



ANNO TRICESIMO PRIMO

VICTORIÆ REGINÆ.

A.D. 1867.

No. 10.

An Act to authorize the appointment of Members of the Executive Council to be Members of a Federal Council of the Australasian Colonies.

[Assented to, 19th December, 1867].

WHEREAS the Governments of South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, New Zealand, Queensland, and Tasmania, respectively agreed to depute certain of their members to meet in Conference to consider and determine the best means of establishing a satisfactory system of steamship communication between the Australasian Colonies and Great Britain for postal and other purposes: And whereas, in pursuance of such agreement, a Conference was held in the City of Melbourne, at which certain resolutions were unanimously passed, and a certain memorial, to be addressed separately by the respective Governments to Her Majesty the Queen, was unanimously adopted; and it was further resolved, unanimously, that it was expedient to establish a Federal Council, consisting of representatives from the Australasian Colonies, in order to carry into effect the agreements embodied in the said resolutions and the said memorial: Be it therefore Enacted, by the Governor-in-Chief of the Province of South Australia, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly of the said Province, in this present Parliament assembled, as follows:

1. It shall be lawful for the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, to appoint one or more members of the Executive Council to represent this Province in any Federal Council which may hereafter be created by the authority of the Parliaments of any two or more of the Australasian Colonies.

Executive Councillors may be appointed to represent the Province in any Federal Council.

It

Federal Council Act.—1867.

Special powers of members of Federal Council.

2. It shall be lawful for the member or members representing this Province in any such Federal Council, to deliberate upon, vote for, and give assent to any resolutions or measures that may be necessary to carry out and establish the system of steamship communication for postal and other purposes, embodied in the proceedings of the Melbourne Conference, as contained in Schedules hereto, A, B, and C, or any modification thereof not exceeding the annual expenditure for Ocean Mail Services of Seventeen Thousand Pounds, which may secure to this Province the benefit of the proposed system, and the decisions of any such Federal Council in respect to the matters set forth in the said Schedules, in which the member or members representing this Province shall deliberate, vote, and give assent, shall be binding.

The Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, to carry out decisions of Federal Council.

3. It shall be lawful for the Governor, with the advice of the Executive Council, to do all things that may be necessary on behalf of this Province, to carry into effect the decisions of any Federal Council as aforesaid: Provided, that no such decision shall be opposed to any law of the said Province.

Province may retire from Federal Council.

4. Notwithstanding anything herein contained this Province, by its representatives, may retire from any Federal Council, if no contract binding upon the said Province has previously been entered into, and in any case, on address to the Governor from both Houses of Parliament, the said Province shall retire from any such Federal Council: Provided, that all intercolonial contracts entered into on behalf of South Australia, then existing, shall be carried out and performed by the said Province, in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

Retirement of Colony or Colonies not to invalidate proceedings of Federal Council.

5. In the event of any other Colony or Colonies retiring from any Federal Council, and this Province continuing to be represented in such Council, the decisions of such Council shall be binding upon this Province, and have effect in the same manner as if the retirement of the said Colony or Colonies had not taken place.

Proceedings to be laid before Parliament.

6. The Votes and Proceedings of each Session of any Federal Council shall, within one month from the termination thereof, be laid before both Houses of Parliament, if Parliament be then sitting, and if Parliament be not then sitting, then within one month after the opening of the next Session of Parliament.

Commencement of Act.

7. This Act shall come into operation on the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-eight, and may be cited for all purposes as the "Federal Council Act of 1867."

Short title.

In the name and on behalf of the Queen I hereby assent to this Act.

D. DALY, Governor.

SCHEDULES

Federal Council Act.—1867.

SCHEDULES REFERRED TO.

A.

Resolutions unanimously agreed to by the Postal Conference held in Melbourne, 12th March, 1867.

1. That any scheme of ocean postal communication agreed upon by this Conference should, in providing for the general convenience, be so adapted to special interests as to secure the concurrence and support of all the associated Colonies.

2. That any such scheme will be valuable to each of the Colonies in proportion to the number of points of commercial intercourse which it shall be made to include, consistently with expedition and regularity of conveyance between Great Britain and Australia.

3. That the facilities for the transmission of merchandize and for passenger traffic ought not to be overlooked as collateral advantages.

4. That the advantage of more rapid telegraphic communication by way of Torres Straits, commends that route to the favorable consideration of the Conference.

5. That the contributions of the associated Colonies to the cost of any such general scheme should be proportioned, not so much by calculations of the actual population or the Post Office correspondence, as on the basis of a compromise of interests and preferences in view of a common federal object.

6. That, considering our political connection, as dependencies of the Crown, and the interests of Great Britain as a commercial nation in the trade and progress of the Colonies, one-half of the cost of any such aggregate scheme ought to be borne by the Imperial Government.

7. That, in the proposed federal action, the Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, and New Zealand are considered as possessing equal interests, which may be approximately estimated as follows :—

Victoria.—On the basis of population and commerce with her general interest in Australian progress, and her special interest in the maintenance of the Suez route, from her undoubted priority of advantages derived from it.

New South Wales.—On the basis of population and commerce and the same general interest, with her supposed greater interest in the Panama route.

New Zealand.—On the same basis of individual and general interest, with her undoubted priority of advantages in communication *vid* Panama.

8. That the interests of Queensland, governed by her geographical situation, require a special service which does not present any considerable postal advantages to the other Colonies; but that it is not desirable that Queensland should be disunited from the other Colonies in the settlement of this question.

9. That the Colonies of South Australia and Tasmania will be least affected by the proposed adjustment of the existing postal arrangements.

10. That, in order to establish a postal system, affording regular fortnightly communication by three lines, *vid* Brisbane and Torres Straits to Singapore, *vid* Melbourne and South Australia to Suez, and *vid* New Zealand to Panama, with the necessary branch services, the six Colonies represented at this Conference should contribute a moiety, not exceeding £200,000, of the total cost, in the following proportions, viz. :—

Victoria	One-fourth.
New South Wales	One-fourth.
New Zealand	One-fourth.
Queensland	One-seventh.
South Australia	One-twelfth.
Tasmania.....	One-fiftieth.

11. That it is expedient that the six Colonies represented at this Conference should act in concert in urging these views, and should join in a memorial to Her Majesty, setting forth the mutual advantages to be derived by Great Britain and Australia from their adoption.

B.

Federal Council Act.—1867.

B.

TO THE QUEEN'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty—

The memorial of the undersigned most humbly and dutifully sheweth :

That the six Colonies of Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania, by the duly accredited representatives of their respective Governments, assembled in conference in the City of Melbourne, approach Your Majesty with feelings of profound loyalty and attachment to Your Majesty's throne and person.

Your Majesty's Colonial Governments have had under their consideration a Despatch from the Right Honorable the Earl of Carnarvon, one of Your Majesty's Principal Secretaries of State, enclosing a Treasury Minute of September the 4th, 1866, in which they are urgently invited, in combination, to provide for the steam postal service between Point de Galle and Australia, the Imperial Government engaging to pay one-half of the necessary subsidy. Your Majesty's Australasian dependencies are prepared to respond to an invitation so appreciative of their ability to direct their own affairs; but they feel it incumbent on them to represent to Your Majesty that a single branch service connecting them with the ocean postal system of India and China is no longer adequate to their wants, or sufficient to meet the demands of British interests. The rapid progress of these Colonies in population and in all the elements of national wealth, and the widely differing conditions that control their progress, not only render increased facilities of intercourse with the United Kingdom a necessity for the group, but also render it impossible to give equal advantages to all, or to avoid inflicting injustice on some, by any one service. While the productive capabilities and the commerce of the associated Colonies have attained a magnitude which, it is humbly submitted, entitles them to a foremost place in the consideration of Great Britain, their geographical extent imposes upon them deprivations and hardships which can only be alleviated by new and various means of communication with the rest of the world. The farther the settlement of population advances the greater becomes the difficulty. Thus the enterprize of the colonists, in extending the bounds of the Empire, and spreading the lustre of Your Majesty's name, entails upon them the penalty of their more certain exclusion from British intelligence. In the early years of Australian colonization this virtual banishment was a condition of life to be faced and endured as inevitable; but the Colonies of the present day, as fields of production and as markets of consumption for the national manufactures, have advanced to a position which makes their intimate connection not less important to the United Kingdom than to themselves.

The imports into the six Colonies during the year 1865, as valued at the different ports of arrival, amounted to thirty-five millions sterling; and although the estimate includes the intercolonial trade carried on by Your Majesty's Australian subjects, and the imports from foreign countries, by far the greater part of this sea-borne commerce assists in sustaining the manufacturing power of the United Kingdom. Their exports—consisting principally of gold and wool—for the same period, amounted to more than thirty millions. The following are the returns for the several Colonies:—

	Imports.	Exports..
Victoria	£13,257,537	£13,150,748
New South Wales	9,923,595	3,191,170
New Zealand	5,594,977	3,713,218
South Australia	2,927,596	3,129,846
Queensland	2,505,559	1,153,464
Tasmania	762,375	880,965
	£34,976,639	£30,219,411

Within the last sixteen years the two Colonies of Victoria and New South Wales have produced a supply of gold amounting in value to one hundred and fifty millions sterling, five-sixths of which has been the produce of Victoria alone. The Colony of New South Wales has raised from the earth 4,617,100 tons of coal, valued at £2,742,224; and her coal-fields, north and south of the port of Sydney, may be said to be inexhaustible. The Colonies of New Zealand and South Australia are eminently favored in the rich variety of their resources. New Zealand has risen within the last few years to an important position as a producer of gold and wool. In ten years the Colony of South Australia has exported copper of the value of £4,751,638, while the produce of her corn-fields is unsurpassed by other countries. The Colony of Queensland, in addition to her pastoral and mineral wealth, has established by successful experiment her capability of growing both cotton and sugar. Nor are the resources of Tasmania unimportant to the British Empire. Her wool, grain,

Federal Council Act.—1867.

grain, and timber, with the oil of her whale fisheries, form a valuable part of Australian exports. In the year 1865 the exports of the associated Colonies, in five articles of production, which are selected for their conspicuous value to the world, amounted to more than twenty-one millions sterling. The results are given from the latest official returns.

	Wool. £	Gold. £	Coal. £	Copper Ore. £	Grain of all kinds. £
Victoria.....	3,315,109	6,190,317	—	—	—
New South Wales.	1,624,114	2,647,668	274,303	—	—
New Zealand	1,141,761	2,226,474	—	—	—
South Australia ..	964,397	—	—	618,472	1,228,480
Queensland	885,299	101,352	—	—	—
Tasmania	381,625	—	—	—	107,268
	£8,312,305	£11,165,811	£274,303	£618,472	£1,335,748

If the position of the six associated Colonies be tested by the number of the shipping visiting their various ports, its importance to Great Britain will be equally manifest. The shipping returns of 1865 for the Australasian Colonies give an aggregate of arrivals amounting to 1,969,091 tons, and 2,018,224 tons as the aggregate of departures. The following table will show the distribution of this tonnage amongst the six Colonies:—

	Inwards. Tons.	Outwards. Tons.
Victoria	580,973	599,351
New South Wales	635,838	690,294
New Zealand	295,625	283,020
South Australia	183,102	174,188
Queensland	173,227	167,153
Tasmania	100,276	104,218
	1,969,091	2,018,224

The present number of those animals most useful to man, as compared with the number only forty-two years ago, will exhibit alike the progress and the internal wealth of the Colonies. In the year 1825, there were in all Australia, 6,142 horses, 134,519 head of horned cattle, and 237,622 sheep. In 1865, the returns for the Australian Colonies alone were as follows:—

	Horses.	Horned Cattle.	Sheep.
Victoria	121,051	621,337	8,835,380
New South Wales	282,587	1,961,905	8,132,511
South Australia	73,993	158,057	3,779,308
Queensland	51,091	887,856	6,810,005
Tasmania	22,152	90,020	1,736,540
	550,874	3,719,175	29,293,744

The number of Your Majesty's loyal subjects in Australasia is fast approaching an aggregate of two millions, and the evidences of their successful industry and enterprise which are here recorded, though necessarily brief and imperfect, will not fail to ensure for them Your Majesty's gracious consideration. The interests of commerce are strong in uniting the Colonies to the parent country, but stronger still is the glory of an advancing civilization which belongs to the remotest British dependency as part of a great nation under Your Majesty's beneficent reign. Nor will Your Majesty be insensible to those claims of the poorest of your subjects which grow out of affections that cannot be severed with separated households. The parent in England and the child in Australia, actually as well as figuratively, feel the need of a closer and more constant intimacy.

The four continental Colonies of South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, occupy a seaboard of not less than three thousand miles, with points of settlement and traffic throughout its extent; and the Islands of New Zealand are a thousand miles distant from the Australian coast. The letters brought by the way of Cape Lewin by a mail steamer calling at any port in the Colony of South Australia, could not be forwarded from that point by any practicable means of communication to Your Majesty's subjects at the northern ports of Queensland under twelve or fourteen days, or to the ports of New Zealand under nine. A steamer arriving by the Torres Straits route would afford still less satisfaction, as the most populous Colonies would be the last to receive their letters. The means of communication with many important settlements in the interior of Australia is only by a journey of several days, and cannot, on account of cost, be more frequent than once or twice a week. It will thus be seen that any single monthly line of steamers would leave large numbers of Your Majesty's subjects unable to reply to their correspondence by the return mails, and that any two or more lines by the same route would fail in affording general satisfaction.

The

Federal Council Act.—1867.

The representatives of the several Colonies assembled in Conference, after careful and anxious consideration of the whole subject, on behalf of their respective Governments, approach Your Majesty, and humbly and dutifully represent that, in order to meet the demands of the large and growing commerce of these Colonies, and to serve in a satisfactory manner the complicated interests that connect them with the United Kingdom, it has now become necessary to maintain three Ocean Postal Services; one by way of King George's Sound, one by way of Torres Straits, and one by way of New Zealand and Panama. The last two of these routes have been opened successfully by the enterprise of Your Majesty's subjects in Australia and New Zealand; and their advantages to the Colonies most nearly affected by them are too apparent to be relinquished.

The associated Colonies, by their representatives in Conference, have agreed to contribute annually a moiety not exceeding £200,000 of the entire cost of maintaining these three lines of postal communication, and they are prepared to act in combination in contracting for the necessary services to open and maintain these routes in connection with Your Majesty's contract services to India and China, and to the West Indies. They humbly pray that Your Majesty may be advised to take such steps as may be expedient, by terminating or re-adjusting present contracts, or calling for fresh tenders for the performance of the main services, to establish the proposed United Australasian Postal System without drawing upon the limited resources of the Colonies beyond the large sum which they cheerfully undertake to pay.

Your memorialists humbly urge the claims of the great Colonies they represent, to the favorable consideration of Your Most Gracious Majesty, and they trust that a project so closely in harmony with the spirit of British enterprise, so essential for the development of British trade, so calculated in its effects to promote the welfare of Your Majesty's loyal subjects in Australasia, and one in which the whole of the Colonies are acting in union, may receive your Majesty's royal favor and support.

And Your Majesty's loyal and dutiful subjects will ever pray.

- (Signed) JAMES McCULLOCH, Chief Secretary, and Member of the Executive Council of Victoria.
- (Signed) GEO. VERDON, Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council, Victoria.
- (Signed) HENRY PARKES, Colonial Secretary, and Member of the Executive Council, New South Wales.
- (Signed) JOSEPH DOCKER, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, New South Wales.
- (Signed) JOHN HALL, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, New Zealand.
- (Signed) CROSBIE WARD, Special Representative of New Zealand.
- (Signed) JAS. P. BOUCAUT, Attorney-General, and Member of the Executive Council, South Australia.
- (Signed) WALTER DUFFIELD, Colonial Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council, South Australia.
- (Signed) A. MACALISTER, Vice-President of the Executive Council, and Colonial Secretary of Queensland.
- (Signed) ST. GEORGE R. GORE, Postmaster-General, and Member of the Executive Council, Queensland.
- (Signed) THOS. D. CHAPMAN, Colonial Treasurer, and Member of the Executive Council of Tasmania.

Melbourne, 20th March, A.D. 1867.

C.

A List of Branch Mail Services required to connect the whole of the Australasian Colonies with the three lines of Postal Communication between Great Britain and Australasia, *vid* Suez and King George's Sound, *vid* Suez and Singapore, and *vid* Panama and New Zealand.

Agreed to by the Postal Conference held in Melbourne, March 18th, 1867.

I.—FOR THE SERVICE *vid* KING GEORGE'S SOUND.

On the arrival of the Suez steamer at Melbourne, one branch steamer to leave for Launceston and another for New Zealand. On the arrival of the same Suez steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to leave for Brisbane. Return branch steamers to leave Brisbane, New Zealand, and Launceston in time to reach Sydney and Melbourne respectively before the departure of the steamer for Suez. The

Federal Council Act.—1867.

The Adelaide mails by this line will be delivered by the Suez steamer at Kangaroo Island, and conveyed to and from that Island and Port Adelaide by a branch service.

II.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* SINGAPORE.

On the arrival of the Singapore steamer at Sydney, one branch steamer to leave that port for a port in New Zealand, and another for Melbourne. On the arrival of the latter vessel at Melbourne, either the same or another steamer to proceed to Adelaide, and a branch steamer also to proceed to Launceston. Branch steamers to return to Melbourne and Sydney respectively in time to catch a return mail to Singapore.

III.—FOR THE SERVICE *via* PANAMA.

On the arrival of the Panama steamer at Wellington, a branch steamer to leave for Melbourne. On its arrival there, either the same or another vessel to proceed to Adelaide, and another branch steamer to proceed to Launceston. On the arrival of the Panama steamer at Sydney, a branch steamer to proceed to Brisbane. The branch steamers to return to Sydney and Wellington respectively in time for a return mail to Panama.

All the branch services to be performed at a speed of not less than nine and a half (9½) knots per hour. The several branch steamers to take their departure, on the outward journey, within six hours after the arrival of the trunk-line steamer; and, if necessary, to wait her arrival for a period not exceeding three days beyond her due date.

SUMMARY.

I.—KING GEORGE'S SOUND LINE.

1. Kangaroo Island to Port Adelaide and back.
2. Melbourne to Launceston and back.
3. Melbourne to New Zealand and back.
4. Sydney to Brisbane and back.

II.—SINGAPORE LINE.

1. Sydney to New Zealand and back.
2. Sydney to Melbourne and back.
3. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.
4. Melbourne to Launceston and back.

III.—PANAMA LINE.

1. Wellington to Melbourne and back.
2. Melbourne to Adelaide and back.
3. Melbourne to Launceston and back.
4. Sydney to Brisbane and back.