

CORRESPONDENCE ON WEST INDIA MAIL SERVICE.

*The Governor to the Secretary of State.*

King's House, 23rd May, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 196.

MY LORD,

In connection with the recent Mail Contract entered into for the West Indies, a copy of which was forwarded to me in Sir Robert Herbert's printed letter "Library" of the 16th ultimo, I have the honor to furnish for your Lordship's consideration a copy of a letter from the Postmaster of Jamaica calling attention to the curtailment of the period which has hitherto been available for correspondence between the arrival and departure of the steamer at Jamaica.

2. I would urge on your Lordship that, judging from the practice under the present contract, there is no apparent necessity for the detention of the steamer for as long as 24 hours at Barbados, and that the usual detention there of 10 or 12 hours would permit of her arrival at Jacmel and at Jamaica a full day earlier, and, further, that, as pointed out by the Postmaster, a gain of a few hours will be of much importance to Jamaica, especially to the post towns in the north-west of the island, the distance of which from Kingston is considerable.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

H. W. NORMAN.

The Right Honorable the Earl of Derby, K. G.

*Postmaster Jamaica to the Colonial Secretary.*

General Post Office, 15th May, 1885.

No. 4288  
SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 7th instant, No. <sup>S.S. 11b.</sup> 16485, with which was transmitted, for my information, a printed copy of the West India Mail Contract.

2. I notice that the contract has been entered into with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company. The new service is to commence on 1st July next and that the annual payment is to be ninety thousand pounds if mails are despatched from Southampton, or ninety-one thousand two hundred and fifty pounds if the port of despatch is changed to Plymouth.

3. The Time Table (No. 1 Atlantic and Colon Route, via Barbados, once every fortnight) attached to such contract affects Jamaica so adversely and is so different from the previous Time Tables submitted for the consideration of the Jamaica Legislature and on which the Tenders of the Royal Mail Company were approved, in so far as this colony is concerned, that it appears necessary for me to draw attention thereto.

4. The accompanying comparative Tables\* shew the position in as concise a form as possible.

5. Enclosure No. 1 compares the course of voyage to and from Jamaica as submitted for approval, and approved, with that now proposed. I would draw attention to the fact that the interval at Kingston between the arrival of the Outward and the despatch of the Homeward Steamer now five days, but which was accepted as either four days twenty hours or three days nineteen hours, under the Royal Mail Tenders Nos. I. and II. will, in future, be reduced to two days eight hours, from which must be deducted the usual period of about five hours for Departmental treatment of mails on receipt and despatch.

6. The adverse effect on the country Post Offices is more marked as shewn in enclosure 2. For instance the interval for correspondence at the important town of Montego Bay will be reduced from thirty hours at least, as proposed, to four hours. At Lucea from twenty-one hours at least to *nil*. The Down Express not being due until several hours after the Up Express must be despatched and other stations in like manner, as shewn in the statement.

7. A reference to enclosure No. 1 will shew that the chief cause of the lessened time given to Jamaica is the lengthened stoppage at Barbados.

8. It is not apparent why such a serious change of the premises on which the Legislature came to a conclusion should have been made; and more especially without notice given to Jamaica, as one of the parties to the contract. I therefore submit the question for consideration.

I have, &amp;c.,

(Signed) FRED. SULLIVAN.

The Honorable Colonial Secretary,  
Kingston.*Secretary of State to the Governor.*

Downing Street, 28th July, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 26.  
SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 196 of the 23rd of May, with its enclosure, calling attention to the curtailment, under the new West India Mail Contract, of the period which has hitherto been available for correspondence between the arrival and departure of the Steamer at Jamaica, and I transmit to you for your information a copy of a letter on the subject from the General Post Office.

I have, &amp;c.

(Signed) FRED. STANLEY.

Governor Sir Henry Norman, K.C.B., C.I.E., &amp;c., &amp;c., &amp;c.

*The Post Office to the Colonial Office.*

General Post Office, London, 24th July, 1885.

Copy—No. 329 L.  
SIR,

I have laid before the Postmaster General your letter of the 23rd of last month, enclosing copy of a despatch from the Governor of Jamaica, in which he calls attention to the disadvantage which that colony will suffer under the new West India Contract, by the curtailment of the period which has hitherto been available at Jamaica for replying to letters, between the arrival of the Mail from England and the departure of the next Mail for England.

Reference is made to a *pro forma* Time Table which was prepared before the new Contract was entered into, and which gave an interval of 3 days and 19 hours between the arrival and departure, whereas under the actual Time Table appended to the Contract the interval is reduced to 2 days and 8 hours.

The difference thus shown is accounted for by the circumstance that, in framing the first Time Table the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company assumed Saturday as the probable day of departure of the Packet from Southampton, and by shortening the stay at Barbados shewed an earlier arrival at both Jamaica and Colon although, as the Company now state, the stay at Barbados under that plan would have been much shorter than could be desired. On proceeding, however, to settle the actual Time Table, in accordance with the Contract, Saturday was found to be an unsuitable day for the departure from Southampton, and Thursday was eventually decided upon as the most convenient day of the week for the purpose. It was then found that no advantage would be obtained as regards the arrival at Colon by curtailing

the stop at Barbados, and that such curtailment would have the disadvantage of bringing the Packet to Jamaica on a Sunday afternoon, which would no doubt have been inconvenient to the colony. In these circumstances the stay at Barbados was extended to 26 hours and the stay at Jacmel to 2 hours, so as to make the hour of arrival at Jamaica 8 o'clock on Monday morning.

The question has been considered whether the difficulty could be met by an alteration of the homeward arrangements, and by so delaying the departure of the Packet from Colon as to make its arrival at Jamaica somewhat later, and thus increase the interval between the Outward and Homeward Mails; but this cannot be done without retarding the arrival of the Packet at Plymouth to the same extent, thus giving a later delivery of the West India Mail throughout the United Kingdom, and also curtailing the interval for replies, which is now only three days.

Lord John Manners feels sure that Colonel Stanley will readily appreciate the great difficulty of arranging a service like that of the West India Mails so as to give complete satisfaction to all the colonies concerned, as well as to secure the interests of the Mother Country; and, while His Lordship regrets that some inconvenience as regards the interval for replies will result to the important colony of Jamaica under the new arrangements, he is satisfied that on the whole the Time Tables have been prepared with a due regard to the common weal, so far as it is possible to reconcile conflicting interests and claims.

And it may be well to remember that a great improvement of the Mail Service with Jamaica is effected under the new Contract by shortening the course of post between England and Jamaica to the extent of three or four days.

At the same time, while unable to remove immediately the inconvenience complained of by the Government of Jamaica, Lord John Manners desires to assure Colonel Stanley that the point shall be borne in mind in any revision of the existing Time Table that may become necessary, as His Lordship would gladly find an opportunity of effecting, as far as may be practicable, an amelioration of the service between this country and Jamaica.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

Sir R. G. W. Herbert, K.C.B., Colonial Office.

*The Governor to the Secretary of State.*

King's House, 8th September, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 330.

SIR,

I have the honor to inform you that your despatch of the 28th July last, No. 26, with its enclosure from the General Post Office relative to the curtailment under the operation of the new Contract of the period which has hitherto been available for correspondence between the arrival and departure of the Steamer at Jamaica was referred for the remarks of the Postmaster of this island, copy of whose report dated the 31st August, I forward for your information and for transmission, if you approve, to the Postmaster General.

2. I would remark that the representation made to you in my despatch No. 196 of the 23rd May was sent before the new Contract came into operation and was made for the purpose of inducing the Postmaster General to modify the Time Table of the Steamers, so as to give the inhabitants of this colony a longer period in which to answer their letters than was available to them under the Time Table that had been adopted, and which differed from the Time Table sent out in Lord Derby's despatch of the 27th August, 1884, and which had been submitted to the Legislative Council of Jamaica, when an increased subsidy was granted.

3. It is now stated by the General Post Office that the Time Table originally sent out was only a pro forma Table, and the Postmaster General, while willing to bear the point that has been urged in mind when any revision of the existing Time Tables becomes necessary, states that he is unable immediately to remove the inconvenience complained of.

4. Since this correspondence commenced the new Contract has come into operation, and an inconvenience and evil has now made itself manifest that is exciting a very strong feeling in this colony, and I would ask your serious attention to the matter in view to its being brought prominently under the notice of the Postmaster General.

5. In practice it is found that the Mail Steamer invariably arrives here on Sunday mornings. There seems no reason as regards rate of speed why this should not continue, and no doubt by this earlier arrival time is given for letters to be answered from all important places in the island, although perhaps a day longer would be more convenient, but the circumstance of the arrival taking place on Sundays has given rise to great dissatisfaction.

6. In a colony like this, which I am happy to say clings to all that connects it with England, the arrival of the Mail Steamer from Southampton is the great event of the fortnight, and when it comes in on Sunday there is a general interruption in Kingston of the quiet and rest of the Sabbath. Not only have the Postal and Customs Departments to be at work and a special train to be run on the railway on which there is otherwise no Sunday traffic, but the cartmen and drivers of public conveyances are busily employed, and the city has a regular week-day appearance.

7. Ministers of Religion and those who are interested in the observance of Sunday as a day of rest are greatly opposed to this arrangement, and I am led to believe even those who do not object on religious grounds still feel that it is undesirable to have a fortnightly disturbance of the ordinary Sunday quiet, while the colony is put to no inconsiderable expense by having to give public officers additional remuneration for working on Sunday and by having to run a special train on Sunday with the Mails.

8. The feeling in Kingston and its neighbourhood has been expressed in a Memorial addressed to me, copy of which I enclose. It was presented by a deputation of Ministers of Religion of different

denominations and bore the signatures of 496 persons of all classes including those of some the most influential firms and individuals. While I desire to call your attention and that of the Postmaster General to this Petition I do not concur in the remedy which it proposes, namely, that the Steamer should arrive on Saturdays. Such an arrangement would not relieve the Customs Department from having Sunday work, and as respects the Postal Department it would simply shift Sunday work from the Kingston Post Offices to several Country Offices.

9. It is not unworthy of remark that by the present Time Table Homeward Steamers reach Barbados on a Sunday, and that they arrive at Plymouth on a Saturday often presumably too late for letters to be delivered in London and in many other places until Monday morning.

10. The proposal of the Postmaster of Jamaica in the 4th paragraph of his memorandum of the 31st August has therefore my warmest support, and I trust that you will strongly recommend its adoption to the Postmaster General unless there are strong objections to it which are not at present apparent.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

H. W. NORMAN.

The Right Honorable Colonel F. A. Stanley, M.P.  
&c., &c., &c.

*The Postmaster for Jamaica to the Colonial Secretary,*

General Post Office, 31st August, 1885.

No. <sup>112</sup>/<sub>6305</sub>  
SIR,

I have the honor as directed in your letter of 22nd instant, No. <sup>4614</sup>/<sub>8836</sub>, to offer in the shape of a memorandum my remarks on the observations of the Imperial Post Office as to the curtailment of the time in Jamaica for the answer to packet letters received from England, &c., under the new Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

2. These remarks will, I hope, also meet the objections contained in the Memorial to His Excellency the Governor signed by certain Ministers of Religion and others, and also the representation on the same subject that I understand is about to be made to the Governor by the Chamber of Commerce, a deputation from whom was good enough to ask me for information on Thursday last and to whom I gave, in rough, the information I now supply.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

FRED. SULLIVAN.

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Kingston.

*Memorandum of the Postmaster to the Colonial Secretary.*

General Post Office, 31st August, 1885.

In return to the representation from Jamaica as to the shortened interval for replying to correspondence from England, &c., by Royal Mail Steamers under the new Contract the Imperial Post Office says (see Mr. Blackwoods letter of 24th July, 1885, to the Colonial Office)—

- (1.) That the Time Tables submitted for consideration were only pro forma.
  - (2.) That, on consideration, the times stated were found to be unsuitable and had to be altered.
  - (3.) That the stated day of departure, viz., Saturday, was found to be inconvenient and had to be altered to Thursday.
  - (4.) That to meet certain objections the time stated in the Time Table were altered so as to extend the stay or stoppage at Barbados and thereby prevent an earlier delivery of the Mails at Jamaica than 8 a.m. on Monday; and
  - (5.) That every effort has been made to meet the legitimate claims of the several colonies.
2. In return I would say—
- (1.) That the Time Tables submitted for the consideration of the Legislative Council were accepted as having been fully considered; and it was in consequence of the completeness of the information contained in those furnished by the Royal Mail Company that they recommended themselves for favorable consideration. Apart, of course, from the admitted superiority of the Royal Mail Company as shown by past performances.
  - (2.) That the necessity for altering such Time Table\* is not apparent and such alteration has seriously affected Jamaica interests.
  - (3.) That the accompanying comparative Tables\* show that Saturday is the last day for starting from Southampton, as avoiding Sunday work at the places where that work would be most objectionable, namely, the larger colonies.
  - (4.) That (to the advantage of Jamaica in so far as extended interval for reply is concerned) the practical working of the Time Table brings the Outward Steamer to Jamaica at 8 a.m. on each alternate Sunday regularly; and
  - (5.) That whilst no doubt is expressed as to the desire to meet the claims of the several colonies concerned it is to be regretted that so much unnecessary Sunday work should have been thrown, not as provided by the approved Time Table but as a result of its practical working, not only on Jamaica, but also in respect of the delivery of the return Mail at Plymouth.

3. I enclose—

1. Statement shewing the working of the present Time Tables as compared with the old ones, and with those that were tendered to the Council for approval.

\*Not Printed.

2. Statements shewing the effect of the despatch of the West India Mail from Southampton on each day of the week (except Sunday).

I. According to Tender No. 2 Table No. 1, as considered and accepted by the Legislative Council.

II. According to the printed Time Table now in operation.

III. Memorandum shewing actual working since commencement in so far as Barbados, Jamaica and Plymouth are concerned.

4. Accepting the fact that the Mails arrive at Barbados twenty four hours before time the outward dates for Jamaica, Demerara, Trinidad and Colon are anticipated by one day; and must be so read: the Homeward departure remaining unaltered. It is therefore apparent that Saturday is the proper day of the week for despatch of the West India Mail from Southampton as originally proposed.

5. It would relieve all principal Colonies of Sunday work and bring the return Mails to England on Monday night or Tuesday morning, as the case may be, instead of Saturday night, which has on two out of three occasions involved either a Sunday delivery or delay.

6. Accepting the Saturday despatch from Southampton it would be very advantageous to Jamaica, especially to persons resident in the interior, if Table No. 1 of Tender No. 2 were adopted, especially as, in its actual working, it would, by arriving one day earlier than stated, afford to the respective Colonies extended time for replying to correspondence and relieve the principal Colonies and the Home Offices of all Sunday work.

7. With respect to the avoidance of Sunday work for the Jamaica Post Office, the suggestion that the Steamer should be timed to arrive at Kingston on Saturday by reason of an increased rate of speed on the voyage to Barbados is open to the objection, that a Saturday arrival would throw such Sunday work on the Country Post Offices instead of on Kingston.

8. In conclusion I would remark that under Tender No. 2 Table No. 1 which was accepted by the Jamaica Legislature the Mails are timed to arrive at Colon on Friday at 5 p.m., to connect with the South Pacific Mail Steamers leaving Panama on the Saturday; and practical experience shows that even under the present Time Table with a Saturday despatch from Southampton the same connection could also be made although without so large a margin of time to spare.

(Signed)

FRED. SULLIVAN,

The Honorable Colonial Secretary,  
Kingston.

starting the Mail a day or a portion of a day <sup>earlier</sup> from England, or by increasing the speed of the Steamers (which we are informed is quite practicable) or by a combination of these plans so as to bring the Steamers into the port of Kingston in good time every alternate Saturday. This slight modification of the present Royal Mail Service, besides removing many serious objections urged against the existing system as hereinbefore expressed, would have the very great advantage, by the gain of an additional day, of meeting the convenience and satisfying the reasonable requirements of this Island generally, and of not interfering with the other colonial engagements of the Company, while the shortening of the voyage, which one of our suggestions involves, would tend to popularize the Service and attract passengers throughout the whole of the West Indies.

And your Memorialists as in duty bound will ever pray.

Jamaica, 18th August, 1885.

496 Signatures.

*The Secretary of State to the Governor.*

Downing Street, 30th October, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 119.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State to transmit to you, for your information, with reference to your despatches No. 330 of the 3rd ultimo and No. 354 of the 26th ultimo the documents specified in the annexed schedule.

Date.	Description of Document.
C. O to G. P. O., 10th October, 1885. G. P. O. to C. O. 23rd October, 1885.	Copy of Correspondence with the General Post Office on the subject of the Jamaica Mail Service.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

ROBERT G. W. HERBERT.

The Officer Administering the Government of Jamaica.

*The Colonial Office to the Post Office.*

Downing Street, 10th October, 1885.

SIR,

With reference to your letter of the 24th of July, I am directed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies to transmit to you for the favourable consideration of the Postmaster General a copy of a despatch from the Governor of Jamaica,\* enclosing a report from the Colonial Postmaster suggesting that Saturday would be the most convenient day for the departure from Southampton of the Royal Mail Steam Vessels, a suggestion strongly recommended by the Governor for the reasons stated in his despatch.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

EDWD. WINGFIELD.

The Secretary to the Post Office.

*The General Post Office to the Colonial Office.*

General Post Office, London, 23rd October, 1885.

(Copy.)—Reg. No. 461 L:

SIR,

The Postmaster General has had under consideration your letter of the 10th instant, covering a further despatch from the Governor of Jamaica on the subject of the Packet Service under the new Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company.

The details now set forth by the Governor serve to emphasize the remarks made in the letter of the 24th of July from this Department, concerning the great difficulty of meeting fully the desires of all parties concerned.

The inconvenience attending the abridgment of the interval for replying to correspondence, between the arrival of the Outward Packet at Jamaica and the departure of the Homeward Packet, having been represented to the Postmaster General an endeavour was made to reduce that inconvenience.

By shortening the stop at Barbados and at Jacmel and by performing the service at a better speed than the Contract provides the Company, as in practice, managed to bring the Outward Packet into Kingston harbour on each occasion 24 hours before Time Table time, and so afford a long interval.

But this earlier arrival takes place on Sunday morning; and it now appears that Jamaica leans strongly in favour of having no work done in its capital on Sunday.

If the Company could be induced to drive the Outward Packet faster still and get her to Kingston on Saturday evening, Jamaica would, it seems, object to the arrangement on the score that people out of the capital would have to work on Sunday.

\* 330—3rd September, 1885.

The Postmaster General understands that nothing short of a departure from England on Saturday, so as to secure an arrival at Jamaica on Wednesday or perhaps Tuesday, will satisfy the colony; and I am directed to state that the question of such a change in the arrangements had been exhaustively examined before Colonel Stanley was informed that a Saturday departure was impracticable, and that the actual arrangement was, all things considered, the best that could be devised in the general interest.

Lord John Manners directs me to acquaint you, for the Secretary of State's information, that, having attentively considered the further representation from Jamaica, his Lordship is still unable to make the change desired, but that he will, as previously stated, bear the wishes of the colonial community in mind in the event of any future alteration of the Service.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed)

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

SIR R. G. W. HERBERT, K.C.B., Colonial Office.

*The Governor to the Secretary of State.*

King's House, 23rd October, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 386.

SIR,

In continuation of my despatch of the 8th September, 1885, on the subject of the arrival of the Royal Mail Steamers at Kingston upon Sundays and of the period during which it was possible to reply by return Steamer to letters from England, I have to inform you that the Legislative Council as a body is strongly opposed to the present arrangement.

2. As you are aware the Contract time of arrival at Kingston is every alternate Monday morning, but the speed at which the Steamers usually proceed has brought them in on Sundays. This though giving more time to answer letters was objected to by those who signed the petition I have forwarded and by many who had not the opportunity of signing it, but the plan now apparently being adopted of coming in at the Contract time on Monday is even more strongly objected to as rendering it impossible for persons who reside in many parts of the island to answer letters by the return Mail which leaves on Wednesday, while even for those who live in Kingston, in the neighbourhood, the time allowed is considered too short.

3. I say by the arrangement apparently adopted, for I have received no instructions that the arrival upon Monday has been ordered; but it is the fact that while every Steamer up to the last that arrived came in on Sundays the last Steamer came on Monday at the Contract time and the next Steamer expected has left Barbados at a time which renders it almost impossible that she can reach Kingston before Monday. If this arrangement has been ordered in view to meeting the objection to arrivals on Sunday it must have been directed in anticipation of any official remonstrance from Jamaica, as my despatch forwarding the petition against Sunday arrivals could not have reached London at the earliest before the 3rd October, and the last arrived Steamer which came in on Monday left Southampton on the 24th September. I am informed that she could easily have arrived on Sunday or even on Saturday but came part of the voyage at a reduced speed so as to arrive on Monday.

4. This change, while remedying the grievance of a Sunday arrival, has in fact created what I think is felt to be at least as great a grievance, namely, the extremely short interval allowed in which to answer letters.

5. In response to questions in the Council the recommendation of the Postmaster of Jamaica for the Service to be arranged for as shewn in the Time Table No. 1 in Tender No. 2, which was approved by the Council last year, was laid upon the table and the Council were informed that I had warmly supported that recommendation but that there had not been sufficient time for me to receive a reply after reference to the Postmaster General.

6. Notwithstanding this explanation the Member for Westmoreland in Committee of the whole Council on the Estimates for 1885-86 moved that the sum of £1,489, entered as the balance of contribution under the Contract of 1885 with Royal Mail Steam Company, be struck out as the Contract had not been fulfilled as far as Jamaica is concerned. It may be explained that it was thought fair not to increase the sum of £3,000 originally charged under the head of Postal Department and thus swell the postal charges, as it was felt that other interests than those connected with the Post derived benefit and therefore the increase to the previous amount of contribution was charged under the head of Miscellaneous.

7. I pointed out that I was obliged to the Council for expressing an opinion which would be a strong support to my recommendation but that I trusted they would not interfere with this vote, and that while I doubted whether they could lawfully withdraw from the Contract I thought it would be very undignified to attempt to do so while the reference I had made was still pending, and I pointed out that although the Time Table accepted by the colony had not been finally adopted and the time left for answering letters had been curtailed still the island had gained a very substantial advantage by having two more services in the year. In answer to my appeal the mover said that after what I had urged he would only move to reduce the vote by one-half. This was seconded and put to the vote when seven members voted for the motion and seven against. My casting vote threw out the motion but no doubt it would have been carried if it had not been for the somewhat unusual circumstance that three of the elected members were that day absent.

8. The three grounds upon which the Council voted the higher rate of subsidy last year were shewn in the report of a Select Committee dated 10th October, 1884, which was adopted by the Council after a division and a copy of which I transmitted to Earl Derby in despatch No. 430 of 21st October, 1884. These grounds were—

- I. Increase in number of services in the year from two every month to one in every fortnight, or two additional in the course of the year.
- II. A shorter voyage between England and Jamaica.

III. An interval for the reply to letters as satisfactory as that existing under the previous system.

9. The first condition has been strictly carried out.

10. The second condition as to speed has been disappointing for by the old Contract the time was 17 days and 14 hours or exactly the same as under the new arrangement, while in the Time Table sent out last year and which was what the Committee and Council had in view the Contract time for the outward passage was put at 16 days and 18 hours. There has been therefore no gain in speed over the old arrangement and there has been a decrease of 20 hours on what the colony was led to expect. In addition to this it is apprehended from what is stated in the third paragraph of this despatch that in future the vessels may not be allowed to arrive before the Contract time while hitherto, under both the old and new Contract, they usually reached Jamaica in advance of that time.

11. The third condition is very injuriously altered for while under the old Contract there was an interval of 5 days between arrival and departure of the Mails at Kingston and of 4 days 20 hours or 3 days 19 hours under the alternative Time Tables accepted by the Council, the interval is now reduced to 2 days and 8 hours, a period quite insufficient to enable answers to be sent from several of the towns and from a large extent of country in this island.

12. I trust you will see fit to urge upon the Postmaster General in the strongest manner to cause the adoption of the Time Table which was accepted here as sufficiently advantageous to justify an increased subsidy. I can assure you that the feeling of dissatisfaction expressed in Council is very generally shared by the community.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

H. W. NORMAN.

The Right Honorable Colonel F. A. Stanley, M.P., &c. &c. &c.

*The Secretary of State to the Governor.*

Downing Street, 27th November, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 141.

SIR,

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your despatch, No. 386 of the 23rd of October, and to inform you that I have communicated a copy of it to the Postmaster General, in order that the wishes of the Legislative Council may be known should it be found possible hereafter to alter the Time Table of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company,

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

FRED. STANLEY.

Sir H. W. Norman, K.C.B., C.I.E., &c., &c., &c.

*The Secretary of State to the Governor.*

Downing Street, 30th December, 1885.

Jamaica—No. 179.

SIR,

I am directed by the Secretary of State to transmit to you, for your information, with reference to his despatch No. 141 of the 27th ultimo, the document specified in the annexed Schedule.

Date.

Description of Document.

21st December, 1885.

Post Office to Colonial Office.  
As to the Mail Service with Jamaica under the new Contract,

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

ROBERT G. W. HERBERT.

The Officer Administering the Government of Jamaica.

*Post Office to Colonial Office.*

General Post Office, London, 21st December, 1885.

No. 153,594.

SIR,

In reply to your letter of the 27th ultimo, I am directed by the Postmaster General to acquaint you, for the information of the Secretary of State, that he has again communicated with the Directors of the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company with reference to the Mail Service to Jamaica under the new Contract.

His Lordship has drawn special attention to the circumstance that during the first six outward voyages from this country the Packet arrived at Kingston about 24 hours in advance of the Contract time, but that latterly the Company's Commanders appear to have reduced the speed of the ships in order to adhere to the prescribed Time Table, by arriving at 8 a.m. on Monday, a course which it seems is more strongly objected to by the Government of Jamaica than that of arriving on Sunday, inasmuch as it renders impracticable any reply by return mail to letters addressed to the interior of the island.

It appears to be admitted by the reply of the Directors that the attention of their Commanders had been drawn to the desirableness of adhering to the Table times for arriving at the different places on the outward voyage, partly with a view to uniformity in conducting the Service which is thought to be



of great importance, and partly, as regards Kingston, to meet the views of those who have an objection to the arrival of the Packets at that port on Sunday.

The Directors state, however, that there is every wish on their part to meet the views of the Postmaster General, as well as those of the inhabitants of Jamaica, as to giving a longer interval at that island for answering letters, and as this might be to some extent forwarded by an earlier arrival of the Outward Packet at Jamaica they are willing that the vessels should arrive there earlier than the Table time, when it can be done without inconvenience, and they have given instructions accordingly.

Lord John Manners hopes that the steps which have been taken in this matter will be satisfactory to Colonel Stanley.

I have, &c.,  
(Signed)

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

Sir Robert G. W. Herbert, K.C.B., &c., &c., &c., Colonial Office.

Enclosure to Despatch No. 5 of 10th February, 1886, from the Secretary of State for the Colonies.  
*General Post Office to Colonial Office,*

General Post Office, London, 6th February, 1886.

SIR,

Referring to recent correspondence respecting the disadvantageous position in which Jamaica is placed with regard to its mail service under the new Contract with the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, and particularly to your letter of the 31st December, last, I am directed by the Postmaster General to request that you will be good enough to lay before the Secretary of State for the Colonies some of the principal reasons which preclude this Department, from adopting the pro formâ Time Table, submitted by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company in their letter of the 19th of July, 1884, although it is clearly more suitable to the interests of Jamaica than the one now in operation.

It must be borne in mind that before any of the Tenders sent in for the West India Mail Service were accepted each Company tendering was called upon to submit a pro formâ Time Table illustrating practically the nature of the Service they were prepared to perform. The Table sent in by the Royal Mail Steam Packet Company as illustrating its Tender No. 2 was the outcome of this demand, but it was not intended as the Council of Government at Jamaica seems to suppose to be regarded as an essential part of the Tender.

On the Company's Tender being accepted it was necessary to examine carefully this pro formâ Time Table in order to judge of its suitability to the postal service generally; and it was then found that a Saturday morning's departure from Southampton was impracticable inasmuch as it involved a heavy accession of postal work in London on Friday evening, an evening already fully and even inconveniently occupied by the despatch of the important mails to India, China and Australia, as well as those to the West Coast of Africa.

Besides this difficulty in itself quite sufficient to preclude the adoption of a Saturday morning's departure from Southampton, it was found that the scheme involved an arrival of the Packets at Demerara and Trinidad on a Sunday, every voyage, a state of things which would certainly have been strongly objected to by those colonies, whose interests and convenience must necessarily be considered as they not only contribute like Jamaica towards the general mail subsidy but pay an extra sum on account of the special advantages they derive from the acceptance of the No. 2 Tender.

In these circumstances it was absolutely necessary to select another day of departure from Southampton and after careful consideration Thursday was eventually found to be the day of the week which had the greatest number of advantages and was accordingly adopted.

As regards the appointed stay at Barbados on the outward voyage complaint is made by Jamaica that while it was limited by the pro formâ Time Table of 1884 to ten hours it has been extended in the working Time Table to twenty-six hours, thus retarding the arrival of the Packet at Jamaica.

The immediate reason for this alteration was explained in my letter of the 24th of July last, and nothing more can be usefully said except that the indicated stay in port is not actual but only permissive, and that in effect the Packets leave Barbados for Jacmel and Jamaica as soon as the necessary work can be accomplished. This is shown by the fact that during the first six voyages under the new Contract the mails were delivered at Jamaica about twenty-four hours in advance of the time indicated in the Table and they will probably be delivered equally early in future. By an unfortunate coincidence the mails thus reach Jamaica on Sunday instead of on Monday, but for this inconvenience no remedy can be devised at present. This earlier arrival removes to a great extent the complaint of the short interval allowed at Jamaica between the arrival of the mails from England and the next departure for England, for it gives 3 days 8 hours instead of 2 days 8 hours prescribed by the Time Table.

On the whole Jamaica benefits under the new Contract by a shorter course of Post to and from England to the extent of 2 days 8 hours, and has also the advantage of 26 mails in each year instead of 24, and it appears to the Postmaster General that the sum of about £1,000 a year which the colony has consented to pay, in addition to the £3,100 a year contributed by it to the loss under the old Contract, is fully compensated by three very considerable advantages.

The Postmaster General thinks that if these additional circumstances were communicated to the Governor of Jamaica he would be enabled to place the matter in a better light when the question of the mail subsidy next comes under discussion in Council.

In any general revision of the West India Service the Imperial Post Office would naturally be ready, as more than once stated, to give its best consideration to the claims of Jamaica.

I have, &c.,

(Signed)

ALGERNON TURNER.

Sir Robert G. W. Herbert, K.C.B., Colonial Office.