassa	July	2,185	2,942	42·61
Dorunda	August	1,973	2,638	42·78
Merkara	September	2,032	2,774	42·301
Roma	October	2,088	2,752	43·14
Almora	November	2,279	2,856	44·38
Chyebassa	December	2,181	2,470	46·89
Durham	January	1,746	2,235	43·85
Compta	January	2,413	2,832	46·005
Roma	February	2,313	2,808	45·16
Almora	March	2,548	2,661	48·91
Dorunda	April	2,755	3,195	46·302
Chyebassa	May	2,704	2,788	49·23
Compta	June	2,804	2,436	53·53
		35,243	45,253	43·78

	Letters.	Percentage.
London direct	35,243	43·78
„ <i>via</i> Brindisi	45,253	56·22
Total	80,496	100

FROM THE HON. THE PREMIER TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR.

Colonial Secretary's Office,
Brisbane, June 25th, 1882.

YOUR EXCELLENCY,

I have the honour to forward you herewith copies of correspondence between the Agent-General for Queensland and the Postmaster-General and myself, together with copy of a memorandum thereupon by the Postmaster-General of this colony, on the subject of the differential rates fixed for postage between England and Queensland, which the Imperial Post Office refuses to recognise.

In the letter from the Colonial Office dated the 6th April, 1882, to the Agent-General in London, Mr. Bramston informs the latter that Lord Kimberley had caused a further letter to be written to the Treasury in relation to this matter, and on receiving a reply his Lordship would address a despatch to you on the subject. As that course will necessarily entail some further delay, and as the matter in dispute is one of considerable importance to the Imperial Government as well as to this colony, I think it best to address your Excellency at length, reviewing the whole position, as the cross correspondence between the Government and the Colonial Office, and between the London and Brisbane Post Offices, has tended to confuse the question and conceal the real points in dispute.

I will first draw Your Excellency's attention to the financial aspect of the question, on the basis that a uniform rate of 6d. by all routes is charged both in England and in Brisbane; or of 12d. for a letter on the round from London to Brisbane and back by all routes. If the letter is sent *via* Brindisi, and by our British-India Royal Mail Steamers, out of the 12d. charged on the round, the London Post Office receives 3½d. and the Brisbane Post Office 8½d. If the letter is despatched *via* Melbourne, Queensland pays 12d. to Victoria, 3½d. to England, and 2½d. for transit between Brisbane and Sydney (in all 18d.), being a direct loss to Queensland of 6d. on each letter on the round instead of a gain by the British-India route of 8½d. It must be quite apparent to you, therefore, that it is not to the interest of the Queensland Government to despatch or receive English letters by the Melbourne route to Queensland. In order, however, to give Queensland people and their correspondents in England the advantages of alternate routes, the Government determined to fix such a rate of postage on letters sent by Melbourne as would just cover the cost of transit. By adopting this course the colony still suffers a loss in having to pay a Mail Service to carry her letters while allowing them to go by another route; but the advantages to the public in getting quicker or more frequent communication, justified the Government in taking that course. On this principle, therefore, ninepence (9d.) was determined upon as the postage on letters *via* Melbourne and Brindisi. The service *via* Melbourne is a fortnightly one, a little quicker so far as the southern part of this colony is concerned, and very regular. Were the Government to consent to a uniform tariff by that route and that by the British-India route *via* Singapore, we would simply be destroying our own Mail Service; for the bulk of the Southern mails would go *via* Melbourne-Brindisi, and thus entail a loss to the colony of 6d. a letter, while the Government still paid the subsidy for their own service, and lost the postage.

The service conducted by the British-India Company is a complete through service from London to Brisbane, for which we pay £55,000 a year. This Government, having the service entirely in their own hands, determined to lower the rate of postage by the long sea route, attaining thereby an object which the Imperial Postmaster-General says he has always kept steadily in view, viz., a reduction in the rates of postage. The rate, therefore, for a letter from Brisbane to London was fixed at 4d. Other rates were fixed in proportion, but, to make the matter more simple to you, I have considered the charge on one letter only. The various rates determined on were duly forwarded to the Postmaster-General, in London, on the 31st December, 1880; and in the covering letter the attention of that right honourable gentleman was called to the fact that as the direct sea route would not involve England in the same expense as the overland route, 3d. out of the 4d. charged in London on each ½-oz. letter would be an equitable amount with which to credit this colony. The time-table, as arranged here, the Postmaster-General in London has up to the present time ignored, although it has been in operation at the Queensland end. We are now charging here 6d. per letter *via* the British-India route and 9d. *via* the Melbourne and P. and O. route. The refusal of the Postmaster-General in London to charge the amount fixed by this colony, namely, 9d. on letters coming *via* Melbourne, has made it necessary for the Post Office here to charge at this end the deficient postage. This has led not only to a vast amount of trouble to our Post Office, but to great dissatisfaction both to correspondents here and in England. The refusal to post letters by our direct British-India steamers in London has, up to the present time, not led to so much confusion, because the Post Office in London has refused to let the public know of the existence of a fourpenny (4d.) rate to Queensland. It has, however, created inconvenience and loss to some extent, and especially so to the poorer class, who seem mostly to have availed themselves of this route.

I have carefully searched through the correspondence connected with this subject in the hope of finding some reason for the action taken by the Imperial Post Office authorities in the matter, but can find no other than that assigned by Mr. Algernon Turnor in his letter of the 20th August, 1881, to the Postmaster-General, Brisbane, in which he says:—"The principal ground on which objection to any such charge was taken was that no longer since than March, 1880, at the instance of one of the Australian Colonies, a uniform rate of postage had been established in this country for correspondence to all those colonies by all routes, and that the arrangement had been fully explained to, and concurred in, by Mr. McIlwraith on the part of Queensland; and that the Postmaster-General cannot but regard this action as an infraction of the agreement come to last year by the Premier of Queensland." I cannot characterise this in any other language than as a misstatement of facts, a misstatement which not one word of the correspondence between myself and the Colonial Office will be found to justify. I deny distinctly that such an agreement was ever made by me, and my denial of such an agreement ought to have been perfectly well known to Mr. Fawcett, for this alleged agreement was the subject of an interview between myself and Mr. Blackwood, the Under Secretary, in April, 1881, and the matters discussed at this interview were subsequently communicated by Mr. Blackwood to Mr. Fawcett.

On the 4th of February, 1880, I received the following letter from the Colonial Office:—

Downing Street,
London, 4th February, 1880.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you a copy of a memorandum which was handed to him yesterday by the Right Hon. H. C. E. Childers, M.P., relating to the postal rates on correspondence passing between this country and the Australian Colonies.

Her

Her Majesty's Government propose to carry out the arrangement for the despatch of letters and newspapers *via* Brindisi, at the reduced rates, in consideration of the terms as to payment offered in this memorandum; and I am to request to be informed whether it will be the wish of the Queensland Government that the colony should come under the same arrangement, and if so, whether they will be prepared to make the same payments to the Post Office as will be made by the Victorian Government *on account of such letters as may continue to be sent between Queensland and this country via Brindisi and Singapore.*

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

T. McIlwraith, Esq., &c., &c., &c.

I do not think there can be any doubt about the meaning of that letter. It was simply a proposal that on certain conditions Queensland should agree to a sixpenny (6d.) rate on letters between London and Queensland *via* Brindisi and Singapore.

After some correspondence with the Colonial Office, in which not one word occurs to show that the proposed agreement had any reference whatever to any other route than the Brindisi-Singapore route to Queensland, I addressed the following letter to the Under Secretary to the Colonies:—

SIR, London, 25th February, 1880.

On account of my absence from London, I received yours of the 18th instant only to-day. I have examined carefully the explanation of the existing and proposed arrangements for postal charges in the letter of the Post Office Department, to the Treasury, accompanying yours, and find the proposed arrangement, as there explained, more equitable than as set forth in the memo. of the Right Honourable H. C. E. Childers.

Considering that it would be highly disadvantageous to Queensland for the postal rates to and from the colony to be different and higher than those to and from the adjoining colonies, I agree on behalf of Queensland to the rate for a single letter being reduced to 6d., and of a newspaper to 1d., and to the apportionment of the rates collected in England and the colony being carried out, as set forth in the Right Honourable Postmaster-General's letter to the Treasury of the 16th instant.

I am, &c.,
T. McILWRAITH.

The acknowledgment of this letter was conveyed to me from the Colonial Office in the following terms:—

Downing Street, London,
13th March, 1880.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State of the Colonies to acquaint you that he received with satisfaction your letter of the 25th February, agreeing on behalf of the Colony of Queensland to the rearrangement of the amount and division of *postal charges on correspondence passing between this country and Queensland via Brindisi and Singapore*, in accordance with the terms of the letter from the Postmaster-General to the Treasury, dated the 16th of February.

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach desires me to convey to you the expression of his satisfaction at your decision.

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

T. McIlwraith, Esq.

The meaning attached to the agreement by the Colonial Office and by myself is plain. Further evidence of the reduction applying only to the Brindisi-Singapore route will be found in the despatch of Sir Michael Hicks-Beach to the Officer administering the Government of Queensland, dated 16th March, 1880. In referring to the agreement made by me Sir Michael says, "The same rates will also be charged upon correspondence sent by way of Singapore, and thence by the steamers under contract with the Queensland Government; the Premier of that colony, who is now in England, having agreed with Her Majesty's Government upon a division of postage which will enable this arrangement to be carried out." The construction put on the agreement by the London Post Office became known to me only after our differential rates had been arranged in the colony and which I gathered from a letter directed by the Secretary of the General Post Office, London, to the Postmaster-General, Brisbane, on the 27th February, 1880. In this letter the rates are made the same to Brisbane, whether *via* Melbourne or New Zealand; a matter on which the Queensland Government had never been consulted, and to which they had never given their consent. All this I clearly put before Mr. Blackwood in my interview with him in April, 1880. He says he communicated my arguments to the Postmaster-General immediately afterwards, and yet the latter, ignoring my statements, and the correspondence that passed between me and the Colonial Office, to which I then referred Mr. Blackwood, lays down as justification for the obstructive course that he has chosen to adopt the fact that I had made an agreement whereby a sixpenny (6d.) rate was to be uniform to Brisbane by all the routes. I think, Your Excellency, the correspondence sufficiently shows the meaning attached to the agreement by Mr. Herbert, Mr. Bramston, and myself, with whom the matter was negotiated. That that was the true and only meaning will be made plainer to you by considering the very absurd position I would have been placing our own Mail Service in, by agreeing to a uniform postal rate. At the time this agreement was made in London I was negotiating with the British-India Company for the New Mail Service, and it is beyond all reason to suppose that on the one hand I should have been making an agreement with a Steamship Company involving a large annual expenditure, and on the other hand making an agreement with the British Government the direct effect of which would have been to destroy all advantages to be derived from that Mail Service.

I have consulted the Cabinet on this matter at the instance of the Postmaster-General. We have given it our most careful consideration, and are determined that we will not agree, under present circumstances, to a uniform rate by all routes to Queensland. We consider it most unjust that we should be forced into it by the Imperial Government. The inconvenience thrown on this Government by the action of the London Post Office authorities I have already shown to be great. They have not condescended to give us any reason why we should be subjected to such inconvenience, and so far as we see at the present time, there are no difficulties whatever in the way of their adopting our tariff and agreeing to our terms. In my interview with Mr. Blackwood he no doubt assured me that it would be very inconvenient for the London Post Office to have differential rates. Beyond his assurance, however, I had nothing by which my judgement could be swayed. He gave me no reason, nor can I understand now where the inconvenience arises. I see no reason given in the correspondence, except that contained in the statement that I had made an agreement in March, 1880, which the London Post Office was determined should be carried out. Such an agreement, I affirm, never existed.

Your

Your Excellency will observe that in discussing this matter I have confined my observations to the Melbourne-Suez route, but my remarks apply equally to the San Francisco route.

Now with reference to the fourpenny (4d.) rate charged on letters by the direct sea route. In this I think the Postmaster-General of England has treated us unjustly, has acted contrary to the usual practice of the London Office, and has taken a course which has been highly inconvenient to correspondents in England, but especially so to correspondents in Queensland. That it is unjust is to me quite evident. This Government pays the whole subsidy to the British-India Company for a through service between London and Brisbane. In transmitting letters either way the only work performed by the British Government is to receive and distribute the letters in England. We, for this part of the service, out of the 8d. received on the round letter, offered the English Government 1d., which I consider a handsome remuneration for their share of the work. The British Government say, "No; we will not send letters by that route at all. If letters are posted in England by that route, and a fourpenny (4d.) stamp only put on a $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. letter, we will charge forward 8d., being 2d. for insufficient postage and 6d. fine." Were these fines really imposed they would fall principally on the uneducated and poorer classes; but as a matter of fact the colony is the sufferer, as the Government decline to levy these charges.

In fixing the lower rate the Government considered they were acting in accordance with the policy of the Colonial Office. When the discussion with reference to the abolition of the Southampton route was going on, Mr. R. G. W. Herbert, on the 30th July, 1879, wrote to the Treasury, suggesting that "as the raising of the minimum postal charge (which was proposed to be made 7d. instead of 6d.) would appear to bear hardly on the poorer classes, it might be arranged that letters, &c., should still be conveyed as far as Suez by the numerous steamers trading between this country and the East, as 'Ship Letters,' at the present, or even a lower rate." This policy I understand to have been acquiesced in by the General Post Office in their letter to the Treasury of the 8th of August, 1879. Their acquiescence is not definitely expressed, but at all events the policy of the Colonial Office is perfectly plain. We had, therefore, in making the lower rate, the direct sanction of the Colonial Office. I find in the correspondence no reason whatever why the Post Office should object. It cannot surely be made an objection that differential rates generally cannot be worked in the London Office. They have been worked since Colonial Services commenced, and there are different rates of postage to all the different countries of the world. A plain intimation to the public in the usual way by the London Post Office would be perfectly well understood, and the fourpenny (4d.) service would, I have no doubt, come into general use. Mr. Fawcett professes to desire a lower postal rate generally, and in our endeavour to accomplish this we are thwarted by him.

I understood from Mr. Blackwood that the present rates charged by the French and Italian railways for postal matter transmitted over their lines by the accelerated service was made at the present reduced price on the understanding that all correspondence between England and her Colonies and India would be transmitted by their lines. If such an arrangement was made by the British Government, and intended to bind the colonies, I think the Colonies ought to have been consulted in the matter. In consenting to the sixpenny (6d.) route by Brindisi and Singapore to Southampton, had it been stated to me that this rate was got on the understanding that we agreed to forward all our correspondence that way, and that we would have been debarred from taking advantage of any sea service in place of the railway from Brindisi to Calais, I certainly should not have agreed. I can quite understand the advantage it is to England to get a reduction for the whole of her East-Indian possessions by passing the whole of the correspondence over these lines; but the advantage to the Colony of Queensland of a direct service to London is infinitely greater to us, and would have prevented me giving my consent to any arrangement by which we were debarred from having this direct service.

I would point out to Your Excellency that, although the advantages to Queensland of the British-India Service are largely appreciated here, still they are shared in to a very great extent by England. It brings employment to her ships, it draws trade to her shores, and for trading purposes places her at a great advantage in competing with other countries. These considerations alone ought to induce the British Government, instead of obstructing our plans for advancement, to assist us as much as they possibly can. Not only has the Imperial Post Office done this colony a substantial wrong in depriving it of the profit it had a right to expect by carrying that portion of the correspondence which would have gone by the long sea route in British-India vessels, but they have done it in a way most discourteous to this colony, as will be seen from the enclosed copy of a letter from Mr. Rae, of the London Post Office, to Mr. Samuel McDougall. We congratulate ourselves that this colony is not under the control of Mr. Fawcett, and, from a full consideration of his conduct in the matter, do not feel in any way depressed that he should consider the course taken by the Queensland Government to be improper.

As a matter of right this Government claims that the English Government acquiesce in the differential rates proposed by us. We are perfectly prepared to discuss the matter, but not to accept the dictum of Mr. Fawcett as to what we ought to do, especially when that dictum is founded on such reasons as he has given; and until sufficiently cogent reasons are forthcoming we intend, although we much regret the inconvenience to the public, to insist on these differential rates. I protest strongly against the action of the London Post Office in this matter. Mr. Fawcett has done more than any other Postmaster-General to prevent the Colonies entering into the postal union which he professes so much to desire, and his action practically tends to the increase of postal rates, and at the same time entails a very heavy loss upon our Government.

I have the honour to be,

Your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

THOMAS McILLWRAITH,

Premier and Colonial Secretary.

His Excellency Sir Arthur E. Kennedy,

G.C.M.G., C.B.,

Government House, Brisbane.

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