

(No. 72.)



1890.

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PARLIAMENT OF TASMANIA.

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POST AND TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE, 1890 :

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS.

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Presented to both Houses of Parliament by His Excellency's Command.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

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POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE, 1890.

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*REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS*

OF THE

CONFERENCE HELD IN ADELAIDE.

MAY, 1890.

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MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS, REPORT OF THE DEBATES, PAPERS LAID BEFORE THE CONFERENCE,  
AND REPORTS OF PERMANENT HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

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ADELAIDE:

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1890.

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# POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE.

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## *Reports of the Delegates to the Intercolonial Postal & Telegraph Conference held in Adelaide during May, 1890.*

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- I. The Colonies represented at the Conference were New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania.
- II. The Conference sat on the 22nd, 23rd, 26th, and 27th days of May, at the Parliament House, Adelaide.
- III. The following were the principal Resolutions carried at the Conference:—

### A.—RELATING TO POSTAL SERVICE.

1. "That the Conference agrees to the proposed reduction to 2½d. per half-ounce "on all letters dispatched to places beyond the colonies, and recommends the discontinuance of the accelerated train service between Brindisi and Calais."
2. "That the rate on postcards be reduced to 2d. to the United Kingdom and to those countries beyond the colonies to which the postcard system extends. The rates on packets and newspapers to remain as at present."
3. "That these colonies should unite in arranging with the Indian Government for the introduction of postcards between India and Australasia at the same rate as to England."
4. "I. That this Conference approves of the Australian Postal Convention as submitted by heads of departments (and now amended), and agrees to recommend to the respective Governments that it be brought into operation on the 1st January, 1891. II. That the colonies of New Zealand and Western Australia be invited to become parties to the Convention."
5. "That in any future mail contract across the Pacific Ocean, if arranged for by the colony of New Zealand, the other colonies shall pay similar poundage rates to New Zealand to those paid by the non-contracting colonies to the contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony paying all charges to destination."
6. "That the Postal Convention with the United States of America, drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, be adopted by the colonies generally."
7. "That

7. "That the Conference recommends that the several Postal Departments be asked to provide, in any future legislation, for the post office departments to have power to stop delivery or registration of any letters addressed to, or to issue money-orders in favor of, any sweep promoters." (New South Wales dissented.)

8. "That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that the limit on intercolonial money orders be increased from £10 to £20."

## B—RELATING TO TELEGRAPH SERVICE.

1. That the following terms for reduction of cable rates, as proposed by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, be accepted, namely:—"Firstly, the tariff will be reduced to 4s. for ordinary messages, 3s. 6d. for Government messages, and 1s. 10d. for press messages during one year of trial. If at the end of the first year no very serious loss is involved, the experiment will be continued for two years more, and such extension must be at the option of the company. If the loss should be nearly recovered at the end of the three years, the arrangement will be extended for the remainder of the subsidy. The whole proposal is conditional upon South Australia accepting 5d.—the transit rate." (Queensland dissented.)

2. "That in the event of South Australia reducing the telegraph rates on the trans-continental line, in accordance with any resolution agreed to by this Conference, the several colonies represented at this Conference, including South Australia, agree on the basis of population to guarantee to South Australia a revenue from the line equivalent to that received at present." (Queensland dissented.)

3. "That any colony or country not joining in the contribution to subsidy and guarantee, shall pay proportionately higher rates."

4. "That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference—1. That between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge for twelve words, and 1½d. for each additional word; names and addresses to be paid for. 2. Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 2d. for each additional word. 3. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 3d. for every extra word. 4. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for twelve words for each colony, plus the cable rates. Twelve words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited. 5. That the reduced rates come into operation on January 1st, 1891."

5. "That it is considered desirable to adopt a system of urgent telegrams, at double rates, locally and intercolonially."

6. "That the Uniform Intercolonial Telegraph Regulations, as drawn by heads of departments, be adopted."

7. "That in the opinion of this Conference it is very desirable that the heads of the Post and Telegraph Departments of the Australian colonies should frequently meet—annually, if possible—to consider and report to their respective Governments on all questions affecting the postal and telegraphic services generally."

8. "That the President forward to His Excellency the Governor of South Australia a copy of the resolutions agreed to by the Conference regarding the reduction of postal and cable rates to the United Kingdom, requesting that his Excellency will forward it to the British Government by cable, with the expression of the earnest desire of this Conference that, as England is equally interested with the colonies in securing and maintaining cheap telegraphic communication, the proposal of the Conference that Great Britain should contribute towards the subsidies and guarantees required may be accepted by the Imperial Government."

9. "That the President inform the Agent-General of South Australia of the acceptance by the Conference of the amended offer of the Eastern Extension Cable Company, and request him to confer with the Agents-General of the several colonies represented

“ represented at this Conference in order that they may jointly urge upon the Imperial Government their acceptance of the proposal that England should contribute one-half of the subsidies and guarantees required in order to secure the reduced rates agreed to for telegraphic communication between England and the colonies of Australasia.”

Appended to this report will be found—

- i. Minutes of proceedings of the Conference.
- ii. Full report of the debates thereat.
- iii. Australian Postal Convention.
- iv. Intercolonial telegraph regulations.
- v. Proposed Postal Convention with the United States of America.
- vi. Reports of heads of departments and other papers.

Signed on behalf of New South Wales,

DANIEL O'CONNOR, Postmaster-General.

Signed on behalf of Victoria,

FREDK. T. DERHAM, Postmaster-General.

Signed on behalf of South Australia,

J. H. GORDON, Minister of Education.

Signed on behalf of Queensland,

CHARLES POWERS, Postmaster-General.

Signed on behalf of Tasmania,

B. STAFFORD BIRD, Postmaster-General.

JAMES BATH, Secretary.

MEMO.—The resolutions 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9, relating to Telegraph Service, were passed after the Postmaster-General of Queensland left the Conference, and have not been assented to by him.

# POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE.

## MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

*Parliament House, Adelaide, Thursday, May 22nd, 1890.*

The Conference met at 3 o'clock.

### Present—

#### Representing New South Wales—

The Honorable Daniel O'Connor, M.P., Postmaster-General.  
S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary General Post Office.  
E. C. Cracknell, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraph.

#### Representing Victoria—

The Honorable Frederic T. Derham, M.P., Postmaster-General.  
James Smibert, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General.

#### Representing South Australia—

The Honorable J. H. Gordon, M.L.C. (Minister of Education).  
Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S., Postmaster-General.

#### Representing Queensland—

The Honorable Charles Powers, M.P., Postmaster-General.

#### Representing Tasmania—

The Honorable B. Stafford Bird, M.P., Postmaster-General.  
Thomas H. Magrath, Esq., Secretary Post-office Department.  
Robert Henry, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

### ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That the Hon. J. H. Gordon (Minister of Education for South Australia) preside at this Conference."  
Carried.

The Hon. J. H. Gordon then took his seat as President. He thanked the members of the Conference for the honor they had conferred on him, and expressed the pleasure he felt in meeting them in Adelaide.

### APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY.

The President moved—"That Mr. James Bath (Secretary to the Minister of Education) be appointed secretary of the Conference."

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded.  
Carried.

### ADMISSION OF PRESS.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That the Press be admitted to the meetings of the Conference."  
The Hon. F. T. Derham seconded.  
Carried.

### MESSAGES FROM NEW ZEALAND AND WESTERN AUSTRALIA.

The President and the Hon. F. T. Derham laid their commissions on the table.

The President read the following messages from New Zealand:—"Wellington, May 9th—Regret it will not be possible for me to attend proposed Conference in Adelaide, or to send a representative, as our Parliament meets early in June. Moreover, I have already informed your Premier that we cannot recommend Parliament to accept Mr. Goschen's proposals.—H. A. ATKINSON, Premier." "Wellington, May 15th—Ministers busy preparing for early meeting of Parliament. Under the circumstances I much regret that New Zealand will be unrepresented at the Conference, which I trust will be a success.—E. MITCHELSON, Postmaster-General." Also the following message from Western Australia:—"Perth, May 21st—This Government unable to send representative to Conference to consider Mr. Goschen's proposal for reduction of postal rates, but will await report of Conference, which I shall be glad to receive as early as possible.—O. BURT, Acting Colonial Secretary."

PAPERS.

## PAPERS.

The President laid on the table the following Papers :—

1. Conference Report, Melbourne, 1889.
2. Departmental Conference Report, Sydney, 1890.
3. Cablegram from the Agent-General for South Australia, dated April 30th, giving Mr. Goschen's proposal to reduce the postage on letters to 2½d.
4. The Postmaster-General of South Australia (Mr. Todd's) report on Mr. Goschen's proposal.
5. Mr. Todd's report on reduction of intercolonial telegraph rates.
6. Mr. Todd's report on reduction of cable rates.
7. Sir John Pender's letter on same subject, and
8. The copy of agreement between South Australia and Western Australia as to the Roebuck Bay cable.

## BUSINESS OF THE CONFERENCE.

The President then addressed the Conference, and said he would ask the delegates to consider *inter alia* the following questions:—(1) Mr. Goschen's proposal to reduce the rate of postage between the United Kingdom and the colonies. (2) The proposal of the Eastern Extension Company in regard to the reduction of cable rates. (3) The adoption of an intercolonial postal convention. (4) Uniform intercolonial telegraph regulations. (5) Reduction of intercolonial telegraph rates. (6) An amended postal convention with the United States of America.

## PACIFIC CABLE.

The President read a letter addressed to the Hon. F. T. Derham by Mr. Audley Coote, stating that the project of the Pacific cable was temporarily arrested pending the proposed conference between the Canadian and Australasian representatives. The writer expressed a hope that nothing would be done by the Conference that would impede or militate against the proposed Pacific cable.

## DRAFT REPORTS BY HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

1. The President proposed, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That heads of departments prepare and submit draft Intercolonial Postal Convention."

Carried.

2. The President proposed, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That heads of departments prepare and submit a draft of uniform Intercolonial Telegraph Regulations."

Carried.

3. The President proposed, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That with reference to proposed reduction of postage to the United Kingdom, heads of departments be requested to bring up a report as to the cost of extending the reduced rate to and beyond the United Kingdom, and as to the relative advantages offered by the Naples route, and the accelerated train service, and generally to the proposed reduction as applied to all other services."

Carried.

4. The Hon. Charles Powers proposed, and the Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded—"That the permanent heads of departments be requested to consider and bring up a report to the members of the Conference, showing the effect on the revenue of each colony between—

"The adoption of an intercolonial (including Tasmania) 1s. telegram of ten words, exclusive of addresses and signatures. The receipts to be divided between the colonies proportionately transmitting the messages. The charge for each additional word after ten to be 1d., and

"The alteration proposed of crediting to each colony 6d. instead of 1s. for intercolonial telegrams.

"Both calculations to be based on the number of telegrams at present sent from and to the different colonies."

Carried.

## INTERCOLONIAL MONEY ORDERS.

5. The President proposed, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that the limit on intercolonial money orders be increased from £10 to £20."

Carried.

## NOTICES OF MOTION.

1. The Hon. D. O'Connor to move—"That any future mail contracts across the Pacific Ocean be left to the colony of New Zealand to arrange for, other colonies paying similar poundage rates to New Zealand to those paid by the non-contracting colonies to the contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony paying all charges to destination."

2. The Hon. F. T. Derham to move—"That the rate for cablegrams to the United Kingdom be—for the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word—the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue, and the other half being equally divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies; to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy."

3. The Hon. C. Powers to move—"That it is considered desirable to adopt a system of urgent telegrams, at double rates, locally and intercolonially."

4. The Hon. F. T. Derham to move—"That these colonies should unite in arranging with the Indian Government for the introduction of postcards between India and Australasia."

The Hon. F. T. Derham said he intended to bring before the Conference the question of sweep and gambling circulars passing through the post, and whether it was advisable to legislate on the subject.

The Conference adjourned to 10.30 the following morning.

Confirmed,

J. H. GORDON, President.

May 23rd, 1890.



*Parliament House, Friday, May 23rd, 1890.*

SECOND DAY.

The Conference met at 10·30 o'clock.

Present—

Representing New South Wales—

The Hon. Daniel O'Connor, M.L.A., Postmaster-General.

S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary General Post-Office.

E. C. Cracknell, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Representing Victoria—

The Hon. Frederic T. Derham, M.P., Postmaster-General.

James Smibert, Esq.; Deputy Postmaster-General.

Representing South Australia—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon, M.L.C., Minister of Education (President).

Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S., Postmaster-General.

Representing Queensland—

The Hon. Charles Powers, M.P., Postmaster-General.

Representing Tasmania—

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, M.P., Postmaster-General.

Thomas H. Magrath, Esq., Secretary Post-Office.

R. Henry, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Minutes of the proceedings of the Conference of the previous day were read and confirmed.

The Hon. D. O'Connor laid his commission on the table, and the Hon. Charles Powers a copy of Executive minute authorising his appointment.

REDUCTION OF POSTAGE TO THE UNITED KINGDOM.

Mr. Todd read report by heads of departments on the proposed reduction of postage to the United Kingdom. (See resolution No. 3 of previous day.)

To be printed.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That the Conference agrees to the proposed reduction to 2½d. per half-ounce on all letters dispatched to places beyond the colonies, and recommends the discontinuance of the accelerated train service between Brindisi and Calais."

Carried.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird said the resolution just agreed to would affect the rates for postcards and packets. He would submit a motion on the question later on.

A letter was read from Mr. S. Knevett, agent for the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, informing the Conference that Sir John Pender had cabled that the Agents-General might send telegrams to their respective Governments on the cable tariff question free of cost, and that the same privilege was extended to the Conference delegates.

PACIFIC OCEAN MAIL CONTRACT.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That in any future mail contract across the Pacific Ocean, if arranged for by the colony of New Zealand, the other colonies shall pay similar poundage rates to New Zealand to those paid by the non-contracting colonies to the contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony paying all charges to destination."

Carried.

REDUCTION IN RATE OF CABLEGRAMS.

The Hon. F. T. Derham, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That the rate for cablegrams be—for the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word—the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue, and the other half being equally divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies; to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy."

After a lengthened discussion, the Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That the Conference resolve itself into a Committee to further consider the motion."

Seconded by the Hon. B. Stafford Bird, and carried.

THE CONFERENCE IN COMMITTEE.

After further discussion, the Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That in the event of South Australia reducing the telegraph rates on the transcontinental line, in accordance with any resolution agreed to by this Conference, the several colonies represented at this Conference, including South Australia, agree on the basis of population to guarantee to South Australia a revenue from the line equivalent to that received at present."

Carried, the Hon. Charles Powers withholding his consent.

The Hon. F. T. Derham's motion was carried without amendment.

THE CONFERENCE RESUMED.

The Conference resumed, and the President reported that the Committee had agreed to the resolution of the Hon. Mr. Derham, viz.:—"That the rate for cablegrams be—for the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word—the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue and the other half being equitably divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies; to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy."

The report was adopted, the Hon. Charles Powers withholding his consent.

URGENT

## URGENT TELEGRAMS.

The Hon. Charles Powers, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded—"That it is desirable to adopt a system of urgent telegrams at double rates locally and intercolonially."  
Carried.

## POSTCARDS WITH INDIA.

The Hon. F. T. Derham, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That these colonies should unite in arranging with the Indian Government for the introduction of postcards between India and Australasia at the same rate as to England."  
Carried.

## CABLE RATES—MESSAGE TO AGENT-GENERAL.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That the President be requested to cable the decision of Conference as to cable rates to the Agent-General of South Australia, asking him to confer with other Agents-General, and inform the Eastern Extension Company of result, and ask Sir John Pender if he, on behalf of his company, will agree to proposal of colonies."  
Carried.

## RATES FOR POSTCARDS, &amp;c.—MESSAGE TO POSTMASTER-GENERAL, ENGLAND.

Moved by the Hon. B. Stafford Bird, seconded by Hon. F. T. Derham—"That the President of the Conference be requested to communicate by cable with the Postmaster-General of England, in order to ascertain what rates he proposes to fix for postcards, newspapers, and packets in the event of his proposed reduction of postage on letters for Australia being adopted, and that an immediate answer be requested while the Conference is still sitting."  
Carried.

The Hon. D. O'Connor handed in a draft Postal Convention between the United States of America and the Australian colonies.  
To be printed.

Mr. Todd handed in a table, showing the revenue and expenditure on the Adelaide and Port Darwin telegraph line during the years 1873 to 1889, both inclusive.  
To be printed.

## NOTICES OF MOTION.

1. The Hon. D. O'Connor to move—"That the Postal Convention with the United States of America, drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, be adopted by the colonies generally."
2. The Hon. D. O'Connor to move—
  - "I. The charges for telegrams within any one colony shall be an initial rate of sixpence (6d.) for 10 words, names and addresses to be considered as part of the message. One penny (1d.) per word to be charged for each word over the first ten."
  - "II. Between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge, and 1½d for every additional word. Names and addresses to be paid for."
  - "III. Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge, and 2d. for every additional word."
  - "IV. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge, and 3d. for every extra word."
  - "V. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for ten words for each colony, plus the cable rates. Ten words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited."
3. The Hon. Charles Powers to move—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that an intercolonial 1s. telegram be adopted, the receipts to be divided equally between the colonies through which the messages are transmitted. That the 1s. intercolonial telegram to consist of six words, exclusive of the address of the person to whom the message is sent and the signature of the sender. Each additional word to be charged one penny."

The Conference adjourned till the following Monday.

## REPORT OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

It was moved by the Hon. F. T. Derham, and seconded by the Hon. Charles Powers—"That the heads of departments be requested to report as to what would be the effect of the Hon. D. O'Connor's proposed motion reducing the charge for telegrams."

The Conference adjourned till the following Monday, at 9-30 a.m.

Carried.

Confirmed,

J. H. GORDON, President.

May 26th, 1890.

*Parliament*

*Parliament House, Monday, May 26th, 1890.*

THIRD DAY.

The Conference met at 9.30 a.m.

Present—

Representing New South Wales—

The Hon. D. O'Connor, M.P., Postmaster-General.

S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary General Post Office.

E. C. Cracknell, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Representing Victoria—

The Hon. F. T. Derham, M.P., Postmaster-General.

James Smibert, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General.

Representing South Australia—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon, M.L.C., Minister of Education (President).

Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S., Postmaster-General.

Representing Queensland—

The Hon. Chas. Power, M.P., Postmaster-General.

Representing Tasmania—

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, M.P., Postmaster-General.

Thos. H. Magrath, Esq., Secretary Post Office.

R. Henry, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Minutes of proceedings of Conference on the previous Friday were read and confirmed.

RATES ON POSTCARDS TO UNITED KINGDOM.

The President read the following cablegram, received in reply to message sent to the British Postmaster-General, in terms of the resolution passed at the previous meeting:—"At present the reduction of letter postage alone has been discussed. Question of other correspondence will be considered hereafter. 'A corresponding reduction as regards postcards most probably be proposed.—Postmaster-General, London.'

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That the rate on postcards be reduced to 2d. to the United Kingdom and to those countries beyond the colonies to which the postcard system extends. The rates on packets and newspapers to remain as at present."

Carried.

POSTAL CONVENTION WITH UNITED STATES.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That the Postal Convention with the United States of America drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney be adopted by the colonies generally."

Carried.

INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAM RATES.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, pursuant to notice, moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded, that—

"I. The charges for telegrams within any one colony shall be an initial rate of sixpence (6d.) for 10 words, names and addresses to be considered as part of the message. One penny (1d.) per word to be charged for each word over the first ten."

"II. Between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge, and 1½d. for each additional word. Names and addresses to be paid for."

"III. Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge, and 2d. for each additional word."

"IV. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge, and 3d. for every extra word."

"V. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for ten words for each colony, plus the cable rates. Ten words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited."

After a lengthened debate, the Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved—"That the further consideration of the motion be adjourned till heads of departments had supplied the figures showing how the alterations proposed would affect each colony."

Carried.

AUSTRALIAN POSTAL CONVENTION.

A draft of the Australian Postal Convention prepared by heads of departments was laid on the table. To be printed.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, after discussion, during which the Conference amended the draft, moved, and the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—

"I. That this Conference approves of the Australian Postal Convention as submitted by heads of departments (and now amended), and agrees to recommend to the respective Governments that it be brought into operation on the 1st January, 1891."

"II. That the colonies of New Zealand and Western Australia be invited to become parties to the Convention." Carried.

SWEEP PROMOTERS.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved, and the Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded:—"That the Conference recommends that the several Postal Departments be asked to provide, in any future legislation, for the post office departments, to have power to stop delivery or registration of any letters addressed to, or to issue money-orders in favor of, any sweep promoters."

Carried, the Hon. D. O'Connor dissenting.

REDUCTION

## REDUCTION OF CABLE RATES—GUARANTEE TO SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The President reported that the following resolution was, at the previous sitting, carried in Committee:—  
 “That in the event of South Australia reducing the telegraph rates on the transcontinental line, in accordance  
 “with any resolution agreed to by this Conference, the several colonies represented at this Conference,  
 “including South Australia, agree, on the basis of population, to guarantee to South Australia a revenue  
 “from the line equivalent to that received at present.”

Report adopted, the Hon. C. Powers withholding his consent.

## CABLEGRAMS—REDUCTION OF RATES.

The President read a cablegram from the Agent-General, dated May 24th:—“Had a long interview  
 “with Sir John Pender. Result generally favorable.” Also another, dated May 26th:—“Terms  
 “telegraphed are best procurable, and advise accept them—4s. public, 3s. 6d. Government, 1s. 10d. press.”  
 “South Australia to reduce its rates on overland line to 5d.”

The President pointed out that the message as to terms referred to by the Agent-General evidently  
 contained a proposal from Sir John Pender which had not yet come to hand.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded:—“That the terms named in the  
 “cablegram from the Agent-General to the South Australian Government be agreed to, provided that the  
 “period of the test be three years. The reduction to take effect from July 1st next, if possible.”

Carried, the Hon. C. Powers withholding his consent.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded:—“That any colony or country not  
 “joining in the contribution to subsidy and guarantee, shall pay proportionately higher rates.”

Carried.

The Hon. Charles Powers expressed his gratification at the successful meeting of the Conference, and  
 stated that important official duties compelled him to leave during the afternoon. The Hon. F. T. Derham  
 said he also was compelled to leave that afternoon.

Hon. D. O'Connor moved—“That the Conference adjourn till the following morning at 10-30.”

Carried.

Confirmed,

May 27th, 1890.

J. H. GORDON, President.

*Parliament House, Adelaide, Tuesday, May 27th, 1890.*

## FOURTH DAY.

The Conference met at 10-30 a.m.

## Present—

## Representing New South Wales—

The Hon. D. O'Connor, M.P., Postmaster-  
 General.

S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary General Post  
 Office.

E. C. Cracknell, Esq., Superintendent of Tele-  
 graphs.

## Representing Victoria—

James Smibert, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-  
 General.

## Representing South Australia—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon, M.L.C., Minister of  
 Education (President.)

Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S.,  
 Postmaster-General.

## Representing Tasmania—

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, M.P., Postmaster-  
 General.

Thos. H. Magrath, Esq., Secretary Post Office  
 Department.

R. Henry, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs.

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Conference were read and confirmed.

## CABLEGRAMS—REDUCTION OF RATES.

The President reported that he had received the missing cablegram from the Agent-General. It read as  
 follows:—“In accordance with the desire of the Adelaide Conference the Agents-General for South  
 “Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand have conferred together, and have had repeated  
 “conferences with Sir John Pender, the Indian officers, and the cable companies whose interests are  
 “concerned, with the following results:—Firstly, the tariff will be reduced to 4s. for ordinary messages,  
 “3s. 6d. for Government messages, and 1s. 10d. for press messages during one year of trial. If at the end  
 “of the first year no very serious loss is involved the experiment will be continued for two years more, and  
 “such extension must be at the option of the Company. If the loss should be nearly recovered at the end  
 “of the three years the arrangement will be extended for the remainder of the subsidy. The whole proposal  
 “is conditional upon South Australia accepting 5d.—the transit rate. Secondly, the Agents-General  
 “are unanimously of opinion that the proposal embodies the very best terms which can be obtained, and  
 “strongly urge its final acceptance by the Adelaide Conference, in order that the Paris Conference may be  
 “informed. Thirdly, much will yet have to be done both here and in London to perfect the details with the  
 “respective companies and the Indian Government, and therefore press greatly that the proposal be finally  
 “accepted at once. Please cable prompt reply. BLYTH, SAMUEL, BERRY, and BELL.”

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved and the Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded—“That the terms now offered  
 “by the Eastern Extension Company as cabled by the Agents-General be accepted by this Conference, and  
 “that copies of the cable message be transmitted to the Hon. F. T. Derham and the Hon. Charles Powers  
 “for their concurrence.”

Carried.

INTERCOLONIAL

## INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPH RATES.

The consideration of the Hon. D. O'Connor's motion recommending an alteration in the rates for colonial and intercolonial telegrams was resumed.

Mr. Todd read a statement, showing how the proposed alterations would affect South Australia.

After discussion, the resolution was carried in the following amended form:—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference—1. That between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge for twelve words, and 1½d. for each additional word; names and addresses to be paid for. 2. Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 2d. for each additional word. 3. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 3d. for every extra word. 4. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for twelve words for each colony, plus the cable rates. Twelve words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited. 5. That the reduced rates come into operation on January 1st, 1891."

The following motion of the Hon. Charles Powers lapsed owing to that gentleman's absence:—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that an intercolonial 1s. telegram be adopted, the receipts to be divided equally between the colonies through which the messages are transmitted. That the 1s. intercolonial telegram consist of six words, exclusive of the address of the person to whom the message is sent and the signature of the sender. Each additional word to be charged 2d."

## McGAURAN'S INVENTION FOR IMPROVING QUADRUPLIX WORKING.

The president said this matter was discussed at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney. It appeared to him that some united action was necessary by the various colonies.

The question was left for heads of departments in the various colonies to deal with.

## UNIFORM INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPH REGULATIONS.

The reports by the heads of departments on the question were brought up and adopted.

## MEETINGS OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, and the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That in the opinion of this Conference, it is very desirable that the heads of the Post and Telegraph Departments of the Australian colonies should frequently meet—annually, if possible—to consider and report to their respective Governments on all questions affecting the postal and telegraphic services generally."

Carried.

## CABLEGRAMS—MESSAGES TO BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE AGENT-GENERAL.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, and the Hon. the President seconded—"That the President forward to his Excellency the Governor of South Australia a copy of the resolutions agreed to by the Conference regarding the reduction of postal and cable rates to the United Kingdom, requesting that his Excellency will forward it to the British Government by cable, with the expression of the earnest desire of this Conference that, as England is equally interested with the colonies in securing and maintaining cheap telegraphic communication, the proposal of the Conference that Great Britain should contribute towards the subsidies and guarantees required may be accepted by the Imperial Government."

Carried.

The President reported that he had received the following telegram from the Hon. F. T. Derham:—"I have received the missing telegram, and am quite agreeable to join the other members of the Conference in accepting the proposal now made, as it approximates so nearly to our own. Kindly let me know if you wish us to cable our Agent-General."

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That the President inform the Agent-General of South Australia of the acceptance by the Conference of the amended offer of the Eastern Extension Cable Company, and request him to confer with the Agents-General of the several colonies represented at this Conference in order that they may jointly urge upon the Imperial Government their acceptance of the proposal that England should contribute one-half of the subsidies and guarantees required in order to secure the reduced rates agreed to for telegraphic communication between England and the colonies of Australasia."

Carried.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, the Hon. D. O'Connor seconded—"That the President be requested to prepare a report of the proceedings of the Conference, and to undertake the work of conducting any correspondence or other business necessary to give effect to the resolutions of the Conference."

Carried.

## THE CONFERENCE—THANKS ACCORDED TO THE PRESIDENT.

The Hon. the President reviewed the questions that had been dealt with, and congratulated the members on the highly satisfactory results attained.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That a hearty vote of thanks be accorded to the President for the able manner in which he has conducted the proceedings of the Conference." He thanked the President and the South Australian Government, on behalf of the colony of New South Wales and at the request of the Postmaster-General of Victoria, on behalf of Victoria, for the kindness and consideration which the delegates had received while in Adelaide.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded. He thoroughly appreciated the manner in which the President had conducted the business of the Conference, and expressed his thanks for the hospitality shown the members of the Conference.

Carried.

The President replied, and declared the Conference closed.

Confirmed,

May 27th, 1890.

J. H. GORDON, President.

POSTAL

# POSTAL AND TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE.

## REPORT OF THE DEBATES.

*Thursday, May 22nd, 1890.*

Present—

New South Wales—

The Hon. D. O'Connor, Postmaster-General.  
Mr. S. H. Lambton, Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department.  
Mr. E. C. Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Victoria—

The Hon. F. T. Derham, Postmaster-General.  
Mr. James Smibert, Deputy Postmaster-General.

South Australia—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon, Minister of Education.  
Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G., Postmaster-General.

Queensland—

The Hon. C. Powers, Postmaster-General.

Tasmania—

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, Postmaster-General.  
Mr. T. H. Magrath, Secretary of the Post Office Department.  
Mr. R. Henry, Superintendent of Telegraphs.

### ELECTION OF PRESIDENT.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I beg to propose “That the Hon. Mr. Gordon be President of this Conference.”  
The Hon. F. T. Derham—I will second that.  
Carried.

### APPOINTMENT OF SECRETARY.

The President—Gentlemen, Mr. Bath, the secretary to the Education Department, is present, and I would move that he be appointed to the position of Secretary to the Conference.  
Seconded by the Hon. B. Stafford Bird, and carried.

### ADMISSION OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE PRESS.

The President—It has been the practice to exclude the representatives of the press from such Conferences as this, but I see no objection to their admission on the present occasion. It is, however, for you to say whether this shall be done or not, and therefore I leave the matter in your hands.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I propose “That the representatives of the press be admitted.”

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I second that with pleasure. I see no reason why our deliberations should be held with closed doors.  
Carried.

### THE PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS.

The President—Gentlemen, I have in the first place to thank you for electing me to the honorable position of President of this Conference, an honor to which I have, of course, no personal claim, but which you pay, through me, to the colony in which this Conference is held. In the second place, let me very heartily welcome you to Adelaide, and express the gratification, which is very generally felt, that the Governments of the various colonies here represented should so readily have consented to make Adelaide the place of meeting. Adelaide is not, of course, the most convenient place of meeting for the majority of the colonies, and I take your ready compliance with the request that the meeting should be held here as a graceful compliment to South Australia, and as a pleasing acknowledgment that in the great work of telegraphic communication this colony has bravely borne her share, or perhaps a little more, than her share, of the undertaking. I regret very much, as you will, that the great colonies of New Zealand and Western Australia have not joined in this Conference. Sir H. Atkinson has wired as follows:—“Regret it “will not be possible for me to attend proposed Conference in Adelaide, or to send a representative, “as our Parliament meets early in June. Moreover, I have already informed your Premier that we “cannot recommend Parliament to accept Goschen’s proposals”; and the Hon. O. Burt, the Acting Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, telegraphed as follows:—“This Government is unable to send a representative “to the Conference to consider Goschen’s proposal for a reduction of the postal rates, but will await a report “of the Conference, which I shall be glad to receive as early as possible.” And now, gentlemen, since time is short and we have many important questions to discuss, I will very briefly enumerate those matters of general interest to the colonies which, amongst others, I respectfully propose we should consider. I shall do little more than enumerate them, because this is a Conference of experts—if I may use the term—and the whole of the circumstances surrounding each proposition is known to every member of the Conference. The sooner we get to definite discussion, as distinguished from general remark, the better. There is one consideration, however, to which perhaps I ought to refer, and which, though it will be conspicuously present to the minds of the members of this Conference, will perhaps hardly be sufficiently weighed by those who

who follow our deliberations. It is this—that almost every matter which we are met to discuss means an immediate sacrifice of revenue and only a prospective advantage. It requires an effort even on the part of Governments to agree to a reduction of income, which they are certain to have to account for, for an advantage to be reaped in the future, perhaps by successors who did not sow. And to the non-trading community, that large number of the people who do not send cablegrams or telegrams, and whose correspondence is limited to a letter or two a year, concessions in the matter of telegraph rates and postage look like relief to the mercantile class and additions to the burdens of all other classes. These views are, however, superficial, and it needs only to be stated to be approved by all those who have watched the development of commerce in modern times that cheap and rapid methods of communication with centres of trade result in benefit to the whole community, and render it more independent of monopolists and more accessible to all sources of supply. It is not, I think, because we have any doubt about this proposition that this Conference will not go to the full length which the most ardent advocates could desire in the way of cheapening communication, but because the conditions of the colonies we represent, each at full stretch in the race for development, do not allow of the expenditure of as much capital as we would like in this particular direction. Without further remark I will now mention the matters to which I have before referred as being those to which (in addition to those other questions which may be introduced by hon. delegates) I respectfully submit the deliberations of this Conference should be directed. The question which is the immediate motive of the Conference is the proposal of the English Government to reduce the postage from 6d. to 2½d. on letters between the United Kingdom and the colonies. On this question I apprehend there will not be much difference of opinion. Germany has already shown us the way by charging only that rate (2½d.) between Germany and Australia for letters sent by the North German Lloyd's service under contract, and it would be ungenerous not to meet the English Government, which is making a very large concession of revenue. So far as South Australia is concerned, I am authorised to agree to the reduction in the postage rate to the United Kingdom, but it will be a matter for this Conference to decide how far the reduction shall extend to other countries, and whether or not it shall obtain only as regards the all-sea route to England, and with your permission I shall move before I finish these remarks that the heads of departments be requested to bring up a report recommending how far the reduction should apply, and to revise table A. The next question in point of importance—if, indeed, it is not of greater importance—is, I think, the proposal of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for the reduction of telegraph rates. The letter of Sir J. Pender, the chairman of the company (a copy of which members of the Conference will find upon their files), proposes to reduce the present rates, which are 9s. 4d. per word for ordinary messages, 7s. 1d. for Government messages, and 2s. 8d. for press messages, to 5s., 4s. 5d., and 1s. 10d. per word respectively; and the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company propose that they should bear half of the immediate sacrifice of revenue involved in this reduction, viz., the sum of £80,000, and that the colonies should bear the other half in proportions to be arranged. In making this proposal it cannot but be admitted that the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company have shown a bold and generous policy which the colonies would do well to encourage. (Applause.) But, gentlemen, in considering this proposal for a reduction of cable rates on a guarantee by the colonies, the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Western Australia must carefully consider the position they now occupy and are likely to occupy with regard to the cable subsidy before committing themselves to further liability. (Hear, hear.) I think I may say with much respect and perfect fairness that the colonies I have mentioned are already bearing more than their share of the burden. Under the present contract with the cable company the colonies mentioned pay an annual subsidy of £32,400, which in 1886 was apportioned on the basis of population as follows:—Victoria, population 1,003,043, £13,786 1s. 4d.; New South Wales, 1,001,966, £13,771 5s. 3d.; South Australia, 312,758, £4,298 12s. 5d.; Western Australia, 39,584, £544 1s. In addition to her share of this subsidy South Australia pays Western Australia a subsidy of £1,000 a year towards the Roebuck Bay cable; Tasmania pays a subsidy of £4,200 for the cable to that colony, but New Zealand and Queensland contribute nothing towards the subsidy. I regret again that New Zealand is not represented here, but we have the advantage of the presence of the Hon. Mr. Powers from Queensland, who, I am sure, will admit that the wealthy colony which he represents should come in to this honorable duty and assist her neighbors. I thoroughly agree with the resolution passed at the Conference of 1888, but which has as yet borne no fruit—"That as all the Australasian colonies are "interested in the maintenance of cable communication with Great Britain, this Conference is of opinion that "each of these colonies should contribute, in proportion to the extent of its population, to the subsidies now "paid by the contracting colonies to the Eastern Extension Company, and that a like division of cost should be "made between all the colonies represented at this Conference of the cables communicating with Tasmania "and New Zealand; Great Britain to be requested to contribute towards the subsidy given to the Eastern "Extension Company in respect of the cables connected with the traffic with the United Kingdom, provided "always that it is understood that the right to purchase the Australasian cables of the Eastern Extension "Company is to be in the hands of the colonies who are now paying, or may consent to pay, the above "subsidies in the manner provided, at any time upon giving the company the notice prescribed in the subsidy "agreement." If all the colonies joined in this subsidy, as I submit they should, the proportions would be as follows, apportioned on their respective populations:—

Colony.	Population on Dec. 31st, 1888.	Contributions.		
		£	s.	d.
Victoria .....	1,090,869	9,609	9	10
New South Wales .....	1,085,740	9,564	6	2
Queensland .....	387,463	3,413	3	5
New Zealand .....	607,380	5,350	8	6
South Australia .....	318,308	2,803	19	9
Tasmania .....	146,149	1,287	8	7
Western Australia .....	42,137	371	3	9
	<u>3,678,046</u>	<u>£32,400</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>

If apportioned on this basis the subsidy is not a great burden for any colony; nor would any colony feel very much the increased subsidy which would be required to meet the proposals for reduction made by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. But I submit that Great Britain should also join in this subsidy, and in any increase of it. Her merchants equally with ours share in the benefit of the communication, and I

cannot

cannot but think that proper representations would result in some assistance from the English Government. Mr. Henniker Heaton's energies might be employed in this direction with great advantage to the colonies. The colony of South Australia is prepared to take her fair share in the work of reducing telegraphic rates, but the reduction of the rates proposed by Sir John Pender, assumes that South Australia will reduce her present charge for transmitting messages across the continent to 7½d. a word. This involves a loss of revenue, allowing for no increase of business of over £16,000 a year—a loss which, I may as well say at once, cannot be sustained by South Australia alone, which has already in the construction of the overland line incurred a heavy burden. The amounts paid to various countries are at present as follows:—

*Apportionment of Cable Rates for each class of Messages.*

	Ordinary.	Government.	Press.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Eastern and Indo-European .....	2 11	2 11	1 0
India .....	0 7½	0 7½	0 2½
Java .....	0 1½	0 1½	0 0½
Eastern Extension .....	4 6	2 3	1 1
South Australia .....	1 2	1 2	0 4
	<u>9 4</u>	<u>7 1</u>	<u>2 8</u>

It would be a pity to lose the offer of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company; and I can only repeat that the colony of South Australia is prepared to take her full share in any scheme which will apportion fairly the immediate loss which its acceptance involves. That there will be any ultimate loss I do not think. If the 5s. tariff is introduced the combined colonies will have to make up, with an increase of traffic of 25 per cent. £40,000; 50 per cent., £25,000; 75 per cent., £10,000. With an increase of 92 per cent. the guarantee would be wiped out. The next most pressing matter for the consideration of this Conference, is that of an Intercolonial Postal Convention. It is highly necessary that some agreement should be come to for the carriage of intercolonial mail matter, respecting which at present there is much confusion and complaint. And if for no other reason this Conference is highly necessary. The matter was fully discussed at the departmental Conference, held in Sydney, last March, and I will to-day give notice of motion that the heads of departments prepare and submit to the Conference a draft Intercolonial Postal Convention. And if no other object but the adoption of uniform intercolonial rates is attained, the colonies may congratulate the Conference upon the achievement, which will be one substantial step towards federation. Next in order of importance comes the question of intercolonial telegraph rates, respecting which much pressure has been brought upon the Government of this colony. As pointed out by the Postmaster-General of South Australia, in his report on this subject, Australian rates cannot be considered high as compared with European rates, especially when the larger populations of Europe and Great Britain are considered. For instance, between—

London and Paris the charge is .....	2d. a word.
“ “ Brussels “ .....	2d. “
“ “ Berlin “ .....	2d. “
“ “ Vienna “ .....	4½d. “

with a minimum charge of 10d. for each telegram. Already between South Australia and the Barrier in New South Wales the rate has been reduced to 1s. for ten words, including names and addresses. This reduction has been made in consideration of the specially heavy business with Broken Hill. South Australia would be prepared, if Victoria and New South Wales will agree, to reduce the rates to these colonies to 1s. per message of ten words, counting names and addresses, but charging still 2d. a word after the first ten words. This reduction will involve a loss on present business to Victoria of £1,300 a year, to New South Wales of £500 a year, and to South Australia of £1,800 a year. The business with the other colonies would hardly justify any alteration in present rates. Arising from the Departmental Conference of last January, there will also be the subjects of an amended Postal Convention with the United States, between which country and the colonies postal arrangements are at present very unsatisfactory, and the extension of limit on money orders. But I shall refer to nothing further in detail, and will conclude with the hope that the labors of the Conference will result in substantial benefit to Australasia. (Applause.)

TELEGRAMS FROM NEW ZEALAND.

The following telegrams were received from New Zealand:—“Wellington, May 9th.—Regret it will not be possible for me to attend proposed Conference in Adelaide, or to send a representative, as our Parliament meets early in June. Moreover, I have already informed your Premier that we cannot recommend Parliament to accept Mr. Goschen's proposals.—H. A. ATKINSON, Premier.” “Wellington, May 15th.—“Ministers busy preparing for early meeting of Parliament. Under the circumstances I much regret that “New Zealand will be unrepresented at the Conference, which, I trust, will be a success.—E. MITCHELSON, “Postmaster-General.”

The Acting Colonial Secretary of Western Australia (Mr. Burt) wired as follows on May 21st from Perth:—“This Government unable to send representative to Conference to consider Mr. Goschen's proposal “for reduction of postal rates, but will await report of Conference, which I shall be glad to receive as early “as possible.”

PROCEDURE.

The President—You have before you on your files copies of the reports of the various intercolonial departmental conferences which have been held recently, also Mr. Todd's reports on Mr. Goschen's proposals and on the intercolonial telegraph rates, and on the cable rates to England; also the agreement between South Australia and Western Australia in regard to the Roebuck cable. Now, I would like to obtain the feeling of the Conference as to whether we should discuss a motion requesting the heads of departments to prepare detailed information as to the effect of Mr. Goschen's postal proposal, or whether you would prefer that I should give notice of motion for preparation of the report?

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We may pass that without notice or even discussion.

The President—Is it your pleasure, gentlemen, that I should submit the motion without notice? (Hear, hear.) Then I will do so, together with several others of a similar nature.

AN



## AN INTERCOLONIAL POSTAL CONVENTION.

The President moved—"That the heads of departments prepare and submit a draft of the Intercolonial Postal Convention."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.  
Carried.

## UNIFORM TELEGRAPH REGULATIONS.

The President moved—"That heads of departments prepare and submit a draft of uniform intercolonial telegraph regulations."

The Hon. F. T. Derham seconded.  
Carried.

## INCREASING MONEY ORDERS.

The President moved—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that the limit of money orders be increased from £10 to £20, as recommended by the Departmental Conference held in January, 1890."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I am not acquainted with the legislation on this subject in the other colonies, but in Tasmania we should have to alter the law, which expressly stipulates that money orders shall not exceed £10, and, of course, whatever resolution was carried, our Government would have to submit it to Parliament. I see no reason, however, why the recommendation should not be made, because, although we cannot issue money orders up to £20, we have agreed to pay them to that amount.

The Hon. C. Powers—Queensland is in precisely the same position as Tasmania in this matter.  
Carried.

## REDUCTION OF OCEAN POSTAGE—MR. GOSCHEN'S PROPOSALS.

The President moved—"That with reference to the proposed reduction of postage to the United Kingdom, the heads of departments be requested to bring up a report as to the cost of extending the reduced rate to and beyond the United Kingdom, and as to the relative advantages offered by the Naples route and the accelerated train service, and generally as to the proposed reduction as applied to all other services."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I presume that the discussion as to the extent of the reduction, and whether it shall only apply to Naples, or all-sea route, or to both, will arise when the reports of the heads of departments are received.

The President—Yes.

The Hon. C. Powers—I think the heads of departments might also report as to whether, if we should adopt a 2½d. rate *via* Brindisi and Naples, some alteration should not be made in the all-sea rates, as well as the rates by any other route. As you are aware, Queensland has a service of her own by a separate route, and we have to pay to send letters through New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia in order to take advantage of the routes *via* Brindisi or Naples.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—So far as Victoria is concerned, we are not prepared to reduce the rate below 2½d. by the all-sea routes. We have found that the all-sea route has been used to a very small extent, and I am sure if the rate were reduced to 1½d. per half-ounce the correspondence sent would be so trifling in extent as not to be worthy of consideration. Of course, any colony that had a special service could consider how far the rates by it might be reduced. Certainly Victoria could not agree to a less rate than 2½d., and I should not like it to be thought that Victoria will be committed in any way to the report of the heads of departments because it is asked for.

The President—The report will comprehend all the information that Mr. Powers wants, and when it is before us he can address himself to the question he has raised.

The Hon. C. Powers—That is all I wish to do.  
Carried.

## THE PROPOSED PACIFIC CABLE.

The Hon. F. T. Derham handed to the President the following letter, which was read:—

"Société Française de Victoria, Melbourne, May 19th.

"Sir—Referring to our conversation in reference to the Pacific cable, and to your request to address you on the subject, I have the honour to solicit your kind offices in bringing before your colleagues at the Conference the following:—The project of the Pacific cable is temporarily arrested pending the projected Conference between the Canadian and Australasian representatives. It is unnecessary to remind you or to refresh your memory as to what has been done in that direction. I have no desire whatever to say anything that would tend towards the reduction of the cable rates between England and Australia, but I do most strenuously urge and hope that nothing will be done by the Conference that would impede or militate against the proposed laying of the Pacific cable.

"I have the honour to be, &c.,

"Athenæum Club, Melbourne.

"AUDLEY COOTE.

"The Hon. F. T. Derham, Postmaster General, Victoria."

## UNIFORM INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPHIC RATES.

The Hon. C. Powers moved—"That the permanent heads of departments be requested to consider and bring up a report to the members of the Conference showing the effect on the revenue of each colony of—(a) the adoption of an intercolonial (including Tasmania) system of 1s. telegrams of ten words, exclusive of addresses and signature (the receipts to be divided between the colonies proportionately transmitting the messages), the charge for each additional word after the first ten to be a penny; and (b) the alteration proposed of crediting to each colony 6d. instead of 1s. for intercolonial telegrams. Both calculations to be based on the number of telegrams at present sent from and to the different colonies."

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I will second that motion, all the more willingly because I have already urged the propriety of introducing a low rate for telegrams between the different colonies. Whether we can

can include New Zealand, as she has a cable connection, is a matter to consider; but there is no reason why we should not discuss a reduction of rates between Tasmania and Australia. The business is growing steadily, and I think the time has arrived when we might adopt a lower scale of charges so as to encourage the growth. I think some new system might be introduced under which each colony sending, the message might collect the fees, thus obviating all necessity for keeping check accounts as at present has to be done. The colonies, in fact, should be regarded as one dominion in regard to the telegraph rates. Still, before entering into the matter fully, I think it would be well to have the information asked for.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I think we might have lower rates for long messages. The initial charge should be heavier. In Victoria we charge 6d. for six words, and 1d. per word afterwards.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—In Tasmania it is ten words for 1s. and 1d. per word afterwards. I think all intercolonial messages might be charged uniformly between the colonies.

Mr. C. Todd—I would like to point out to the Conference that if you reduce the rate to 1s. for the first ten words and charge 2d. per word afterwards, it will mean that when a person wants to send thirty words he will split it up into three messages, which would only cost him 3s., whereas if he sent it as one message he would have to pay 4s. 4d., whilst the telegraph department would have to send the names and addresses three times instead of once.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The initial charge must be heavier than the subsequent rates.  
Carried.

#### PAPERS AND DOCUMENTS.

The following printed papers were laid on the table for the guidance of the delegates:—

“Postal Conference at Adelaide, 1890”

“Proposed Reduction of Intercolonial Telegraph Rates” (by Mr. Todd).

“Report by Mr. Todd on the Proposed Reduction of Postage between the United Kingdom and the Australian Colonies.”

“The Departmental Postal and Telegraphic Conference held at Sydney, 1890.”

“The Departmental Postal Conference held at Melbourne in 1889.”

“The Postal Conference at Sydney in January, 1888.”

#### NOTICES OF MOTION.

The following notices of motion were given:—

By the Hon. D. O'Connor—“That any future mail contracts across the Pacific Ocean be left to the colony of New Zealand to arrange for, the other colonies paying similar poundage rates to New Zealand as the non-contracting colonies pay to the contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony paying all charges to destination.”

By the Hon. C. Powers—“That it is considered desirable to adopt a system of urgent telegrams at double rates, locally and intercolonially.”

By the Hon. D. O'Connor—“That the postal convention with the United States of America, drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, be adopted by the colonies generally.”

By the Hon. F. T. Derham—“That these colonies should unite in arranging with the Indian Government for the interchange of postal cards between India and Australia.”

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Conference, at 4.30 p.m., adjourned till 10.30 a.m. next day.

*Friday, May 23rd, 1890.*

Present—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon (President), in the chair.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, Postmaster-General;  
Mr. S. H. Lambton, Secretary of the Post  
and Telegraph Department; and Mr. E. C.  
Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs, of  
New South Wales  
The Hon. F. T. Derham, Postmaster-General,  
and Mr. James Smibert, Deputy Postmaster-  
General, of Victoria

The Hon. C. Powers, Postmaster-General of  
Queensland  
The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, Postmaster-General;  
Mr. T. H. Magrath, Secretary of the Post  
Office Department; and Mr. R. Henry,  
Superintendent of Telegraphs, of Tasmania  
Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G., of South Australia.

The Hon. C. Powers handed in a copy of an Executive minute authorising his appointment.

#### REDUCTION OF OCEAN POSTAGE.—MR. GOSCHEN'S PROPOSALS.

Mr. Todd read the following report drawn up by the heads of departments:—

“If the postage to the United Kingdom is reduced to 2½d. *via* Brindisi and Naples, the same rate being adopted to India, the Straits Settlements, and some other intermediate places, and a uniform rate to Europe of 4d., the approximate loss of revenue to the several Australian colonies will be as follows:—

	£		£
“Tasmania .....	1,460	South Australia .....	4,000
“Queensland .....	5,300	Victoria .....	15,150
“Western Australia .....	500	New South Wales .....	16,000

“ If

"If a uniform rate of 2½d. is adopted for all parts of the world the loss of revenue will be—

	£		£
"Tasmania .....	1,580	Victoria .....	15,900
"Queensland .....	5,740	New South Wales .....	17,500
"South Australia .....	4,300		

"An important point for consideration in connection with the proposed reduction of postage is whether it is necessary or desirable to maintain the accelerated train service between Brindisi and Calais, which, so far as the homeward mails are concerned, is only available for mails carried by the P. & O. Company's steamers, as the Orient Company's steamers land their mails at Naples.

"From information gathered from returns supplied by the London post office we find that, owing to the P. and O. steamers having to fit in with the Indian mail service, the accelerated service between Brindisi and Calais is of little or no use, as the P. and O. steamers incur certain detention at Colombo or Aden in connection with the Indian steamers. This is shown by the fact that the mails by Orient steamers, which steamers do not connect with the Indian line, and, as already stated, are not taken on by accelerated trains, yet reach London even earlier than those by the P. and O., as shown by Mr. Todd's report. We think, therefore, that the accelerated train service should be discontinued, and thus enable a saving to be effected of about 1d. per letter in connection with overland transit.

"Assuming that the accelerated service be discontinued, and the postage to the United Kingdom be reduced to 2½d. per ½oz. *via* Italy, the total loss to the Australian colonies, on the basis of present returns, would be considerably reduced, say to the extent of about £7,000."

The Hon. F. T. Derham—A return prepared in my department shows that with the reduction of postage to 2½d. per ½oz., and an increase of 15 per cent. in the correspondence, the additional loss to all the colonies would be £36,850 per annum; and, with an increase of 25 per cent., the loss would be £34,030; with an increase of 50 per cent., the loss would be £27,050. We should be quite safe in taking 15 per cent. as a moderate increase, and that would mean a loss of £36,850, while there would be a saving, by the discontinuance of the accelerated train service, of £7,000, so that the loss to all the colonies would be £30,000 a year—not a very large sum when divided ratably between us.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That in view of the report of the heads of departments this Conference agrees to the proposed reduction to 2½d. per ½oz. on all letters dispatched to places beyond the colonies, and recommends the discontinuance of the accelerated mail service between Brindisi and Calais."

He said—I think it is absolutely unnecessary to make any speech in favor of this proposal, and I am sure that I thoroughly express the views of the delegates from the other colonies when I say that we have come here to work and not to talk. Considering that this matter has been before the whole of the colonies, and that each delegate has considered the subject well, while it has been ventilated through the medium of the press, I feel that it is unnecessary to say more than that I hope that this offer on the part of the Imperial Government to encourage communication between the colonies and England will be adopted unanimously by this Conference.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I have great pleasure in seconding this proposition. It appears to me that it would be ungracious on the part of the colonies to refuse the handsome proposal of Great Britain. True, it may be said that the Imperial Postal Department is in a far better position financially than we are, even proportionately. Great Britain has a surplus postal revenue of three and a half millions sterling, while on the other hand, most of the postal departments of the colonies are conducted at a loss. Still, I feel that other considerations so far outweigh monetary considerations that there is scarcely any other course open to us than to accept the proposal with very great pleasure. I am very pleased indeed that the motion has been so worded as to apply to other countries besides Europe. I think, considering the very trifling loss that would be incurred by carrying Mr. O'Connor's motion, that it would be a very great pity if such a trifling loss should prevent our having a uniform rate with all the countries of the world. I think the motion covers the whole ground very simply, but very practically and very effectively, and I have great pleasure indeed in supporting it. There is no doubt that this motion will have the effect of placing the colonies in a better position to join the Postal Union, if we should decide it to be desirable to do so. Heretofore our rates have been such as to prevent us from joining that union, and now, if this motion is carried we shall be on the basis of the lowest rate of the great countries of the world, having 2½d. rate of postage. The advantages of joining this union have seemed to me a little intangible, and certainly not sufficient to justify us in petitioning the Powers to join before this, but now the way seems to be smoothed by Mr. O'Connor's motion to join the Union. This, however, is a subject we shall have to discuss later on. I rejoice to think that there is a probability of this being carried out, as it must strengthen the bonds of union between the mother country and the colonies.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—There is no doubt that it is desirable to secure uniformity of action on the part of the separate communities in regard to this matter, but I think it would be desirable before we agree to this motion that there should be some understanding as to what would be the position of any colony which could not now see its way to fall in with this proposal for reduced rates all round at the present time. I think we are all making a loss on the mail contracts. The loss of Tasmania is £2,000 or £3,000, and the additional loss involved in accepting this resolution would be over £1,600, taking the present amount of correspondence carried. That loss is rather serious, and the view that the Government of Tasmania have taken in regard to this matter is that the advantage of cheap postage, if confined to the allsea route, might be sufficient for the present, leaving those who choose to adopt the more rapid routes, by Brindisi or Naples, to pay the higher rates. No doubt for commercial purposes the more rapid route is the best, and naturally the most largely adopted, but it is a question whether it is desirable to give facilities of cheap postage to the commercial community and make the whole community pay for them. Of course, it may be said that that equalises itself in the matter of trade, but at the same time we have to consider whether it is desirable to incur the somewhat large loss which, in the case of all the colonies, would amount to over £40,000, when by a smaller loss we should meet all present requirements. I would like to know what would be the exact position in which any of the contracting colonies would be placed if they could not see their way to adopt the 2½d. rate for the Brindisi route, and confined it to the allsea route. I do not know whether there would be the objection that the people of that particular colony would be placed at a disadvantage. I do not quite see any other ill effect, but I think we might, at the present time, content ourselves with the allsea route at a reduced rate. I am very anxious that Tasmania should work hand in hand with the rest of the colonies, and we would

not

not like to be the only colony standing out from the others; but it does appear at the present time that New Zealand is not likely to join, and I do not know what the Queensland Government may intend to do. I am expressing the views of the Tasmanian Government when I say that we would have been quite satisfied, and the people of the colony would have been thoroughly satisfied, if the reduced rates were confined to the all sea route. We are aware that, although at the present time there is a difference of 2d. between the allsea route and the Brindisi route, the former has not been largely made use of by the writing public, but when there is a difference of 3½d. between the one and the other there is no doubt a great many would consent to the rather longer time of transit. I shall be very glad, before giving a definite vote, to know what Queensland has to say on the matter, and also what is the view that South Australia takes.

The Hon. C. Powers—So far as the reduction of postage between the United Kingdom and the colonies is concerned, the Government of Queensland are quite agreeable to consent to the proposed reduction to 2½d. I would point out, however, that the motion says—"In view of the report of the heads of departments." I think we come as a Conference to consider this question, and that the motion will not be arrived at in consequence of the views of the heads of departments. I will move to strike these words out.

The Hon. D. O'Connor accepted the amendment.

The Hon. C. Powers—I am not satisfied that we have sufficient information with regard to the latter portion of the motion, and I would suggest that that portion might be left out. Postal matters in our colony are looked upon as a benefit to the people generally, and it is not altogether a question of pounds, shillings, and pence in Queensland, because we are carrying on the post office at a loss (for the benefit of the people) of £87,000, and we feel justified in incurring a further loss if there is not the increased correspondence that might reasonably be looked forward to by this reduced postage. One point I mentioned yesterday, and I would like it to be considered again before this Conference closes. It is bearing on the remarks made by the President that the people might possibly look upon this arrangement as simply a reduction for the mercantile community, and not for the general community. I think we can avoid that by making some reduction on the long-sea route, as against those who wish to have the extra service across the continent, whether from Brindisi or Naples. It appears to me inconsistent to force those people who do not wish to pay the extra cost by Brindisi to do so. It would be a departure from our usual practice in postal matters, and I do not think would be appreciated by the people. Queensland is willing to consent to the reduction to 2½d., either *vid* Brindisi or Naples.

The President—I need not say how much I am gratified to hear the views of the various honorable gentlemen who represent the colonies at this Conference with regard to the reduction on postage rates initiated by the British Government. The remarks made by Mr. Bird are remarks weighted with common sense, and must, I am sure, have appealed very strongly to the economical minds of the various delegates who are here. It is a matter which deserves very great consideration, and which, I am sure, has been very carefully considered by the delegates as to whether there should be a limitation upon the reduction of rates to the United Kingdom to letters by the all-sea routes only; but it appears to me that if we are to make this reduction at all it must be a reduction which is effective, and, if we are to judge by the business done by the post office by the two rates in the past, it would seem that a reduction by the all-sea route, which embraces only domestic correspondence, is not effective as a means for facilitating the business of the colonies. So far as South Australia is concerned, letters sent in 1889, *vid* Brindisi, were 119,540, as against 33,514 by the all-sea route; Victoria sent, *vid* Brindisi, 679,768 letters, as against 67,561 by the all-sea route; New South Wales sent 526,784 letters, *vid* Brindisi, as against 19,954 by the all-sea route. These figures show that if the reduction is to be limited to the all-sea route it would fail in effectiveness as regards commercial correspondence, and, though we must all admit that the suggestion of Mr. Bird is in the interests of economy, which we are all bound to study, I think, if we are to make this reduction at all, it should be a reduction by the direct and most rapid route, as well as the all-sea route. Touching the matter mentioned by Mr. Powers, as to whether there should not be further reductions for correspondence by the all-sea route, there are one or two considerations against that, such as whether the community should not pay for the increased facilities. I think it would be a matter of very general satisfaction and general advantage to the whole of the colonies if they kept in line and had one uniform rate of postage, and I am sure the rate of 2½d. is so low that any further concessions will hardly be of any benefit to the people who use the all-sea route. Then there is another consideration—If the postage to the United Kingdom were reduced lower than 2½d., what about inland rates? The inequality between the ocean and inland rates would be such that influence would be brought to bear to have the inland rate reduced.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—That is provided for as far as Victoria is concerned.

The President—Unfortunately some of the poorer colonies, South Australia amongst the number, have not been able to reach that *desideratum*.

A Member—We will all have to do it.

The President—So far as South Australia is concerned, a lower rate than 2½d. would bring about such a disparity between the ocean rates and the inland rates that it would lead to a demand for lower inland rates. I will say no more than this, that, on behalf of South Australia, I heartily join in the remarks made by Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Derham, and the other delegates, as to the advantage of seizing the offer of the British Government. I am sure that the reduction of the postage rates, although it may mean a reduction of revenue to each colony now, will bring an increased revenue in the future, and will be of general benefit. I heartily agree with the motion.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—There is one point, sir, to which you do not refer. If we are to carry this proposal to abolish the accelerated train service the cost per ordinary train would only mean one farthing per letter additional to the all-sea rate, which is so small that it is scarcely worth while making any difference. Under the present system, where it costs 1d. per letter, it is a matter for consideration, but when it resolves itself into a farthing a letter it is really not worth while considering.

The Hon. C. Powers—If the rate across the continent is only ½d. a letter, of course domestic correspondents would not ask for a reduction, and therefore I do not propose to move an amendment. I would rather see the motion carried unanimously. Following up the remarks I made yesterday, of course, it must be understood that the Queensland Government can deal with correspondence by the British-India route irrespective of this Conference.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Of course, you would be at liberty to charge a lower rate by the British-India service; but this would throw the colonies out of line, and that would be regrettable.

The

The Hon. C. Powers—The Queensland Government wired down to the President informing him of this. They mentioned that they would reserve the right to still further reduce the rates of postage by the British-India route—not because we want lower postage, but because we have to pay 2½d. to send mails through the other colonies to catch the mail at Adelaide.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—But you would not reduce the rate below 2d. by the British-India service. It gives you no financial advantage, no quicker route, and it would throw you out of line.

The Hon. C. Powers—We are subsidising that route to the extent of £32,000 per annum. I wish it to be understood that the Queensland Government reserve the right to make alterations on that point.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I hope the right will not be exercised.

The President—Mr. Powers did specifically reserve the right of making further reductions by that particular route. I heartily join in the remarks of Mr. Derham, that it would be a pity to take the colonies out of line on postal matters. At the same time it would be *ultra vires* on the part of this Conference to bind the hands of a colony which, by its geographical advantages and wealth, might wish to reduce the rate of postage. We can only suggest that it would be of advantage to be united, and we must leave the colony of Queensland to its own rights in this matter.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I would just like to say that I am very much pleased with the remarks that have been made. Though Tasmania was quite content with the reduced rates by the all-sea route, she was perfectly willing to join with the rest of the colonies rather than stand out. Of course, one cannot help admitting that possibly we would not gain much if we did stand out, as, if there were a charge of 6d. on all letters, a good many people would send their correspondence across the Straits and post it in Victoria, which colony would get all the benefit, while we would get none. We did not lose sight of that, but desired to be one with the rest in a matter of this kind, and I shall, under the circumstances, very heartily support the resolution before us, with the verbal amendment which has been indicated.

The motion was put in the following form:—“That this Conference agrees to the proposed reduction to 2½d. per ½oz. on all letters dispatched to places beyond the colonies, and recommends the discontinuance of the accelerated train service between Brindisi and Calais.”

The motion was carried unanimously.

#### ARRANGEMENTS FOR POSTCARDS, PACKETS, &c.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I am not prepared to make any motion upon the question, but it occurs to me that we shall have to consider the rates to be levied in future on newspapers, postcards, and packets. At the present time we have a 3d. postcard arrangement between here and Great Britain, and it goes without saying, that people will not send a 3d. postcard if they can send a letter for 2½d.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—We might ascertain by cablegram what Great Britain proposes to do with regard to other items of postal matter.

#### THE EASTERN EXTENSION TELEGRAPH COMPANY AND THE CONFERENCE.

The following letter was received from Mr. S. Knevett, the agent of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company:—

“Sir—I have the honor to inform you that this Company’s chairman in London, Sir John Pender, “K.C.M.G., has cabled to the effect that the Agents-General have been informed that any telegrams they “may wish to forward to their respective Governments on the cables tariff question will be franked over the “cables, and the privileges is also extended to the Conference delegates. I am also directed to offer my “services to the Conference.”

#### THE PACIFIC MAIL SERVICE.

The Hon. D. O’Connor moved—“That any future mail contracts across the Pacific Ocean be left to the “colony of New Zealand to arrange for, other colonies paying similar poundage rates to New Zealand, to “those paid by the non-contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony “paying all charges to destination.”

He said—In moving this resolution I think I am expressing the unanimous feeling of this Conference. All the colonies of Australasia, with the exception of New Zealand and Fiji, avail themselves of the weekly service that leaves the colonies. New Zealand is the only colony that can benefit by this, and we are prepared, if we use this service, to pay for it. The colonies have paid a very large sum of money, and in return have received no service, or very little. Up to last year, New Zealand and New South Wales conjointly paid a certain sum—£37,000. Queensland, Victoria, and South Australia paid New South Wales a proportion of the amount without getting any consideration for it. I think the time has arrived when New Zealand ought to contract for herself if she desires it, and then if the other colonies of Australasia wish to use the service they should pay for it. It is quite unnecessary to do more than make these few remarks.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The matter is so important that I should not like it to drop for want of a seconder, though I feel somewhat in the dark on the question. Previously it has been an understanding that New South Wales and New Zealand would take charge of this matter, and we, in Victoria, have left ourselves in the hands of those colonies, and trusted to them to carry out the service. I am a little in the dark as to the working of the contract.

The Hon. D. O’Connor—It has been renewed for one year only, and the Government of New South Wales will not touch it any more, except in the way I am indicating.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—What is the amount?

The Hon. D. O’Connor—Thirty-seven thousand pounds.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—How is it provided?

The Hon. D. O’Connor—Equally between the two colonies of New South Wales and New Zealand. All the other colonies pay New South Wales their proportion, but the contract is of no use to us. Its object was to keep up close contact between the great republic of America and Australia, but it was a one-sided arrangement, as America had everything to gain. I had considerable difficulty in getting Parliament to consent to the continuance of the arrangement for one year.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Have you any idea what the wish of New Zealand is?

The

The Hon. D. O'Connor—On the last occasion they did not renew the contract until the last moment, and in the meantime New South Wales at my own suggestion took the contract up. I thought it would be a pity for the sake of £10,000 or £12,000 to allow all communication to cease. It was distinctly understood, however, that the contract was only to be renewed for one year, and on that understanding I got Parliament to consent to it. In the meantime New Zealand came in and asked to share with us. The arrangement terminates next November.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Is the feeling in New Zealand favorable to that service?

The Hon. D. O'Connor—It is the only line they have now except the Shaw-Savill line. It concerns them and them alone.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—What effect will a resolution of this kind have on New Zealand? They will not hold themselves bound by any resolution, as they are not represented here. New South Wales may find herself in just the same position next year. It seems to me therefore a question of propriety whether we should deal with a resolution of this sort here.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—The answer to that is very simple. If New Zealand thought it important she would be represented here to-day. New South Wales has decided not to renew the contract. The last time we renewed it we were the sole contractors because the New Zealand Government thought they could not get their Parliament to agree to it. I was confident they would come in and share with us, and immediately we had contracted they did so. Up to two years ago New Zealand paid two-thirds of the contract money, but they thought we could not do without the contract. My colleagues and our Parliament agreed with me that the contract was only to be renewed for one year, and that preparations were to be made for its discontinuance. So far as New South Wales is concerned, we will have nothing to do with it any more. It gives no service of any material value either to New South Wales or the other colonies. If we use it we will pay for it in proportion to the expenditure.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—It seems to me quite evident that New South Wales suffers considerable disadvantage in undertaking this responsibility. I do not think it would be fair on the part of the colonies on this continent to force New South Wales or to ask New South Wales to continue the responsibility. If there is to be a responsibility it must be a divided responsibility. Then I think Mr. O'Connor's motion will have this effect—it will tend to force the hands of the United States. America has placed the colonies in an unfair position for a long time by compelling us not only to pay postage our way, but their way as well. It is quite evident to me that it would not be fair to New South Wales to ask her to continue her responsibility, and I therefore second the motion.

The President—It appears to me that this motion is one which this Conference may very well carry. It really lies at the basis of the whole postal arrangements existing between the United States and the colonies, and this is substantially a step which must be taken to force arrangements into a fair apportionment of the cost of the service. The United States at present gets the whole advantage of the service. Mr. Todd reports:—"At the recent Postal Conference at Sydney, attention was drawn to the very one-sided character of the conventions between the United States post office and Victoria and New South Wales, and it was agreed to recommend that notice should be given to terminate the existing conventions, and that in any future arrangement provision should be made for each dispatching country to pay cost of conveyance by sea and land to destination of the mails it dispatches. Steps are now being taken to give effect to this decision. The result to South Australia will be a saving of nearly £900 a year." The practical effect of the carrying of the motion now before the Conference will be this: that it will force the readjustment of the whole postal arrangements between the United States and Australia by the Pacific route. On behalf of South Australia I shall heartily support the motion. It inflicts no injustice on New Zealand, which will then reconsider its position. If there were any discourtesy to New Zealand I would not agree to it; but it is simply a matter of pounds, shillings, and pence.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Many years ago the whole cost of the service was undertaken by New South Wales—nearly £90,000 a year. That is twenty-five years ago. Less than a million people in New South Wales were paying two-thirds the cost of the service; America paid a few thousands only. The amount came to be reduced to £37,000. New Zealand has been looking out for herself, and she has succeeded in getting the colonies to do the handsome thing for a number of years, and we have determined in New South Wales not to do this any more. This is a result of the deliberations of the heads of departments.

The Hon. C. Powers—I think, after the remarks that have been made, that New Zealand will understand that we only intend to pay just as they will pay on the contracts we subsidise.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—It seems to me there is a question whether the colonies are not tying their hands, supposing the same circumstances arise to which Mr. O'Connor has referred when he, in the interests of Australia, and in order to secure a continuance of the contract, rushed into the breach and continued the contract with which New Zealand appeared to wish to have nothing to do. Supposing this did occur again, and New Zealand chose to do nothing, we might be left without a mail service across the Pacific. This might be considered with a view of altering the resolution in some way. All we want is that we shall not feel ourselves bound to enter in with New Zealand; at any rate, that we shall not bind ourselves to pay more than the usual rates. But we shall be rather tying the hands of the colonies in the event of our wanting to do what Mr. O'Connor did some little time ago.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—At the time this contract was about to be entered into the Parliament of New Zealand was in recess, and the promise had been made by their Government that they would not renew the contract until they first submitted it to Parliament. The leading members of the Government became very ill, and the Parliament was still further prorogued until the time came when the contract lapsed altogether. It was under these circumstances that we induced our Parliament to renew the contract for one year only.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—We are expecting shortly to have a Conference, with representatives from Canada, and one of the special objects we shall have in view will be to open up intercourse directly with Canada, which will mean not only commercial service but a mail service as well. Positively, this resolution prevents our entering into arrangements with the Canadian representatives for a mail service. I think we should alter the terms of the motion somewhat.

The President—I would suggest that the words "if arranged for by the colony of New Zealand," should be substituted for "be left to."

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I accept that.

The motion was then put in the following form:—"That in any future mail contracts across the Pacific Ocean, if arranged for by the colony of New Zealand, the other colonies shall pay similar poundage rates"

"rates to New Zealand to those paid by the non-contracting colonies to the contracting colonies for the mail service *via* Suez, each dispatching country or colony paying all charges to destination."

The motion was carried unanimously.

#### POSTCARDS, NEWSPAPERS, AND PACKETS.

The Hon. B. S. Bird moved:—"That the President of this Conference be requested to communicate by cable with the Postmaster-General of England in order to ascertain what rates he will propose to fix for postcards, newspapers, and packets in the events of his proposed reduction of postage on letters to Australia being adopted, and that an immediate answer be requested while the Conference is sitting."

The Hon. F. T. Derham seconded.

Carried.

#### REDUCTION OF CABLE RATES.

The Hon F. T. Derham moved—"That the rate for cablegrams be—For the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word—the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue, and the other half being equitably divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies, to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy."

He said—I am sure that every member of the Conference must feel that the rates ruling at the present time are altogether inordinately high; so high, indeed, as to be oppressive, and, in a large number of cases, prohibitory. It will, therefore, be apparent to us all, that a radical change is immediately necessary. The time is more than ripe for making the change, and I hope we shall be able to place the question on a basis satisfactory to all concerned. I feel sure that the existing state of things has checked the traffic on the lines very materially for a large number of years past; that it has hindered commerce, and that it has prevented transactions from taking place which would have taken place otherwise. Whenever we place any unnecessary restrictions in the course of commerce, we not only embarrass the merchant, but increase the cost of the articles to the consumer; so that it does not only affect the merchant, as at first sight might appear. So far as the merchant is concerned, he, in making his calculations, includes the cost of cablegrams as being a very important item. He charges not only the percentage of profit on the articles in the ordinary way, but on the cablegrams also; so that the consumers pay for the cablegrams as well as the ordinary profit. Again, it checks the flow of information, which it is desirable the Australian colonies should be in receipt of from the old world, and I think it is desirable that there should be a larger flow of information from the colonies to the old world. Again, it tends to hamper those social and domestic relations which it is desirable to keep up between the British lion and her cubs in Australia. It will be in the recollection of those at the Conference that when the cable system was first introduced—when the cable was laid to the shores of Australia, the rate charged was £9 9s. 6d. for any message up to twenty words. If you sent one word the charge was £9 9s. 6d., and if it were twenty words the same price was charged. The business at that time was extremely small. The system was commenced about November, 1872. The number of messages sent in 1873, the first complete year, was 8,994; that was messages transmitted and received. At the present time the number is 62,909. I mention that as showing the large increase of business, notwithstanding the high charges that prevailed. In 1876 there was a reduction in the rate I have just mentioned to 10s. 8d. per word, and here I come to a point worth considering. It has always been held that a reduction would lead to an extension of business; in this case it did not. Although there was a reduction from £9 9s. 6d. per message to 10s. 8d. per word in 1876, the revenue, which in 1875 was £104,000, fell off, and in 1876 was only £77,308. In 1875 the messages numbered 9,709, and in 1876 they fell off to 6,665, or a reduction of 30 per cent., even with the lower rate of transit. There is something inexplicable about that. The increase of business did not take place until 1877, when the messages numbered 12,479, and the revenue was £123,242. That went on for a long time, until in 1886 the company reduced the rate to 9s. 4d. per word. The reduction was comparatively so small as to lead to only a very moderate increase in the business. The business for 1885, the preceding year, was £276,551. The reduction in 1886 so affected the money receipts that there was an absolute falling off to £256,527. I view this part of the history of the system as rather interesting to us, because we ought very carefully to consider the measure of reduction the colonies can safely venture upon. I would invite attention to this point—that this reduction did not lead immediately to the large extension of business which might have been expected. But it seems to me that the reason is to be found in this, that the rates, though reduced, were still on a very high level. Even after the second reduction the price was still too high to draw upon the larger sources of traffic which I feel sure would arise if we could see our way to reduce the rate to a sufficiently low point, and it is the exact point to which that reduction can be made that should form the subject of grave consideration on the part of this Conference. We all know that the proposition of the Eastern Extension Company is to reduce the rate to the public to 5s. per word, which is a very important step in the direction in which we all wish to go; but I have been led to think, after a great deal of consideration, that it is scarcely low enough to draw from all those channels we would like to get, and should most likely get if we gave the public what they felt was really a cheap service; and it seems to me our object should be to get the cheapest service possible without running any extraordinary or unwise risk. For some years past it has been considered by a great many persons that the Eastern Extension Company practically holds a monopoly of telegraph communication with Australia, but the colonies have so greatly grown that I think the present position has forced itself upon the minds of those who are so very ably administering the affairs of the Eastern Extension Company. The colonies are no longer the small group of comparatively weak communities that they were when the Eastern Extension Company first took up this business. At that time the united population of Australasia was 2,000,000; now we are nearly 4,000,000 strong, and I think it a great point for us to be able to say that the colonies are in a position now to take a decided stand and speak with a firm voice to any persons having business relations with us. The Eastern Extension Company having entered upon this business many years ago, I think are entitled to be treated with every consideration. At the same time the company must not be allowed to think that they are placed in a position of being able to dictate to the colonies. The colonies—some of them at all events—are under obligations to pay a certain subsidy to the Eastern Extension Company for their duplicate cable. In such an unfortunate event as the

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Eastern Extension Company not agreeing with us as to what is a fair basis for business in the future, the colonies are now quite strong enough to take the matter entirely into their own hands. I think the colonies could undertake to provide a cable service for themselves, and so ignore the Eastern Extension Company altogether if needs be. But I am greatly in hope that no such position will be forced upon us. I believe the colonies are quite willing to treat with the Eastern Extension Company so long as the company, having undertaken the mission of supplying telegraphic communication between the colonies and the old world, are willing to meet public requirements in every reasonable way I do not think the colonies will wish to interfere with them. I merely touch upon this point because it is high time we dispelled any notion of the Eastern Extension Company having a monopoly, and the colonies being entirely in their hands. We are in a position to treat with them, and I shall be pleased indeed if we can come to terms. Another branch of my motion is of some importance, and it introduces a matter which I had the honor of submitting to the Conference in Sydney, rather more than two years ago, and that is, that Great Britain should be called upon to pay her share of the use of this cable. We have heard it said—I do not know on what authority—that it is against the policy of Great Britain to subsidise cables. I should be most sorry if any objection arises on the part of Great Britain to pay her fair share of a service which she so largely uses. The number of messages sent from Europe amounts, singularly enough, to just about the same as the number of messages sent from here to Europe, so that on the basis of actual service rendered, Great Britain should distinctly pay half what the colonies have to pay. I shall be very pleased indeed, if we so word the motion as to make it clearer that Great Britain should be required to pay half, because she uses the cables to that extent. As to Great Britain's policy not to subsidise cables, that is unreasonable and inconsistent. Great Britain has cables of her own, and I cannot see the difference between owning cables and paying for the use of them to other persons. Again she subsidises mail steamers, and I cannot see the difference between subsidising mail steamers and cables. Some of our electrical enthusiasts have suggested that we should bring about a 1s. cable rate or 2s. rate, but after thinking the matter over very carefully I do not think such a tariff would be payable at the present time. The rate from England to New York is 1s.; to California, 1s. 6d.; to Ontario, 1s.; and to Vancouver's Island, 1s. 9d. But, if we take into consideration that we are three times the distance, and also consider the number of administrations through which our message must pass, it will be seen that if we come to anything like 4s. per word, we shall be coming down to as low a rate as the colonies can fairly be asked to entertain. Again, considering these low rates on the American cables, so far as my inquiries go, I find that the companies are either making no profit or else a very small one since the rates have been so reduced by competition. Therefore, we cannot fairly expect these rates to be taken as a basis. Now, I desire at once, to say that it is no part of my wish to ask South Australia to bear any burden which properly belongs to Victoria or any of the other colonies. I hope we shall have some information by-and-by as to how far South Australia can meet us in this matter. I would like to know how far their transcontinental line is mixed up with their local traffic, whether they can dis sever the business of the one from the other so that the exact working of the line can be plainly seen. I feel sure I shall be quite safe in inviting the members of the Conference to consider the position of South Australia in the matter carefully, impartially, and favorably, having regard to the general requirements. The Eastern Extension Company is a company that has for a great number of years past been enabled to make very large profits, and the company can very well afford to make some return. They have been making profits of 6 and 7 per cent. per annum, in addition to which they have been building lines out of revenue which is, I think, a very important matter for us to consider. We should like to know how far this practice has been proceeding, to what extent they have available assets which have been provided out of revenue. Then they have a large reserve fund—a quarter of a million—and unless we had something like a complete survey it is almost impossible to know how many hundreds of thousands of pounds they have disposed of in the same way, for their accounts do not show what the value of some of these assets may be. I mention this because I think we ought to clearly see that the company is in a splendid position to meet the colonies in a handsome manner. I believe from my investigations that they can well afford to do this. They have, no doubt, made a large step in their proposal, but I think it is a step dictated by wisdom and foresight, and by the appreciation of the new position, and the expectation that the business will very largely increase. Those in charge of the company are gentlemen well able to form anticipations of this kind. They are men of business, and I believe they make their proposals feeling that they will be carried out successfully to the company. My proposal goes a little further, but not much, and is that Great Britain and the colonies should bear half the loss, so that if there be any loss, we share it with the company. I think the test of one year after the instances I have named would be entirely insufficient. It would be so incomplete as to be unsatisfactory to us all. I think a three years' test would be the shortest period. It has indeed been suggested that we should carry on for the whole balance of the term of the existing contract. I am not at all clear that that would not be a good plan, but I feel that it will be sufficient to make the proposal I do that the test should be for three years, and that the colonies should have the option of extending it for the remainder of the term. I am bound to say that I feel very sanguine indeed that the reduction is one that will bring about perhaps not in the first year, certainly within three years, an enormous increase of business, which would mean not only a large increase of traffic on the transcontinental line, which would enable South Australia to meet the company on more favorable terms than at present, but it would mean such a quickening of the impulse of communication between the colonies and Europe, that I believe it would have a direct tendency to cheapen the cost of goods to our consumers. It would give a far better indication as to the position of the market for the produce of these colonies in Europe, and would tend to strengthen our social relations, and to cement the union which exists between the mother country and these colonies.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Have you any figures to show the probable loss which will be incurred by the reduced rates which you propose?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I have here the figures, which I omitted to give. On the basis of the tariff proposed, if the business increases 25 per cent. and if we pool the cables, putting the guarantee and pooling subsidies together, Great Britain will contribute £43,112; Victoria, £12,752; New South Wales, £12,798; South Australia, £3,640; West Australia, £498; New Zealand, £7,071; Queensland, £4,638; and Tasmania, £1,716. If the increase were 50 per cent. the following would be the figures:—United Kingdom, £37,175; Victoria, £10,995; New South Wales, £11,036; South Australia, £3,138; West Australia, £430; New Zealand, £6,097; Queensland, £3,999; Tasmania, £1,480. It will be observed that these figures, if we carry out the proposal—whether on a 25 per cent. or 50 per cent. basis of increase—are more favorable to the colonies now joining than is the present arrangement, so that we should get an enormous reduction in the



the cost of traffic and save money, whilst equitably dividing the expense. Of course this is conditional upon Queensland coming in.

The Hon. C. Powers—Do your calculations include the guarantee of portion of the subsidy?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The guarantee is based on the last three years.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Do you include the Tasmanian cable?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Yes; but we can hardly ask Great Britain to share half the Tasmanian subsidy.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Do you take lower rates for Government and press messages?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I take Sir John Pender's rates for press messages, but not for Government messages.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—It occurs to me, and I think I shall be supported by the Conference, that it would be better to resolve ourselves into a committee of the whole to consider this matter. In moving a resolution to that effect, I should like to say that I think we ought to allow ourselves as much liberty as possible in discussing these questions. In committee we can go into detail, and arrange for any modification in Mr. Derham's motion which may be thought desirable.

The President—I will put it. Is it your pleasure, gentlemen, that the Conference resolve itself into committee to consider this motion?

Carried.

The representatives of the press withdrew.

#### IN COMMITTEE.

The President—The Conference has now resolved itself into a committee of the whole to consider the motion so ably submitted by Mr. Derham. The motion stands as No. 2 on the notice paper.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—The principal object we have to consider at this stage in connection with the cable rates is, not to make a proposal to Sir John Pender, but to see whether we can accept his proposal or not. The cable company has made an offer, and all the facts have been adduced by Mr. Derham in his able speech. As to what we shall be able to do if we unite is one question, and whether we accept or reject Sir John Pender's proposal is another. Mr. Derham's proposal to extend the term for three years is the best argument I can discover for giving the proposal a test, and then in the meantime, if the colonies find that the company is not fair, they will know what to do. I shall submit a motion that the offer of the Eastern Extension Cable Company be accepted, on the understanding that Queensland and Tasmania agree to join in the subsidy and guarantee on the usual population basis, and that the Imperial Government be again strongly urged to share half the Australian liability, the reduction to be tried for three years. I have here a cablegram from Sir Saul Samuel, in which he says:—"Have Paris Conference informed as soon as possible of result Conference Adelaide *re* Pender's proposal, which I strongly recommend to your favorable consideration. Feel confident messages at the reduced rate would soon recoup the first loss to all the colonies." Now, if we accept Mr. Derham's suggestion it will upset this proposal, and it would take up time without anything being gained. I shall be glad, whatever may be the result, to abide by it. Our object is to see that fair play is done to all the colonies, and to join together in securing that fair play. Let us pull unitedly, and pull together.

The President—I confess, while joining in the encomiums passed upon Mr. Derham for his most able survey of the position, that I feel a little hesitancy in committing South Australia to the reduction he proposes, because it is a serious matter to us. Even if (as I am sure will be the case) the other colonies join us in the loss of revenue which the proposals involve. Every penny taken off our charges on the overland telegraph line means a loss of £3,000 a year. I certainly favor the attitude taken up by Mr. O'Connor, that whatever reduction is made, it should not go beyond the Eastern Extension Company's proposal. I think that is the furthest extent to which we could go in working the communication from the old country. You will observe from Mr. Todd's report that the rates paid to the different companies to England are:—Eastern and Indo-European, 2s. 11d.; Bombay and Madras, 7½d.; Java, 1½d.; South Australia, 1s. 1d. That is, the Eastern Extension Company are paying away 4s. 9d. If the rates were reduced to 4s. it would work out in this way: South Australia would have to reduce from 1s. 1d. to 7½d., leaving only ½d. a word for the Eastern Extension Company. I am afraid we are not likely to be able to agree to any reduction below 5s.; and it might be better to meet the proposal of Sir John Pender than to bring forward a counter proposal that might mean delay. Without committing South Australia to anything, I do not feel certain that I can support any reduction below Sir John Pender's proposal, and therefore I am inclined to follow Mr. O'Connor. Before we agree to anything we must see how it affects our overland line.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The latter part of Mr. O'Connor's motion is identical with mine.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—No doubt; but we think it better to adhere to Sir John Pender's proposal.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Yes; but if you cannot agree to a proposal made to you, you have to consider what you can agree to.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I confess to sharing the feeling of Mr. O'Connor in this matter with regard to the propriety of accepting, as nearly as possible, the proposal of Sir John Pender, although I should be very pleased to see the rates reduced to 4s., if it could be done satisfactorily to South Australia and the other countries concerned; but it would be very questionable whether the company would go so far as to undertake to take half the guarantee against the loss if you reduce the rate to 4s. We have the proposal of a year or two ago, when they did offer to establish a 4s. tariff, but the utmost they would take in the guarantee was 25 per cent. leaving 75 per cent. to be borne by the colonies. I think, however, it is likely they would agree to an extension to three years' trial, they bearing 50 per cent. of the loss on a 5s. rate, and keeping the Government charge at 4s. 5d., and press messages as at present; but it is doubtful, after all that has been said and done, whether they would entertain the proposal to take off the loss involved in a further reduction of rates to 4s., 2s. 6d., and 1s. 10d. If there was any chance of those terms being accepted, there would be no harm in telegraphing to Sir John Pender. It seems to me that the question is whether we shall secure Mr. Derham's proposal, which will be better for the colonies, or whether we shall get the concessions contained in Mr. O'Connor's motion. I do not apprehend any difficulty, so far as Tasmania is concerned, with regard to bearing her share of the subsidy towards the cable company, but I would point out that Tasmania has all along paid the entire subsidy to the Straits cable, that is £4,200 a year, without any assistance from any other colony.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—But Victoria is paying a little.

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The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Yes, a little towards the guarantee when the rates were reduced, so as to ensure the company the same revenue as under the old rates. Practically, I believe, you will be paying nothing, as the receipts have increased to the amount they were before the reduction came into operation.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—How long ago is that?

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Since 1884. We then reduced the rates by half—from 4s. per ten words, to 2s. per ten words. The point I have referred to is that we have borne the entire cost of the subsidy to the company, which is £4,200, and of course the colonies, so far as they have to communicate with Tasmania, have all the advantage of that at our cost. While we should be prepared to come in with the rest in bearing a proportion of the subsidy for the European cable, I think in that case it would be only fair if the Tasmanian cable was brought in and pooled with the rest. Such an arrangement as that would meet the approval of the Government and Parliament of Tasmania. If our friends from Queensland are prepared to do so, it seems to me the course is perfectly plain. I do not believe the company will agree to pay half the loss or guarantee if the rate is reduced to 4s. If we take the proposal for 5s. they will take 50 per cent risk. The rest will be divided between England and ourselves, leaving us practically as we are at present. I am rather favorable to asking by cable whether the terms suggested by Mr. Derham would be accepted by the company, although, on the other hand, after what has been said by the President, it makes the difficulty so much the greater, that, on the whole, I think we should be going on the safest course towards a satisfactory settlement by asking if the company would extend the term of trial to three years.

The President—The agent here has communicated to me that he has cabled the views of Mr. Derham to the head office, and we shall get the benefit of that shortly.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Of course if that information has gone to Sir John Pender, and we are likely to get his views upon it, it seems to me that the only additional information we ought to have is an answer to the suggestion of Mr. O'Connor, as to whether the company would extend the term of trial to three years on the same basis as their present proposal.

The Hon. C. Powers—Are your calculations based on the loss that would accrue to South Australia?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—No; whatever compensation this Conference may agree to make to South Australia would be in addition. The South Australian difficulty is quite out of our way. We need not consider it in dealing with Sir John Pender.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I can scarcely see what objection there can be to our sending a formal and official reply to Sir John Pender's offer, stating that we do not quite like it—that it is not good enough—and that we would rather submit this proposition of Mr. Derham's, and allow him to accept or reject it. No harm can result from that. It does not commit us to anything. Would the Conference be bound by the terms of your resolution if we telegraphed it to London?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—If you telegraphed to London, I think this Conference would be in honor bound to stand by any proposition suggested. They proposed some years ago to reduce the rates to 4s., and why should we not make an attempt to get it now? I do not think any loss would result to South Australia, because the traffic would increase very largely.

The President—After lunch we shall have the figures, and therefore, I think, we might adjourn until 2 o'clock.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I suppose it was in view of the effect upon South Australia's revenue that made you prefer the 5s. rate?

The President—Yes; but I would very much like to have the 4s. rate if it can be arranged with due regard to the position of my colony in connection with her overland line.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Of course we recognise the position of South Australia in the building of this transcontinental line, and she ought to have every consideration.

The Conference at 1 p.m. suspended its sitting until 2.15 p.m.

On resuming, the President said:—When we adjourned we were waiting for some information with regard to South Australia and her overland telegraph line. The figures as they stand now, without reference to the loss in previous years, respecting which I shall be able to furnish you with a return, are as follows:—The revenue for 1889-90 for messages sent across our lines for transmission by cable was £38,013; from local messages, £4,755—that is, messages to intervening stations and the Northern Territory only. But I may point out, with regard to that item of £4,755, that, according to the method of bookkeeping adopted by the South Australian Government, the messages sent by Government departments to Government departments in the Northern Territory, and which constitute very much the largest portion of this traffic, are included in this amount. However, for the purposes of this calculation, I am willing, on behalf of the colony, to assume that we received in money £4,755 for local messages. This makes a total of £42,768. The expenditure for working is £19,460, and the interest we are paying on the capital outlay on the Adelaide and Port Darwin telegraph line is £24,380, making the total expenditure £43,840, against £42,768, the total receipts, leaving on the working for this year a loss of £1,072. However, I need hardly point out that the traffic on this line has been only very gradually increasing for many years, and since 1873, when the line was finished, we have been yearly losing a very large amount. For 1873 the revenue was £11,994; for 1874, £12,389; for 1875, £11,751; for 1876, the year to which Mr. Derham drew attention, £9,139; for 1877, £15,850; for 1878, £16,421; for 1879, £17,792; for 1880, £20,491; for 1881, £23,347; for 1882, £25,424; for 1883, £27,510; the actual capital loss to date is £288,277 without interest. I am getting a table prepared showing the total loss up to date, which will amount on these figures to a very large sum of money. However, on the present revenue there is a loss of £1,072; and if, for the purposes of adjustment, South Australia were to say she would let the hundreds of thousands of pounds which she has lost remain for the present, it should be taken into consideration in future negotiations which are made, with a view of relieving South Australia of a fair share of the burden.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—With an increase of business under present arrangements you would lose nothing. Practically from this time out you would pay your way.

The President—Although I shall have to submit the matter to the Government, I think if the colonies came in and bore a proportion of the loss which the reductions would entail upon our present revenue, thus crediting the account every year with what might be gathered from the increase of traffic, the Government would agree.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I think we should guarantee you a certain amount down.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—You don't know the rates at which the loans for the overland line were issued. It would be well to adopt the present value of money as a basis, and then divide the loss between the colonies.

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The President—I think, for the purposes of this calculation, we might take 4 per cent. as the rate of interest. We are paying up to 5 and  $5\frac{1}{2}$  per cent. for loans that have not yet expired.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—We might be asked elsewhere if the line would have cost the same now as it did when it was constructed so many years ago.

Mr. Todd—At the time when we constructed that line we had to take it through an unknown country. Then our contractor broke down, which cost the colony not less than £100,000; but the amount of £500,000 includes repoling the entire line with iron poles.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—After how many years?

Mr. Todd—We commenced in 1870, and we are just completing the iron poles now.

The President—I do not think you will find this colony standing in the way of a fair adjustment in this matter.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—What is the length of the line?

Mr. Todd—Nearly 2,000 miles, and the cost was £500,000. We had to pay as much as £180 per ton for cartage.

The President—We have maintained the line at an average loss on a rough calculation of £12,000 a year. If you can agree to a proposal placing the capital value of our line at the cost value, fixing the interest at 4 per cent., and the colonies come in with a standing agreement that the loss is for the future to be borne *pro rata*, I apprehend there will be no difficulty on the part of the South Australian Government.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Suppose you take it this way: At one time your receipts amount to so many thousands a year. Under the new proposals there would be a reduction of rates by which you would lose a certain amount. The colonies joining in this arrangement contribute *pro rata*, so that you secure the same amount of receipts you are now getting; that would be all that you want.

The President—That is practically my proposal.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Supposing you were going to buy the Eastern Extension Company's cables, you would not buy them at the original price. I think we should guarantee a certain sum, and that sum should be based upon the present value of the line.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—South Australia is looking forward to recoup herself for the £12,000 a year loss.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Was that not due to their own action? I gather that the other colonies were not asked to join.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Whether that is so or not there has been a loss of £12,000.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Here the Australian colonies are free. There is no obligation other than a moral obligation to South Australia. Could not you arrange a line from some northernmost part of Queensland. You see, we shall have to justify our position.

Mr. Todd—You must take into consideration that at the present time we have a railway from Port Augusta extending 500 miles north, and therefore the carriage of our plant could be more cheaply effected than it was when the line was built. Even taking into consideration the facilities afforded by the railway from Port Augusta northwards, and from Palmerston to Pine Creek southwards, I do not think the line could be constructed with iron poles at anything less than £120 to £130 per mile.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Half the original cost.

The President—The one railway from Palmerston to Pine Creek cost us a million.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—What is your cost of maintenance?

The President—Nineteen thousand four hundred and sixty pounds.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Then £30,000 is practically what you require to meet the expenditure, and, from Mr. Derham's point of view, if the colonies guaranteed that to you, you would be satisfied.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—One can hardly expect the President to treat such a large question as this off hand. We want to do what is perfectly just to South Australia, but we must be just to our own people as well.

The President—We are running the line at present at a loss, and I do not think we should be called upon to reduce the rates to  $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. from 1s. 1d., which is the rate at which we are at present making a loss.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Supposing you were a millowner, and put up a mill on the old principles. Supposing a new man starts alongside with a mill costing half the money, you would have to shut up or come down to his plan.

The President—I think the colonies, as you have generously said, are prepared to recognise that we have done a national work which would not have been undertaken by the other colonies for a great number of years and the benefit of which our neighbors have been reaping.

The Hon. C. Powers—So far as Queensland is concerned, she has always stood out, because she wanted a duplication of the service and did not consider that this was a duplication of the service. It was thought that there should either be a line across the Pacific or else one from some port in Queensland towards India. Sir John Perder agreed in 1876 to lay a submarine cable at his own expense, costing £70,000, to connect Queensland with Port Darwin, and if it comes to a question of a contribution by Queensland when we have a line practically so near Port Darwin, possibly some objection may be raised. Since the time of which I have spoken we have built a line from Normanton to Burketown. We have always kept this question open, because we wanted some other service better for Australia and better for Queensland, and thought there should be a second service. When we came to consider the cost of the whole thing to the colonies, there seemed reason for our standing out, because the rest of the colonies do not subsidise the British-India service simply because they do not use it to the same extent as we do. We pay a higher rate now than any of the colonies because we do not join in the subsidy.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—That goes to the company; not to us, unfortunately.

Mr. Todd—Queensland has asked whether we would be prepared to connect with the Queensland system in the meanwhile. Of course the best point at which the systems could unite would be some point near Powell's Creek. Queensland would have a very short piece of line to construct, and South Australia would have a line of over 200 miles to make.

The Hon. C. Powers—I was about to point out that we are asked to contribute to the full extent according to the population of the colonies in any subsidy that might be arranged or any guarantee that might be given. It appears that Queensland only sent 4,000 messages as against 8,122 sent by South Australia, and although the basis of population, generally speaking, is a fair basis to work upon, yet if we are asked for a subsidy we do not use the line as you do. I do not think the basis of population is the only one you ought to,

to look at. We do not use the line to the same extent as you do, and it is not of such commercial advantage to us.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Why not?

Mr. Todd—The increase, so far as South Australia is concerned, purely arises from the fact that a great many messages are sent to South Australia for distribution.

The Hon. C. Powers—On the question of guaranteeing 1s. 1d. to send a message 2,000 miles, Queensland at present sends messages 2,200 miles for 1s. If the Queensland line were connected with the Port Darwin line we would effect a saving, and so would the rest of the colonies if the messages were sent through Queensland, because they would be only paying 1s. instead of 1s. 1d.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—What length of line would you have to construct now?

Mr. Todd—The South Australian line passes through the minimum of the north-west monsoon, and is therefore less liable to disturbance than any line which would run along the northern coast, and would consequently be almost wholly within the adverse atmospheric influence of the tropics.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Have you any objection to joining the transcontinental line from, say Normanton? Have you anything to propose to us?

The Hon. C. Powers—I am here to gain information on this subject, and will be glad to hear what is suggested.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—If Queensland would come to some friendly arrangement, I do not think the other colonies would object to it.

Mr. Todd—What you suggest is to nationalise the lines, or some of them, in which all the colonies are concerned.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—One important item would be to have proposals with regard to a Pacific cable at once, before we bind ourselves to the present company for three years.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—You would not have a Pacific cable within three years.

The President—We are already bound to the present company until 1899.

The Hon. C. Powers—Perhaps the rest of the Governments would hardly be likely to join in a subsidy at present for a Pacific cable; but rightly or wrongly, the Governments have for years past been considering the duplication of the cable by way of the Pacific, and they want to keep the matter open so as to be able to join New Zealand at any time. I would like to know the voice of the Conference, as to whether this cable is a question which is to be discussed by it.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Certainly not. We passed a resolution at the last Conference that it was to be carried out as soon as possible.

The President—It is not a work that is likely to come within the scope of practical consideration for a good many years.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—If we have to wait for the Pacific cable to secure a duplication of the service, we shall have to wait a long while; and after we do get it we shall have to pay £75,000 a year in addition to our present subsidy.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Of course there is a strong feeling in the colonies that we must have a Pacific cable, but the point is to discover which is the best route for it.

The President—The question is one of pounds, shillings, and pence. At present it narrows itself down to this—how far the other colonies will meet South Australia in regard to the loss of £18,000, on the basis of population. I think the Conference will admit that £18,000 is not a large sum to divide amongst us all. Of course, it is understood that South Australia will make her contribution to the additional guarantee as well as this.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—You will simply pool that with the other subsidies.

The President—Yes.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—There will be £32,400 and £18,000 from the last guarantee besides, and the subsidy to the Tasmanian cable of £4,200, all put into one pool?

The President—That will be it. We have been serving the other colonies at a cost of £12,000, or £15,000 a year for a good many years.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—But the other colonies would have joined in the undertaking if they had been asked.

The President—Then, on the principle of the comity of nations, they ought to come in now and pay up the deficiency.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I am really afraid I must ask you to modify this cost. I suppose the Conference would be agreeable to take over the line at the amount it would cost to construct now.

The President—But our colony has lost £12,000 a year on the line in the past for the benefit of the whole of Australia, and we do not think we ought to be asked to bear the loss in perpetuity.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—As we are here in a perfectly friendly way, I may put it in this way: you would be in a worse position if we were to construct another line.

The President—By which way?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Queensland.

The President—The question is whether you would gain anything then; whether you would be able to send your messages at less than 7½d., as now proposed.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—The question is whether we could build another line at the cost you now ask from the other colonies.

The President—I do not think it would be worth while disturbing the basis proposed. I think it would be rather hard if you come now and ask us to accept terms which would ignore the loss we have incurred in bearing the heat and burden of the day for the benefit of the whole Australasian continent, New Zealand, and Tasmania.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Supposing we guaranteed you a round sum of £10,000 a year instead, and the cost of maintenance.

The President—That would leave us a heavier loss than we should be asked to bear. If we were to cut off the line from the other colonies I am inclined to think they would lose a great deal more, commercially, than the sum we are now asking. I think it would be merely fair play to accept our proposal, for even then we should be losing £4,800 a year.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The thing won't stand going into on strictly arithmetical lines. Supposing we take it in a lump sum and give you £12,500 a year instead?

The

The President—We have to look at the matter as we are working it now and we ask for an apportionment of whatever the loss may be. A lump sum leaves this colony to take the risk of all shortcomings, and this must be inequitable.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—It seems to me that South Australia could refuse to reduce the rates, and if she did so she could secure her present revenue with the possibility of increasing it. Would it not be fair, considering what she has lost, to say—"You are sure, if you adhere to the present rates, to get sufficient to cover interest and maintenance besides, and therefore whatever amount you lose by reducing the rates we are prepared to pool and make it up on the basis of population." If South Australia makes lower rates for the benefit of all the colonies, cannot we say that we will recoup her for the next three years.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—My idea was to relieve South Australia for all time.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—We might make it a three-years' term, with the option of extending it to the end of 1899.

The President—South Australia would be very glad to hand over the line to the other colonies, losing her £200,000, and work it as a joint concern. Possibly that would be the result of any practical federation movement. Mr. Bird has put it in a very fair way. Of course it would be impolitic to say we would not reduce the rates, because we want to do so if we can be secured against making any further loss. We are only asking the other colonies to help us on the basis proposed by the cable company.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—What are the terms of the division of the 4s.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Europe, 2d.; India, 7½d.; Java, 2½d.; Cis India, Java, 1½d.; South Australia, 5d.; Eastern Extension, 1d.; Eastern India, 2s. 4½d.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—A resolution of this kind might meet the case:—"That, in the event of South Australia reducing the telegraphic rates on the transcontinental line in accordance with any resolution of this Conference, the several colonies, including South Australia, agree on the basis of population to guarantee to that colony a revenue equivalent to that received at present." I shall propose that.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Were you going to ask any modification of Sir John Pender's proposal?

The President—Yes. I think it would be to the interest of the colonies to keep the tariff as it is at present on the overland line, and take off a shilling from the lines passing through the other countries, so as to reduce the tariff to 4s.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Do you think you will get them to agree to that?

The President—I think so—We must make the proposal.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I am not quite sure whether I can say yes to Mr. Bird's motion.

The President—There is no doubt it is a fair and equitable way to look at the matter.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—If I were an arbitrator I should certainly take the line at what it would cost to construct at the present time.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Well, I will second Mr. Bird's proposition.

The Hon. C. Powers—That resolution would be binding in connection with any motion that may be passed afterwards. I intend to dissent formally, because I would not be justified in voting for it. If it were deferred until Monday, if it is desired, I could wire, and would vote then.

The President—We can adopt this motion in Committee, and I won't report it to the Conference until Monday.

Carried, the Hon. C. Powers withholding his vote.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved—"That the reduced cable rates agreed to by this Conference be available only by those countries which are contributors to the guarantee."

The Hon. C. Powers—I think that ought to be put after Queensland says no.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Besides, it would hardly be fair to make foreign countries, such as France, pay the full rates.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I was thinking principally of New Zealand when I framed the resolution.

The Conference resumed.

The President—Gentlemen, I beg to report that the Conference in committee has agreed to the following resolution:—"That the rate for cablegrams be—for the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word—the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue, and the other half being equitably divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies; to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy."

Carried, Mr. Powers withholding his consent.

#### URGENT TELEGRAMS.

The Hon. C. Powers moved—"That it is considered desirable to adopt a system of urgent telegrams at double rates, locally and intercolonially." With reference to this motion, I gave notice of it because we have adopted the system of urgent telegrams in Queensland since 1880, and it has been found to work very well indeed. The telegraph authorities would no more think of doing away with it than they would of raising the price of ordinary telegrams throughout the colony. From 1880 to the present time we have had no complaints whatever, and, while reaping the benefits of the system, Queensland has tried to get it adopted in the other colonies, but unsuccessfully, except in the case of Victoria. From the commencement we have tried to get all the colonies to agree to adopting the system; but, although Queensland and Victoria have brought it into operation, we do not get the full benefit of it because New South Wales will not come in. I am sure it would be to the benefit of Australia generally if the system were adopted throughout the colonies, and, therefore, I hope the delegates will support the proposition. Negotiations have already been entered into between Queensland and South Australia. Having experienced the beneficial effects of the system, I know the great advantage it is to those who are willing to pay double rates for urgent telegrams. This question was dealt with at the Conference in 1888, and the system was agreed to by the majority—New South Wales and South Australia dissenting, and Tasmania, Victoria, and Queensland voting for it. I beg to move the motion.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I will second that, all the more willingly because we have adopted the system locally, and, as far as possible, intercolonially. We should be glad to see it agreed to by the other colonies, with whom it rests to give reasons for their hesitation in approving of the system of urgent telegrams

The

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We have always been opposed to this proposal in New South Wales for very good reasons. All telegrams are important. However, I will not offer any objections to the wish of the majority.

The President—I may say that South Australia has always dissented upon this point, but, seeing the unanimity of the Conference, we will agree to it.

Carried.

#### POSTAL CONVENTION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

The Hon. D. O'Connor's motion—"That the Postal Convention with the United States of America, "drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, be adopted by the colonies generally"—was made the first order of the day for the next meeting of Conference.

#### POSTCARDS TO INDIA.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved—"That these colonies should unite in arranging with the Indian Government for the introduction of postcards between India and Australasia at the same rate as to England."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

Carried.

#### COMMUNICATING RESULTS TO ENGLAND.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—We have asked the President to telegraph to England with regard to the reduction of the cable rates, but I think it would be better now to pass a formal motion to that effect. I will move:—"That the President be requested to cable the decision of Conference to the Agent-General of South Australia, asking him to confer with the other Agents-General and inform the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company of the result and to ask Sir John Pender if he, on behalf of his company, will agree to the proposals of the Conference."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—You will see that in our resolution with reference to the cable rates we have not allowed for the possibility of the British Government declining to share in the loss to revenue.

The President—I fancy it would be understood by the Eastern Extension Company that the proposal of the colonies is contingent upon the Imperial Government agreeing to bear their share of the loss.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—If the British Government decline to pay their share it will mean of course that our contributions will be doubled if the reductions are made.

Carried.

#### NOTICES OF MOTION.

The following notices of motion were received:—

By the Hon. D. O'Connor—"1. That charges for telegrams within any one colony shall be an initial rate of 6d. for ten words, names and addresses to be considered part of the message; 1d. per word to be charged for each word over the first ten. 2. Between any contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge, and 1½d. for each additional word, names and addresses to be paid for. 3. Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge, and 2d. for each additional word. 4. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge, and 3d. for every extra word. 5. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for ten words for each colony plus the cable rates. Ten words to be considered the minimum rate, addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited."

By the Hon. C. Powers—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that an intercolonial 1s. telegram be adopted. The receipts to be divided equally between the colonies through which the messages are transmitted. That 1s. intercolonial telegrams consist of six words, exclusive of the address of the person to whom the message is sent and the signature of the sender, each additional word to be charged 1d."

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Conference at 4.45 p.m. adjourned until 9.30 a.m. on Monday morning.

*Monday, May 26th, 1890.*

Present—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon (President), in the chair.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, Postmaster-General, Mr. S. H. Lambton, Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department, and Mr. E. C. Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs, of New South Wales.

The Hon. F. T. Derham, Postmaster-General, and Mr. James Smibert, Deputy Postmaster-General, of Victoria.

The Hon. C. Powers, Postmaster-General of Queensland.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, Postmaster-General, Mr. T. H. Magrath, Secretary of the Post Office Department, and Mr. R. Henry, Superintendent of Telegraphs, of Tasmania.

Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G., Postmaster-General of South Australia.

The Conference assembled at 9.30 o'clock.

The President—The principal matter we have to discuss to-day is the Hon. Mr. Derham's motion as to cable rates. I have reason to believe that a cable is coming through from Sir John Pender to his agent, and I expect every moment to receive it. While we are waiting we might go on with the other items on the paper.

POSTAGE

## POSTAGE OF POSTCARDS.

The President—With regard to the resolution moved by Mr. Derham as to the rates for postcards and other mail matter, exclusive of letters, I have received the following cablegram from the Postmaster-General, London, dated London, May 24th :—"At present the reduction of letter postage alone has been discussed. Question of other correspondence will be considered hereafter. A corresponding reduction as regards postcards must probably be proposed."

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That the rate of postcards be reduced to 2d. to the United Kingdom, and to those countries beyond the colonies to which the postcard system extends; and that the rates on packets and newspapers remain as at present."

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I second that.

Carried.

## POSTAL CONVENTION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

The draft Postal Convention between the United States of America and the Australian colonies, agreed to at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, was brought up. [See Appendix C.]

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved, the Hon. F. T. Derham seconded—"That the Postal Convention with the United States of America, drafted at the recent Departmental Conference in Sydney, be adopted by the colonies generally."

Carried.

## INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAMS.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—

- I. "The charges for telegrams within any one colony shall be an initial rate of sixpence (6d.) for ten words, names and addresses to be considered as part of the message. One penny (1d.) per word to be charged for each word over the first ten."
- II. "Between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge, and 1½d. for each additional word. Names and addresses to be paid for."
- III. "Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge, and 2d. for every additional word."
- IV. "Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge, and 3d. for every extra word."
- V. "Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for ten words for each colony plus the cable rates. Ten words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited."

He said—This is virtually adopting the principle contained in the resolution of my honorable friend the Postmaster-General of Victoria. We have asked the people in England to reduce the rates in order to afford greater facilities of communication between the Australian Colonies and England. On the same principle I now ask the Conference to adopt this resolution in order that greater facilities may be afforded to people in Australia to communicate with one another, and, although it will involve at the first onset a loss more or less to the adjoining colonies, I feel perfectly certain, and I am justified in saying so after consulting the Superintendent of Telegraphs of New South Wales, that the loss will be easily recouped, and that instead of a loss there will soon be a large balance to the good. I feel it is unnecessary to say anything further on this resolution, because I am certain that the other members of the Conference are anxious that the public should have every advantage from this great question. I shall therefore content myself with moving the resolution standing in my name.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution for many reasons. First of all it brings about something like consistency in intercolonial telegraphy. At the present time disparities are very serious. Queensland charges 3s. for a message to Victoria, which is altogether exorbitant, and calls for immediate change. The first portion of my honorable friend's motion will involve a change in Victoria, as our rate is, within the colony, 6d. for the first six words, with the name and addresses free. But under this motion a much more equitable system will come into force, and one I have long been thinking of. It will no doubt be regarded as a retrogression to some extent by some people, but our system has led to enormous work on the part of the department, and this motion will have a tendency to restrict names and addresses within reasonable limits. The resolution is a step in the right direction, and I have much pleasure in seconding it.

The President—Have you any figures, Mr. O'Connor, showing the result of the reduction within your own colony?

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Yes, it is estimated that the loss on telegrams between New South Wales and South Australia would be £5,370, between New South Wales and Queensland £5,600, between New South Wales and Victoria £800, and between New South Wales and Western Australia £67. I have not got the figures from Tasmania.

Mr. Todd—Are these the losses that would have to be divided between the colonies?

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Yes.

The Hon. C. Powers—I wish to speak on this motion now because if it is carried it will dispense with my motion on the paper which is as follows:—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference that an intercolonial 1s. telegram be adopted, the receipts to be divided equally between the colonies through which the messages are transmitted. That the 1s. intercolonial telegram consist of six words, exclusive of the address of the person to whom the message is sent, and the signature of the sender. Each additional word to be charged 1d." I will therefore mention some important reasons for opposing this motion, and favoring that which I have placed upon the paper. First of all, in the present state of her finances, Queensland could not afford to adopt a sixpenny inland rate. The telegraphic revenue now is £25,000 less than our expenditure, and according to the figures which have been worked out this would mean a loss on the sixpenny telegrams in the colony of £27,700, and on our urgent telegrams, which would also be reduced by 6d., of £3,300, so that the total loss to us would be some £30,000. Therefore Queensland could not consent to such a sweeping reduction. Then, if the next portion of the motion were agreed to it would mean a loss to Queensland of £9,669 14s. 11d. That would be an additional loss to the £25,000. My reason for opposing this motion is that if the colonies propose to go to the extent of reducing the rate to 6d. in each of the colonies, they might as well go for the further reduction of 1s. for Australia generally. For these reasons: The loss to Queensland on telegrams



telegrams to New South Wales—one half of the shilling—would be £3,196 7s. 10d., and from New South Wales to us £3,064 1s., or £7,031 11s. we would lose by the sixpenny telegrams. If we made a 1s. telegram to Australia generally, we would lose no more, because we would give 6d. to New South Wales, and our loss would be nothing additional. With the sixpenny rate we should lose to and from Victoria £2,198 2s. 7d., and with the 1s. rate, without any increase, the loss would be £2,930 16s. 10d., or an increase of £732 14s. 3d. Then with regard to South Australia our loss in one case would be £348, and in the other it would be £520, as we only get three-fourths of a shilling from the three colonies. So with all the colonies, including Tasmania and Western Australia, the loss to Queensland under the sixpenny rate would be £9,669 14s. 11d., and with the 1s. rate all over Australia the loss would be £10,625 8s. 4d. Thus, our loss would be only £955 13s. 5d. extra by having the 1s. rate, as against the other. What alteration would this make to the rest of the colonies? As between Victoria and New South Wales it would not make much difference at all, because they have the 1s. rate now. As between Victoria and South Australia I understand they are willing to agree to it. As between New South Wales and Queensland we have been pressed to make the rate 6d. for each colony; therefore it would be no further loss to New South Wales and Queensland. As between Queensland and Victoria, we would have the same loss there, which would only amount to £732 more than the sixpenny telegram. The question with regard to Victoria and Western Australia is only a small matter. I have been supplied by Mr. Derham with some figures as to the loss of Victoria by the 1s. rate intercolonially, and I find this would be £11,732 on Queensland messages; but that is reduced in this way: First, there is £4,000 presumed to be lost by reason of the change of 1d. to 2d. per word. That could be avoided by making the charge 2d. per word, retaining it as now—the 1s. telegram being of six words, and addresses and signatures being allowed. Then the next item is £2,854, loss by adopting the 1s. telegram from Queensland to Victoria; but the difference between 6d. and 4d. for each colony is £732 14s. 3d., so that that takes £6,000 off the £11,000. Just in the same way with South Australia, the loss would be reduced, making it the difference between 4d. and 6d., which Mr. O'Connor's motion would mean. I question whether the increase of business on the 6d. per colony would be such an one as would repay us in as short a time as the 1s. rate for Australia generally would do. Every member must see that it would be a very slight increase to any of the colonies. The only one about which I have not sufficient particulars is New South Wales, because they would lose to a further extent on the telegrams passing from Victoria to Queensland, as Victorian and Queensland telegrams only amount, at 1s. apiece, to £2,930, it cannot be a very serious thing. If they are going to make that 6d. a telegram, it reduces it to twice £700, passing both ways. For the whole of the telegraphic communication by the 1s. telegrams we receive £4,400. We halve that. That is proposed to be reduced by one-half at once, making it a sixpenny telegram. The question would therefore be the difference between 4d. and 6d., which would be one-sixth of £4,400, or £700. Between New South Wales and Victoria there would be no loss. The loss to New South Wales, in addition to what they propose now, would be the loss on telegrams from New South Wales to South Australia, and a few to Western Australia and Tasmania. It has been asked what provision, in the way of an extra line, would be required to carry this traffic. I think that is the strongest argument in favor of carrying out my proposal; because, if it is to increase the traffic to such an extent as to warrant a new line, it would be a wise thing for the Conference to recommend the adoption of a 1s. intercolonial rate.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Of course the figures with which we have been favored are very interesting; but they are so numerous as to require a little consideration, and I should like Mr. Powers to furnish us with a statement, in order that we may go through it. The weak point is that his colony is at the extremity of the colonies, and the intermediate colonies would carry traffic at the expense of their taxpayers for his colony. We, in Victoria and New South Wales, should have traffic sent over our lines which would not pay us, and in which our people would not have any interest. I should like to know the exact extent to which the sacrifice would go. It does not appear to be equitable that the colonies at the extremities should be able to send telegrams at the same rate as the colonies which are near to each other.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—As a matter of fact, so far as New South Wales and Victoria are concerned, it would not pay for delivering the messages.

The Hon. C. Powers—You would not deliver them.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We would have to send them over 1000 miles of line, and there must be a penalty attaching to geographical disadvantages. I would like to point out to Mr. Powers that my motion will involve a loss to New South Wales of £42,000, apart altogether from what we lose intercolonially, so that my motion is as unselfish as it can possibly be, and has due regard to the interests of the colonies.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—In no case can I on behalf of Tasmania accept the proposal of Mr. O'Connor as a whole. With regard to the first subsection, providing for a sixpenny rate for ten words, that involves a larger loss to Tasmania than we can undertake at present, and, therefore, I take with respect to that the same grounds as Mr. Powers, and I cannot possibly agree to it. As to subsections 2, 3, 4, and 5, there is this difficulty: I think it would be an increased charge for our people rather than a decrease. We now send a ten-word message exclusive of address and signature for 2s. to Victoria, because we only take 6d. and Victoria gets 6d., the cable taking 1s.; and if you add to the ten words we send the five or ten which are commonly included in the address and signature it comes to this, that we are going to charge the people more for messages from Tasmania to Victoria, New South Wales, and South Australia than we do at the present time. It would be an advantage to the revenue of Tasmania, but if the object is to cheapen the rates it would have a contrary effect. I am sure our people would not consent to anything that would impose a heavier charge on messages. The disposition is to have the charges reduced all round. My own feeling is, strongly, that if we can establish a uniform rate to be effective in all the colonies it would be a much better thing. It would look more like federal action if we were to band together. Those who live far away from certain centres must in many respects pay the penalty, but while that applies to railways it does not always apply to telegraph rates. Those living at the most extreme points of Victoria and New South Wales can send their messages as cheaply as if they lived only twenty miles from the border. I should be very much more disposed to agree to Mr. Powers' motion, because it falls in with my own views that we ought to make the rate uniform to all the colonies, thus helping us to feel we are all one people. By doing as Mr. Powers suggests there will be but little loss to any of the colonies, and none to some.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—If anything can be done to help on the grand movement of federation it should be done, and what has been accomplished in the last few days will tend in the highest degree to bring about federation. But in self-defence I must point out that there is nothing analogous between a colony sending messages



messages at a uniform rate for long and short distances and the sending of a message between South Australia and Queensland. When you send a telegram to Tasmania or Queensland you stop there.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—If we were a federated Australia we would probably have a uniform tariff. In the United States of America they have differential rates, and make the distance govern the cost.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—On the questions of the carriage of mail matter and the reduction of cable rates, we are proposing to make the charges uniform, and are uniting to pay the additional cost of getting the reduction. It strikes me as peculiar that we cannot deal with intercolonial telegraphs on the same lines.

The Hon. C. Powers—I would like to refer to one or two matters that have been mentioned. It had been urged that the extremities of the colonies ought not to press the other colonies unduly to pay for the transmission of their messages. The difference between 6d. and 4d. is so small that even on a number of telegrams it is not such a material thing. Taking Mr. O'Connor's argument that New South Wales practically gets nothing for telegrams going through, I would point out that under this system the money would be divided in all cases according to the distance or colonies through which the messages passed. A message from Queensland to Western Australia would, according to Mr. O'Connor's motion, cost 2s. That would have to pass through five colonies. (A member—Only four.) It must come back to this question of the difference between 6d. and 4d. The question would be whether for £60 worth of telegrams passing from Queensland to Western Australia would be material to New South Wales. Would it matter whether it was £12 or £60? By Mr. O'Connor's own motion they would get 6d.; then it would half, or £30. The question is whether £12 or £30 would be such a loss that Western Australia ought to be deprived of the 1s. telegram. The same argument applies to the rest of the colonies. It seems to me that we might as well argue in favor of a differential postage rate, charging one half-penny a letter through each of the colonies. Mr. Derham has suggested that my motion should not be passed without my figures being before the members of the Conference. I think the figures should be tested, and that it should be seen what would be the actual loss to each colony. The heads of departments have not been able to get all the information I have asked for, and the question is, whether we should defer both of these motions until we get that information. I should be glad if Mr. O'Connor could see his way clear to defer his motion.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I would suggest that we hold the matter over for further consideration with a view of adjusting anomalies between the two motions.

The President—It appears to me that the colonies of Queensland, Taimania, and South Australia are in some respects in a different position to the colonies of Victoria and New South Wales, who have already established rates lower than the rates the former are now charging, and with regard to the position of South Australia particularly I need hardly point out that our lines cover a much larger area of country than the more thickly populated colonies of Victoria and New South Wales, and the increase of business with us does not involve anything like the profit it does with the larger colonies. We have to transmit some of our messages over a very large and sparsely populated area, and we are not so strong financially as those colonies. The loss, therefore, that might be involved must be a matter of more serious consideration to us than it is probably to the larger and wealthier colonies I have named. Speaking for myself, I will not give any vote upon this question until we have had figures most carefully prepared by the heads of departments, and we shall then get a view of the whole situation, and decide accordingly. In any matter which will lead to cheap and more ready communication between the colonies so far as South Australia is concerned she will, if she can afford it, join most heartily; but I agree that we should get from the heads of departments a more complete statement as to how these figures work out as regards the position of each colony towards every other colony. If some member will move the adjournment of the debate until we get that report, possibly it will be the best thing to do.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I will move the adjournment of the debate. There is another feature connected with this matter which it would be well for us to consider, and that is, if we are to have a uniform rate of 1s. between the colonies of Australia and Tasmania, the question of the cable between Tasmania and Victoria must be considered. Tasmania, in addition to the subsidy of £4,200, has guaranteed receipts to the extent of £5,600 a year. That guarantee was given when the rates were first reduced from 4s. to 2s. At the present time the receipts from the 2s. rate are fully up to the amount guaranteed, so that we are paying nothing. Victoria in former years contributed to the guarantee fund. If we are to have a 1s. rate for all the colonies from Western Australia to Queensland it would be an undesirable thing that we should have to pay, in addition to the 1s. rate, of which each colony would get a share, the additional 1s. to the cable company. The question is, whether in making this arrangement with the other colonies we could somehow divide the contributions to this guarantee to the Tasmanian Cable Company. Of course, I am aware that the bulk of the business that goes by that cable is between Victoria and Tasmania, and it was in view of that fact that Victoria consented to contribute £1,000 a year to the guarantee fund. There is no doubt, however, that the other colonies are, to a larger or lesser extent, interested in the cable, and yet do not contribute a penny as subsidy or guarantee. While Tasmania will consent to still bear a considerable portion of this, I would like the heads of departments to say whether some basis could be arranged whereby the various colonies could contribute towards this guarantee to the cable company, and so provide for Tasmania having the privilege of interchanging telegrams with the other colonies, and they with her, at the same rate. I move the adjournment of the debate.

The Hon. C. Powers—A calculation on the word "twopence" might also be included so as to show the cost involved of altering 1d. to 2d.

The motion for adjoining the debate was carried.

#### INTERCOLONIAL POSTAL CONVENTION.

Mr. C. Todd brought up and read the draft of Intercolonial Postal Convention adopted at the Conference of heads of departments held in Sydney. [See Appendix A]

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I propose this alteration, namely, that the rate for the first pound be 8d., and each additional pound be 6d., per parcels post.

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

Carried.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That this Conference approves of the Convention as submitted by the heads of the departments, and agrees to recommend to the respective Governments that it be brought into operation

“operation on January 1st, 1891; that the colonies of New Zealand and Western Australia be invited to become parties to this Convention.”

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded.

Carried.

The sitting of Conference was at this stage adjourned for half-an-hour in order to enable the delegates to attend the Queen's Birthday *levée* at Government House.

#### PROHIBITION OF SWEEP CORRESPONDENCE.

On resuming, the Hon. F. T. Derham moved—“That this Conference recommends that the several postal departments be asked to provide in any future legislation for the post office departments to have power to stop delivery or registration of any letters addressed to or to issue money orders in favor of any sweep promoters.”

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I cannot vote for that, and I have thought the matter out clearly. We see the representatives of royalty going to racecourses.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—That is not the question.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Pardon me. We see men in the first rank of life going on to our racecourses and betting, and why, if our leading city merchants do this, should you place any barrier in the way of a man who happens to live one hundred miles from the course? Why should you debar him from sending his money through the post to be invested in the same way? It is simply arbitrary to say that he shall not. I cannot understand the objection coming from Victoria, where the Government has entered into a combination with the racing clubs to take people to the courses. I have seen judges own racehorses and I have seen judges betting, and where is the harm in it? Moreover, if you stop these letters you must remember that you will considerably curtail the revenue of the post offices. Really, I cannot see where you are going to draw the line. If a man is on a racecourse he can bet, but if he is not there he is not to be allowed the same privilege. It is absurd. The whole thing is most inconsistent. I cannot see any reason or logic in it. I will take the case of a man in our colony (Mr. Adams). He has been conducting his business for years without the slightest suspicion of dishonesty, and he has distributed thousands of pounds. The other day a policeman invested £1 with him and won £750, and was enabled to go home and get married. Where is the difference between a policeman and a Judge of the Supreme Court, and why should not both be allowed to invest on a horserace in the way that pleases him best? Now, if it was proposed to stop the circulation of impure publications I could understand that, because they contaminate the whole community; but I cannot see why a man should be prevented from sending a pound through the post to be invested on a race.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I was not aware that Mr. O'Connor entertained such strong objections to this proposition. It has been found in Victoria that for months before the races came off the poorer class of clerks and others who can ill afford to spend money in such ways invest in these sweeps to such a large extent that they are unable to pay their legal and just debts. The tendency to gamble in sporting becomes so strong that they ignore their honorable obligations. Then these sweeps lock up a large amount of money. Scores of thousands of pounds are diverted from legitimate channels to objectionable channels. It was found in Victoria that people, although not dishonest, made this an excuse for not paying their just debts. Of course, Mr. O'Connor will see that my motion will not prevent people from investing on races. We only aim at restricting the gambling in sweeps. As to the combination with the racing clubs, the Government are in the position of public carriers, and the public demand to be carried to the racecourses. But the State cannot countenance lotteries. That is a different thing. I feel strongly with those who wish to put down these sweeps, which do not in any way increase the national wealth, and the promoters of which are therefore mere parasites upon society.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Your Government make the most elaborate preparations for the November meeting, and you go in and advertise in all the newspapers in Australasia the fact that you offer the greatest facilities for taking people to Flemington. What for? Simply to attend the races, and it is more than hypocrisy to attempt to prevent letters from going through the post while at the same time you do your best to induce people to go to racecourses where they can invest their money without hindrance. You have one of the largest racecourses in the world, and two-thirds of it is taken up with gambling in some shape. You have more wealthy blacklegs in Victoria than there are in any other part of Australia. First of all abolish your national holiday in Victoria—you proclaim it a public holiday—and then talk about the nation encouraging gambling wholesale because a letter goes through the post.

The President—I think the legislation of each colony contains in their Lottery Acts provisions for suppressing lotteries, and this matter ought to be dealt with under the Lottery Acts of the colonies, where the root of the matter can be got at. For instance, if Jones advertises a lottery in Sydney, it is easy for the police there, under the powers given to them, to put down the lottery by prosecuting the promoter, and the powers of the police could be made to extend to stopping correspondence. My opinion is that gambling is not a sin in itself; if these lotteries lock up a large amount of capital so as to render it unproductive it becomes an economic question and consequently a practical question as to whether they should be suppressed. Still, it does not seem to be beginning at the right end by stopping letters. The proper way is to stop the man who advertises the lottery from receiving correspondence. If the post office officials were to stop the correspondence it would be interfering with the correspondence of people who have done no wrong, and would leave practically untouched the man who originated it.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—But the money would simply be returned to the senders.

The President—That would involve a large amount of responsibility and trouble. My own opinion is that steps should be taken to prevent the advertiser of the lottery from receiving the letters. It can be easily done. In this colony the other day a proposal was put forward to distribute the assets of the Commercial Bank by means of a lottery but it was stopped, and I think the police have ample power to put down these sweeps.

The Hon. C. Powers—I think it must be admitted that these lotteries do harm. Horse-racing is countenanced, and the post office is made the means of encouraging gambling. Therefore, as a means of taking away the assistance of the Government in connection with these lotteries, I think the resolution might be passed, and I shall certainly support it.

The motion was carried.

INDEMNIFYING

## INDEMNIFYING SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The President reported that the following resolution had been agreed to in Committee:—"That in the event of South Australia reducing the telegraph rates on the transcontinental line, in accordance with any resolution agreed to by this Conference, the several colonies represented at this Conference agree, on basis of population, to guarantee to South Australia a revenue from the line equivalent to that received at present."

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I beg to propose that the motion be adopted.

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. C. Powers—I think we are waiting for further information about the cable rates.

Carried, the Hon. C. Powers withholding his consent.

## REDUCTION OF CABLE CHARGES.

The President—I have received a letter from S. Knevett, the Adelaide agent of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, addressed to the Postmaster-General, &c., South Australia, as follows:—"I have the honor to inform you I wired Sir John Pender, K.C.M.G., the chairman of this company in London, as follows:—'Mr. Derham's motion—4s. ordinary, 2s. 6d. Government, 1s. 10d. press, Eastern Extension bearing half loss revenue, other half equitably divided between Great Britain and Australasian colonies, to be tried for three years, colonies having option extending reduction for remainder of term of existing subsidy, was referred to committee. They reported in favor of Mr. Derham's motion; also that the President be requested to cable the Agent-General for South Australia asking him to confer with the other Agents-General, and inform Extension Company; also to ask chairman whether company will agree to proposals of colonies. Queensland delegate withheld consent to Mr. Derham's motion, otherwise carried unanimously. . . . Conference sits again on Monday, at 9:30 a.m. Delegates anxious to receive your reply before closing Conference, probably on Wednesday.' He had received a reply from the Paris Congress, as follows:—'May tell Mr. Todd chairman's proposal was well considered by us, and to alter it in accordance with Mr. Derham's resolution would cause great difficulties with other administrations, and might defer introduction of reduced rates indefinitely. If at end of first year no serious loss involved company would not object to continue experiment for another two years, believing that three years would fairly test it; but this must be at company's option. Should loss be nearly reimbursed at end of three years company will agree to extend arrangement of subsidy period.' I apprehend that the alteration referred to as the first alteration means that the term should be for one year, while the resolution we carried said three years."

The Hon. C. Powers—It must be the rate, I think.

The President—I have also received a telegram as follows, dated Paris, May 24th, to Treasurer, Adelaide:—"Agents-General have had long interview with Sir John Pender; result generally favorable. Will telegraph you again to-morrow night. Be prepared to modify in some respects your decision when you receive my next message, and don't adjourn until rates settled.—ARTHUR BLYTH." And also one from Paris, May 26th, to the Treasurer:—"Tell Mr. Gordon terms telegraphed are best procurable, and advise him to accept them—4s. public, 3s. 6d. Government, and 1s. 10d. press. South Australia to reduce its rates on overland line to 5d."

It would appear from this that there is a message missing, which contains an offer from the cable company of the terms mentioned in the Agent-General's telegram. There is no doubt about that.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I think there is certainly an intermediate message missing. I will move—"That the terms named in the cablegram from the Agent-General to the South Australian Government be agreed to, provided that the period of the test be limited to three years, the resolution to take effect from July 1 next if possible."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. C. Powers—I should like to explain the position so far as Queensland is concerned, because she has been accused of being unfair and ungracious. The discussion took place in Committee, and therefore the opinions of the members of the Conference in regard to this matter have not been published. The position I took up of withholding my consent was, I thought, the least ungracious possible, because Queensland, from what we have done in cable communication in the north and from our geographical position, is differently situated to the other colonies, and what might be good policy for them might not be good policy for us. In 1877 a conference was held, when the representatives of Queensland brought forward a motion that it was essential that there should be a complete system of communication with Europe, entirely independent of the Eastern Extension Company, because it was felt that it was dangerous to encourage a monopoly. That was negatived; but at the conferences in 1878, 1883, and 1886, the same position was taken up, and has always been taken up, by Queensland, namely, that there ought to be two lines and not one between England and Australia. In 1886 a resolution was, apart altogether from the question of rates, submitted that the Queensland Government was not disposed to join in any subsidy which would have the effect of discouraging any independent line of telegraphic communication between Australia and Europe. The position Queensland has taken is a matter of policy, and we have felt that it would be wrong to do anything that would hamper any other company which was prepared to give us a duplication of the service either from Java or Ceylon or from San Francisco across the Pacific, because we all know the danger that must attach to being dependent upon one company. We shall never get the cheapest possible rates until a new cable has been laid between Great Britain and the Australian colonies. Therefore the principal reason of Queensland for not joining in this matter has been because they do not believe it is good policy for them to do so. They believe it is best to have two lines, and they would pay extra for the purpose of having them. The next question is that on the basis of population, which is, generally speaking, a fair basis, Queensland would not be fairly dealt with. South Australia uses the line nearly twice as much as Queensland, although the population of the two colonies is about the same. Victoria, with a population two and a half times as many as we have uses the line five times to the extent that Queensland does, therefore for commercial purposes the line is not so useful to Queensland as it is to the rest of Australia, and we pay higher rates—5d. The position Queensland has been in has not been to wish to get the effects of this reduction without taking their proportion of the liability so far as the guarantee is concerned. They have constantly refused to join in a subsidy, but as to the guarantee of the rates we do not ask

to take advantage of these without paying for them. The Government of Queensland will be quite prepared either to join in the guarantee which you wish now or to pay extra rates. At present we pay 5d. per word more than South Australia does. We are perfectly prepared to continue to pay that, and we are prepared either to join in this extra guarantee for the subsidy or to pay extra rates to those paid by the rest of the colonies. We are in this position. We cannot join altogether heartily in the line when we have constructed a line north to Thursday Island, and also to Burketown, when by the construction of a line which would only cost £65,000 from Burketown to Port Darwin we would be in a position to send messages at a very low rate. The interest on £65,000 at 3½ per cent. would be £2,275, and the cost of maintenance of the line would be £3,500, so that really for £5,755 we would connect with Port Darwin a service that costs South Australia £40,000 a year, because South Australia pays interest on loans £22,000, and £19,000 for the cost of maintenance. You may say that South Australia would not allow us to build a line across to Port Darwin. If so, we can lay a cable from Thursday Island to connect with the cable at Port Darwin, which would only cost £140,000. The interest on that would be £4,900, and the cost of maintenance would be £2,000, or a total of £6,900 for what costs South Australia annually £40,000. It would even pay Queensland, if they had to pay the subsidy, to send these cablegrams at 3d. per word, instead of 1s. 2d., so that it would be the best commercial transaction for Queensland to enter into. Instead of being ungracious, I think that Queensland has been gracious in not entering into competition with South Australia. We are really in a position now to build a line from Burketown to Port Darwin, and carry on what costs you £40,000 for £5,575, and, if you will not let us come into your country, as probably you would not, because you would not allow New South Wales to build a line from Broken Hill to Adelaide, we can go from Thursday Island, and join the cable at Port Darwin for £6,900 a year, for interest and maintenance. If we did that, the colonies would send their messages over the cheaper route; and if we could send them for 3d. per word, they would not pay South Australia 1s. 2d. for the same service. I think it would be the policy of the colony, and although we have been treated in a most friendly and pleasant manner in Adelaide, still we are here as a representative of colonies whose interests we have to conserve, and, as a representative of Queensland, I feel that it would not be considering the interests of that colony were I to join to the full extent in the subsidy to another line, and also contribute to pay the loss to South Australia on messages sent for 1s. 2d. per word. We have not at present proposed to build the line of which I have been speaking, and the position Queensland will take is this—we still maintain that it would be a bad policy to bind ourselves to one company, as we would be practically doing, creating to a certain extent a monopoly. A monopoly has been already created, but this would bind us to that monopoly, for at any rate three years; and as for those who have joined in it for nine years, as I understand the other colonies have done, it would be to their interest to seek to make the company a success. The sum of £32,000 is not very much for the colonies to stand, but it is something, and something that would hamper the colonies, and Queensland has never felt justified in joining. We feel satisfied with New Zealand, that the only way to get a second line is to go across the Pacific, or to have another line to join the Eastern Extension Company's cables. Even if we had to pay the subsidy before the Eastern Extension Company allowed us to join on that line and send our cables from Thursday Island, it would pay us to send cablegrams for 4d. across our lines. So far as the difficulty of transmitting these messages is concerned, we, having so many stations, have not found it difficult to do so.

The President—Do not you think it would be well to wait until to-morrow, when we shall have received our cablegrams, to discuss these matters?

The Hon. C. Powers—I was speaking because I understood you to say that the discussion was to be closed.

The President—But this opens up so much for consideration that if you would wait we might get something definite. There is evidently a telegram missing here.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I think it is very desirable that we should wait.

The President—We can reassemble at 2 o'clock, and see if any further telegram has been received.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We are now talking in the dark, as we have not got this telegram.

The President—Your opposition, I understand, Mr. Powers, would be taken in any case. We might reassemble at 2:15 p.m., when you have the right to resume the debate.

The Conference at 12:55 p.m. adjourned till 2:15 p.m.

On reassembling—

The Hon. C. Powers—All that I wish to say in conclusion is, that the policy of Queensland has been not to join in the subsidy, and we do not feel justified now in joining this contract, but so far as any second cable is concerned, Queensland will be very glad to join. That appears to be impracticable at the present time, and I think Queensland will at any rate be bound either to join the guarantee you are now asking for, or at all events, will be willing to pay some additional rate.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—In view of the cables we have received, and the fact that there is one missing which might throw light on the proceedings, I do not think it would be safe to proceed with this debate any further, and I therefore move that—"The Conference stand adjourned until half-past 10 o'clock to-morrow."

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Put the motion first.

The motion was then put as follows:—"That the terms named in the cablegram from the Agent-General to the South Australian Government be agreed to, provided that the period of test be three years, the reduction to take effect from July 1st next, if possible."

Carried, Queensland withholding consent.

The Hon. F. T. Derham moved—"That any colony or country not joining in contributions to subsidy "and guarantee shall pay proportionately higher rates."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I suggested some motion of that sort a day or two ago, and I have thought over the matter a good deal since. I question whether you could enforce the high rates so as to secure contributions to the Guarantee Fund. Suppose it is England you want to enforce them against, it is very possible for any person in England who wants to make use of cable at the lower rates, or any other country on the continent through which the lines come —

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I purposely left the motion open so as to apply to any country. If the colonies find that any country is taking a mean advantage of them that country will have to pay.

The

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—We have a lot of communication with France and Germany. Do I understand that the reduced tariff will only apply to those colonies that contribute towards the subsidy.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Yes.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I did not know that it was generally understood to be so.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—We should not do anything small, but if advantage were taken of us we have a right to protect ourselves.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Then supposing that Queensland—I do not wish to specially single out that colony; but supposing it were an outside colony—Queensland or New Zealand—are we to say to Queensland and New Zealand if they do not join in this contribution to the subsidy or guarantee, shall be compelled to pay the higher rates?

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Yes.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—How can we enforce it? What is to prevent a Queenslander from sending down a message to a friend or agent in New South Wales and asking him to send it on to England? If I were in Queensland to-morrow I could forward a message to Mr. O'Connor and say—"Kindly send this on 'to England for me,' and nobody in the world could find out that Mr. O'Connor was doing this for a Queensland man.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—Mr. O'Connor would not do it.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—It could be done, and I want to know how you can enforce the terms.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—The answer is very plain. Any Parliament which was a party to this Convention could pass a short Bill in a few moments that would make it penal to enter into such a conspiracy against the State, for that is what it would amount to. Why should South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, if they guarantee and expend a certain sum of money for certain privileges—why should an outsider come in and share with them?

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Just to carry the illustration further—Here is the border line between the two colonies of Queensland and New South Wales. A man living half a mile across the border in Queensland territory, knowing he can send a message for half the rate in New South Wales, steps across the border, comes to the nearest telegraph office in New South Wales, and sends a message for half the rate charged in Queensland.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Exceptional cases make bad laws. A man can come from protectionist Victoria into freetrade New South Wales by going fifty yards in a certain place.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—The idea is more as a kind of advertisement for those who are going to use our lines.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I will appeal to Mr. Bird, who has represented the nobility of our race in Tasmania so well; I appeal to Mr. Powers, representative of the youngest and most promising colony of the whole group, and I say this—that if the exigencies of their positions at the present time do not enable them to see their way clear, in the interests of their colonies, to join this contract, we leave it open for them to come in at any time on the most honorable and favorable terms. Do they want anything more?

The Hon. C. Powers—No.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We leave it open, and then the honor and dignity of our race must be maintained. If you cannot come in you will have to accept your position and pay the penalty.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—You misunderstand me. So far as Tasmania is concerned we are with you already. My only point was, whether, in carrying such a resolution, we have any power to enforce it.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—It is a declaration of rights.

The President—We can enforce it so far as telegrams sent through the offices in the other colonies are concerned, but could not prevent subterfuges, such as the sending of telegrams to agents in another colony.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Agencies would be established.

The Hon. C. Powers—If any colony found it was being done they would insist on joining as a matter of fair play.

The President—I think we might leave it to the loyalty of the colonies.

The Hon. C. Powers—So far as Queensland is concerned if we do not join in the guarantee we will not take advantage of the lower rates.

The resolution was carried, Queensland withholding consent.

#### DEPARTURE OF DELEGATES.

The Hon. C. Powers—I would like to say that I cannot attend the meeting to-morrow as I, unfortunately, have to leave. Before I leave I desire to tender to you, sir, my congratulations on the able manner in which the proceedings have been conducted, and my thanks, as the representative of Queensland, both to you as President and to the Ministry generally for the way in which they have received the various representatives. The most important business for which we came here has been attended to, and therefore I feel justified in leaving, and tender my apology for not being able to be here to-morrow.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I have arranged with my friend, Mr. O'Connor, to acknowledge on my behalf to-morrow the courtesy that has been extended to us, and I am sure he will do so in fitting terms.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—What are we to do to-morrow? Two of the delegates will be away, and that will limit us to three voting members. It would be very undesirable to agree to any important resolutions in the absence of representatives of the colonies of Victoria and Queensland.

The President—We could only adjourn to consider these telegrams.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—You can communicate with us in Melbourne.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—That may mean an adjournment again until Wednesday.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I desire to say that I shall stop until the Conference is over. Any man in his senses must see that we cannot terminate the Conference to-day. We are waiting for most important telegrams, which there is no chance of getting to-day.

The Hon. F. T. Derham—We have agreed on the main terms.

The President—We can communicate with Mr. Derham and Mr. Powers by wire, and we know pretty well the position Mr. Powers takes.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—We can meet to-morrow morning and deliberate over the telegrams, and communicate with Mr. Derham and Mr. Powers in Melbourne.

The

The Hon. F. T. Derham—I think our chief business is practically concluded. It is sufficiently clear to us that the Conference has been a success. What we aimed at—a large reduction—has been practically effected.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Hon. D. O'Connor moved—"That this Conference do now adjourn until half-past 10 o'clock to-morrow."

The Hon. F. T. Derham seconded.

Carried.

The Conference, at 2.43 p.m., adjourned till next day at 10.30 a.m.

*Tuesday, May 27th, 1890.*

Present—

The Hon. J. H. Gordon (President) in the chair.

The Hon. D. O'Connor, Postmaster-General; Mr. S. H. Lambton, Secretary of the Post and Telegraph Department; and Mr. E. C. Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs of New South Wales.  
Mr. James Smibert, Deputy Postmaster-General of Victoria.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, Postmaster-General; Mr. T. H. Magrath, Secretary of the Post Office Department; and Mr. R. Henry, Superintendent of Telegraphs, of Tasmania.  
Mr. C. Todd, C.M.G., Postmaster-General of South Australia.

The President—Without reference to the agenda paper, the most important thing before the Conference is the question of the rates on cablegrams between here and England. At the last meeting it was pretty clear to the Conference that a cablegram was missing. This has now turned up with an explanation of the delay. It seems that the message was sent *vid* Turkey. The following is a telegram sent in reply to our communication:—

"In accordance with the desire of the Adelaide Conference, the Agents-General for South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand have conferred together, and have had repeated conferences with Sir John Pender, the Indian officers, and the cable companies whose interests are concerned, with the following results:—Firstly, the tariff will be reduced to 4s. for ordinary messages, 3s. 6d. for Government messages, and 1s. 10d. for press messages during one year of trial. If at the end of the first year no very serious loss is involved the experiment will be continued for two years more, and such extension must be at the option of the Company. If the loss should be nearly recovered at the end of the three years the arrangement will be extended for the remainder of the subsidy. The whole proposal is conditional upon South Australia accepting 5d.—the transit rate. Secondly, the Agents-General are unanimously of opinion that the proposal embodies the very best terms which can be obtained, and strongly urge its final acceptance by the Adelaide Conference in order that the Paris Conference may be informed. Thirdly, much will yet have to be done both here and in London to perfect the details with the respective Companies and the Indian Government, and therefore press greatly that the proposal be finally accepted at once. Please cable prompt reply.—BLYTH, SAMUEL, BERRY, and BELL."

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I have received a telegram in which Sir Saul Samuel asks the Government of New South Wales to accept the terms offered, and in view of that I would beg to move that we at once communicate with Messrs. Derham and Powers, asking them to accept the proposal.

Mr. Smibert—Immediately I saw that telegram this morning, I telegraphed a copy to Mr. Derham, and I expect a reply from him at any moment.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I think the Conference ought to communicate with him as well. Would it be well to include in the resolution an expression of opinion by the members present.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I propose "That the terms now offered by the Eastern Extension Company, as cabled by the Agents-General, be accepted by this Conference, and that copies of the cable message be transmitted to the Hon. Mr. Derham and the Hon. Mr. Powers for their concurrence."

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I second that.

Carried.

The President—There is a further telegram from the Director-General of the Eastern Extension Company to Mr. Knevett, the Adelaide agent, which he asks may be submitted to the Conference. It is as follows:—"After further conference with the Agents-General, and rather than lose present favorable opportunity of settling matter, chairman willing to waive conditions specified in telegram to Todd twenty-three, and will agree to a 4s. tariff for ordinary messages, 3s. 6d. Government messages, 1s. 10d. press messages. Governments should remember that the half rate is only given over the extension lines in consideration of the subsidy which the Extension Company receives from the colonies, and therefore impossible reduce Government messages below 3s. 6d. With regard to duration of experiment, chairman must adhere to previous proposal, namely, if at the end of first year no serious loss involved company will continue experiment for another two years, but this must remain at company's option. Should loss be nearly recouped at end of three years company will extend arrangement for remainder of subsidy term. Above figures are based on South Australia accepting transit rate of 5d."

#### INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPH RATES.

The President—I think we might now have the reports of the heads of departments respecting the reduction of intercolonial telegraph rates.

Mr. Todd—I have had careful calculations made to show how the proposed reductions would affect South Australia and the other colonies. As regards the first clause of Mr. O'Connor's motion, it is almost impossible to

to give exact estimates for all the colonies. I find that the effect would be to cheapen all telegrams up to seven words and to increase the cost for eight words and over. Consequently, if the resolution is carried the revenue of South Australia would gain £1,892. We would lose £813 10s. on telegrams of seven words and under, and gain £2,721 6s. on the increase on messages of eight words and upwards.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Have you not the 6d. rate?

Mr. Todd—Only partially; between Adelaide, Port Adelaide, and a number of suburban places. With regard to the second section of the motion providing for 1s. rate between any two contiguous colonies, I find that the loss to South Australia and each of the other colonies interested would be—On Victorian messages, £1,388 4s.; on New South Wales messages, £788 9s.; on Western Australian messages, about £50; or a total loss to South Australia of £2,157 13s. Section 3 of the motion says:—"Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge, and 2d. for each additional word." The loss to South Australia would be on business between South Australia and Queensland, £52 8s.; between Western Australia and Victoria, £200 12s.; between Western Australia and New South Wales, £81 9s. 4d.; or a total of £334 9s. 4d. That is taking the business both ways, and dividing the total loss by three. Section 4, between Queensland and Western Australia, the loss to South Australia, with a through charge of 2s. per ten words, and 3d. for every extra word, would be £19 10s., and, of course, the same to the other colonies, that is Queensland, New South Wales, and Western Australia. As to Tasmania, it is rather difficult to say what the loss would be, but it would be very small, being about £15 between South Australia and Tasmania, and £3 9s. 4d. between Western Australia and Tasmania. Summarising this, I find that on intercolonial messages South Australia would lose £2,497 8s. 4d., but would gain through the local rates £1,892 16s., so that there would be a loss to this colony of £604 12s. 4d. As to Mr. Powers' motion, the loss to South Australia under that would be £11,057 16s., made up as follows:—South Australia to Victoria, £5,401 10s.; South Australia to New South Wales, £3,942 18s.; South Australia to Western Australia, £170 6s.; South Australia to Queensland, £348 8s.; South Australia to Tasmania, £168 2s. 8d.; Western Australia to Victoria, £597 16s.; Western Australia to New South Wales, £294 13s. 4d.; Western Australia to Queensland, £131 6s.; and Western Australia to Tasmania, £20 16s. If the motion of Mr. Powers is carried South Australia will lose £11,057 16s. The loss to the other colonies will be somewhat in proportion in respect of population.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Between Victoria and New South Wales they have the sixpenny rate, and therefore, the bulk of our loss being the reduction from 1s. to 6d., there can be no comparison between our loss and that of Victoria.

Mr. Todd—The loss will not be so great to Victoria and New South Wales.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—As between themselves they lose nothing.

Mr. Cracknell—There is the difference between 1½d. and 2d.

Mr. Todd—The present 1s. rate only covers the first ten words, and it is 2d. per word after ten words. Mr. Powers' motion is that the charge should be 2d. over six words, names and addresses going free.

Mr. Cracknell—Queensland would lose under the transit rates.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—What is the through rate for messages from Queensland to Victoria?

Mr. Cracknell—Three shillings.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—And what do you get?

Mr. Cracknell—One shilling.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—Under this motion you would only get 4d.?

Mr. Cracknell—Yes.

Mr. Todd—Names and addresses on the average form 48 per cent. of a message.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—What would be the loss to Victoria in round numbers?

Mr. Smibert—I cannot exactly tell. The first motion of Mr. O'Connor would involve a large gain to Victoria, which would never be accepted by the people. We now send six words for 6d., exclusive of names and addresses, and I am under the impression that the names and addresses comprise six words. I would suggest that instead of 6d. for ten words it should be 6d. for twelve words. The same thing affects the second part of Mr. O'Connor's motion.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I have not the slightest objection to make it twelve words.

Mr. Smibert—At present we send ten words for 1s., exclusive of names and addresses. Of course, there is a small sop in the second part providing for 1½d. for each additional word; but, as so many telegrams go through Victoria and New South Wales at the 1s. rate, I think twelve words should be made the minimum to cover the whole.

The President—What is your suggestion?

Mr. Smibert—That twelve words should be made to rule the whole.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I regret that I shall not be able to agree to these resolutions. In the first place, it appears to me that the adoption of inland rates is more a matter for the several Governments of the colonies themselves than for the Conference, and I apprehend that if the resolutions were carried it would still be at the option of the Governments of the colonies to adopt them or not. Mr. O'Connor's motion seems to assume that we would decide the matter, and that our action would be binding on the several Governments. As I said yesterday, the first subsection of the resolution will involve serious loss to the revenue of Tasmania—a loss which I do not think we could possibly at the present time undertake. I therefore, on that ground alone, shall feel constrained to oppose that portion of the resolution, and further, on the ground that it is a matter of Government policy, as to whether in the meantime a reduction of that kind should take place. With regard to subsection 5, I think I pointed out yesterday that its adoption would involve a higher charge to the people of Tasmania. You can send ten words now across the Straits to Victoria for 2s. exclusive of the names and addresses, and if we make the message twelve words with the names and addresses included it will really mean that our people will have to pay more for the ordinary message than they pay now, because, if you add the address and signature to the ordinary message, which is now ten words, you have fifteen or eighteen words for the same money, as you now propose to send only twelve words. So that on both hands the resolution appears to be one that is unfavorable to Tasmania. The first part involves a serious loss to our revenue and the second part involves an extra charge to the people. I am sure the Government will not agree to the first or second parts. For these reasons I shall be compelled to oppose that resolution, although I shall be sorry if nothing can be done to secure a uniform rate for the colonies. I felt very much more in sympathy with the motion of Mr. Powers, and it seems to me that if there is any intention on the part of the Governments, who are now charging 1s. for transit rates or rates between contiguous colonies, to reduce this charge to 6d. the loss between that, and the loss involved in Mr.

O'Connor's



O'Connor's and Mr. Powers' proposals, would be so small that it would not be worth while to consider it. As things are between Victoria and New South Wales there would be no loss in adopting Mr. Powers' proposals. As between Victoria and Tasmania there would be practically no loss. I believe there is a strong desire on the part of Queensland, if not of New South Wales, to adopt an intercolonial rate of 6d., and that would mean, I presume, 6d. transit rates between New South Wales and Victoria. When you have named this point you have named that in which the principal business is done. The business between South Australia and Queensland being very small there could not be very much loss. Then as between Queensland and Victoria, New South Wales would suffer the most. New South Wales should look at it rather as to the loss as between the 4d. and the 6d. than between the 4d. and the 1s. you are at present charging. I do not think the figures given stated what would be the loss between the 4d. and the 6d., but I apprehend the loss would not be a very heavy one and the tendency would be to have a uniform rate. I am in the position of being unable to agree to Mr. O'Connor's motion, and if there be no disposition to incur the loss which would arise from adopting Mr. Powers' motion, I am afraid we shall have to be content to let the matter drop.

The President—As comparisons have been instituted between the motions of Mr. O'Connor and Mr. Powers, I may say that the motion of Mr. Powers does involve, so far as South Australia is concerned, a much larger loss of revenue than Mr. Bird appears to think it will involve. It involves a loss of revenue amounting to nearly £12,000. Seeing that we shall already lose revenue by the motions we have passed by the Conference, I could not recommend to the Government I represent, the acceptance of that motion. Similarly with Mr. Bird, I would point out that the first subsection of Mr. O'Connor's motion would really impose upon the people who use the lines internally in South Australia a heavier charge than they are now paying. It would increase the charges for telegrams to the people by £1,892 16s.

Mr. Smibert—Are your calculations on a ten word telegram?

The President—Yes; twelve words would somewhat reduce it, but in any case it would make a heavier rate to the people than they are now paying. With regard to subsection 4 of Mr. O'Connor's motion, it is quite clear that pressure would be brought to bear upon the South Australian Government to lower the rates between the various colonies, and it does seem a desirable thing that the rates should be lowered, and that we should, as far as possible, strike out any additional charge which is made for telegrams between the colonies because of the imaginary geographical lines that divide us, and that the rates should be as nearly as possible by distance, that is, practically by the cost incurred in sending them. If Mr. O'Connor will consent to an amendment of his motion striking out the first subsection, with regard to which I am sure he is not particularly anxious, and adding the words "That it be a recommendation to the various Governments 'represented at this Conference,' I will support the motion.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I will accept that.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I would just like to say, while I am certainly unable to promise to advise the Government of Tasmania to accept these terms, I am quite prepared to submit them to the Government, and to consider the whole question, after the fullest examination, as to the effect it will have on the people of the colony. I desire to see uniformity, and if there is any probability that our people will submit to the additional charge which these rates would certainly involve upon them, we would be very glad to fall in with it, but my opinion certainly is that they would not submit, because it involves an extra charge. I must withhold my consent to the resolution, although I am quite willing to submit it to the Government for consideration.

The President—The first subsection being struck out, it will not involve, so far as South Australia is concerned, an additional charge to the people, but an additional loss to the Government of £2,000 a year.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—In our colony it means an additional charge to the people, because we send ten words across the Straits for 2s., and get nothing for the addresses and signatures, and every additional word is only 2d. In this case it would be 3d. for every additional word.

The motion was then put in the following form:—"That it be a recommendation to the various Governments represented at this Conference—1. That between any two contiguous colonies 1s. shall be the initial charge for twelve words, and 1½d. for each additional word; name and addresses to be paid for. 2. "Between any three colonies 1s. 6d. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 2d. for each additional word. 3. Between Queensland and Western Australia 2s. to be the minimum charge for twelve words, and 3d. for every extra word. 4. Tasmania to be a minimum rate of 6d. for twelve words for each colony, plus the cable rates. Twelve words to be considered the minimum rate. Addresses and signatures to be paid for, and code addresses to be prohibited. 5. That the reduced rates should come into operation on January 1st, 1891."

Carried.

#### QUADRUPLIX SYSTEM OF TELEGRAPHY.

The President read the following letter:—

"Post Office and Telegraph Department, General Post Office, Melbourne, May 5th, 1890.

"Sir—With reference to the proposed adoption of the late Mr. D. McGauran's invention for improving quadruplex workings, I have the honor, by direction of the Postmaster-General, to state that the price submitted by Mr. Kingsbury to be paid for the patent rights of this invention for the colonies of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria, viz., £10,000 each, is considered excessive in view of the possibility of some other invention superseding the one offered at no distant date. It is, therefore, proposed that each of the colonies named shall offer Mr. Kingsbury the sum of £1,000 for the rights of the invention, or a total of £4,000. I shall be glad to be advised what are your views on this question.

"I have, &c.,

"T. R. JAMES, Acting Deputy Postmaster-General."

The President—It appears that this is a highly desirable invention, and that some united action is necessary, and I shall be glad to hear from the heads of departments what can be said in favor of this Conference dealing with the question.

Mr. Smibert—If it is introduced at all it ought to be introduced in each of the larger colonies. Tasmania is not interested in the matter. New South Wales, Queensland, and Victoria are connected by long lines, and they have found this to be a useful and serviceable invention, and one which, if not introduced, would have involved heavy loss to New South Wales. The value of the instrument has been estimated at a much higher amount than is now proposed. After consultation with the officers of the department, I have

come



come to the conclusion that I should recommend the Government to pay £1,000 for the use of it, provided it is taken up by the other colonies. It would be of no use to us if all the colonies did not adopt it.

Mr. Cracknell—This invention has been for some time in use between Sydney and Melbourne. Before this contrivance was invented we had to have automatic repeaters at Albury, which involved the employment of two clerks. We saved £300 a year by dispensing with the clerks and using this invention. There is another great advantage, you can use a wire of smaller capacity, that is No. 6 instead of No. 10 copper-wire. Then, the facility for working messages is much greater, because of the speed. For these reasons I should strongly recommend that the patent be purchased by the Governments, because, in the working of the long lines between the different colonies, it is absolutely necessary to have something of the kind. I can speak from personal experience, having seen the invention at work for many months.

Mr. Todd—I have seen the invention at work in Melbourne and Sydney, and I can say that it possesses all the advantages which the patentee claims for it. The amount named by Mr. Smibert is, I think, a reasonable one. We are at present working quadruplex between Melbourne and Adelaide, and have had to have repeaters at Horsham, but this would be unnecessary if this invention were introduced. We are putting up a copper wire between Melbourne and Adelaide, which will reduce the resistance a great deal. We shall also introduce quadruplex working with Sydney, and it is only by using this invention that it can be done without repeating stations. It is represented to me on all hands that it is a very valuable invention. I would point out that this is a question where the basis of population hardly comes in, because our lines are really longer than those of the larger colonies.

The President—Having heard what the heads of departments have to say as to the desirability of using this invention, I suggest to Ministers, without carrying a formal motion, that it should be left to the negotiations by heads of departments to secure the purchase of the invention. This concludes our business, unless any delegate has anything to bring forward.

#### ANNUAL CONFERENCES OF HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—It has occurred to me, in view of the benefit and advantage which the Governments of the several colonies may derive from having the joint advice of the various heads of departments, that it would be a good thing if an arrangement was made for their frequent meeting together. I observe that there have been meetings on two occasions since the Postal Conference of 1888, but I do not think there was a joint invitation; at all events all the colonies were not represented. I am sure that so much good will come from the exchange of views, that it might well go as a suggestion from this Conference to the various Governments that arrangements be made for annual meetings of the heads of departments, where they might confer together, and consider questions affecting the postal and telegraphic services, and furnish a joint report. I will move—"That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is very desirable that the heads of the Post and Telegraphic Departments of the Australian colonies should frequently meet—annually, if possible—to consider and report to the respective Governments on all questions affecting the postal and telegraphic services generally."

The Hon. D. O'Connor—I second that, and I thoroughly indorse every word my friend Mr. Bird has said. Nothing would be more calculated to bring about the best feeling and remove many stupid obstacles to the most satisfactory working of the telegraphic services. Members of Parliament who take office and are liable to be turned out at any moment have no time to become acquainted with departmental matters. In any case I do not care how long a man may be in office he must rely upon his permanent head, and it is imperative that these officers should meet alternately in each of the colonies, so that they may consult and be in a position to tender the best advice to the Ministers.

The President—I think the suggestion is an exceedingly valuable one, which would result in great advantage to the working of the intercolonial telegraph lines and in facilitating postal communication. At this Conference we have settled a large number of matters and have removed a good many obstacles which existed in the past; but we cannot expect our adjustments to be final and to last for all time. Indeed, with the progress of development and expansion of commerce it is impossible. Therefore it is almost a necessity that once every twelve months the heads of departments should meet together for the purpose of discussing what rearrangements may be necessary. Of course no more proper meeting could be held than that of those officers upon whom the working of the departments so largely depends, for although Ministers may come and Ministers may go the heads of departments remain.

The motion was carried.

#### NOTIFYING RESULTS TO THE IMPERIAL AUTHORITIES.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—As it is necessary that the resolutions arrived at should be officially communicated to the Imperial Government, I will move—"That the President forward to His Excellency the Governor of South Australia a copy of the resolutions agreed to by this Conference regarding the reduction of postal and cable rates to the United Kingdom, requesting that His Excellency will forward it to the British Government by cable with the expression of the earnest desire of this Conference that as England is equally interested with the colonies in securing and maintaining cheap telegraphic communication, the proposal of the Conference that Great Britain should contribute towards the subsidies and guarantees required may be accepted by the Imperial Government."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

Carried.

#### UNIFORM TELEGRAPH REGULATIONS.

The report of the heads of departments on uniform telegraph regulations was brought up and adopted. [See Appendix B.]

#### SUMMARISING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE.

The President—Gentlemen, at this stage I would like to recapitulate the work that has been done by the Conference. We have done so much that, until I had it placed concisely before me, I did not realise its extent.

extent. We understood at our opening that the delegates would have to leave to-day, and the object was to economise time as much as possible, and therefore, while avoiding confusion, to get through the work with the utmost rapidity. I have to congratulate the delegates upon the business-like way in which they have got through the work. This would have been impossible to gentlemen who were not thoroughly acquainted with the various matters that had to be dealt with. The first and most important object—indeed, the principal motive for calling the Conference together—was the question of the reduction of the postage rate to England, which has been unanimously adopted, and which I think the Conference may fairly be congratulated upon as a very desirable step. Then we have agreed to a post-card rate between India and Australia, and have adopted an intercolonial postal convention, and I say that if nothing else had been done, the holding of the Conference would have been fully warranted. Only those who have experienced the inconvenience of having no uniform packet rates between the different colonies can know the difficulties that existed. The booksellers of Adelaide have had to resort to the expedient of sending magazines to Victoria to be stamped, and posted back to South Australia. Although the outside public may not regard it as important, I am sure the carrying of this one resolution has amply justified the holding of the Conference. Then we have also adopted, so far as the colonies represented are concerned, a policy in regard to the postal relations with the United States, including the terms upon which we would join in the Pacific mail route, and our relations in that regard with New Zealand. I think our postal arrangements with the United States have been exceedingly unsatisfactory, and it is a good thing to present a united front, which will result in improving our position. We have also adopted a system of urgent telegrams, which has never been agreed to unanimously before. We have approved of an increase in the issue of money orders to £20, legislation being recommended in those colonies where it is necessary. We have reduced the post-card rate to the United Kingdom to 2d., in this matter again taking the lead, as the Imperial Government has not fixed any rate. We have adopted a resolution with regard to lottery sweeps correspondence, and we have agreed to a most important matter in the intercolonial telegraph regulations, which will very much assist the work of the departments in the various colonies. Then we have practically settled, so far as this Conference is concerned, the very important question of the reduction upon cable rates. This was a question in which the colony I represented was so largely interested that I approached it with a great deal of hesitation. The sister colonies have generously admitted that South Australia has taken the lead in the matter of communication with Great Britain. It cost her £500,000 in 1873 to build the overland telegraph line, and it has been maintained since then at a capital loss of expenditure over revenue of £288,277; but, if we add to that interest at the rate of 4 per cent., it gives a loss on the line of £387,756. I need hardly point out that the other colonies have reaped the benefit of the burden which South Australia has undertaken in the construction and maintenance of the line, and seeing that as the population of the colony at the present time is a little over 300,000, and that we have lost more than £1 per head for every man, woman, and child, I think that South Australia has well earned the encomiums which Mr. Derham, Mr. Powers, and other delegates have passed upon her energy in that respect. In addition to this very large monetary loss, there was the loss of many valuable lives in the construction of the line, which traverses some of the most trying regions in Australia. It was built and maintained at a considerable cost of life, although I am glad to say that the stretching out of settlement has largely reduced the danger. It is a line that is still maintained at a very great cost of health and comfort to those engaged in working it. When we consider these circumstances, I say that I appreciate the generous references which have been made to the efforts of South Australia, and thank the delegates for the attitude they have taken up with regard to the line. I think it was a proper and generous action to recognise what South Australia has done in connection with reducing the rates over this line, which is now being worked at a loss; and while we feel that it was only right, we acknowledge our gratitude to the other colonies for now coming in to help us. While admitting most frankly the courtesy of Mr. Powers in submitting the views of the Queensland Government, I feel sure that in the consideration which the Queensland Government have given to this matter they have left out this very important factor, to which I have referred, that is to say, the great burden which South Australia has so long borne, and of which Queensland in common with the other colonies has had the benefit. I do not think it is a matter in which the other colonies could fairly say to South Australia, "We can get a cheaper method of communication, and, notwithstanding all 'you have done for us, we will now throw you over.'" I think that would be an ungenerous thing to do, and that it would endanger the unanimity of these colonies. I am hopeful that Queensland will take a different view of the matter, and that she will come in and accept her share of the burden. Of course, even the proposal now agreed to by the Conference is one that has given the South Australian Government a great deal of anxiety before they saw their way to acquiesce in it; but we realised the position in which we are placed—and it is not one which any diplomacy can conceal—that it might be possible to get a cheaper method of communication unless South Australia was prepared to make a further sacrifice and take less than her present rates; but we feel that, so long as we are prepared to bear our share of the burden, we have no fear that the other colonies will ever cease to recognise our position or cease to take their share of an undertaking which, according to all the laws which call for amity between nations, they ought to bear. (Hear, hear.) We have also passed a number of perhaps less important resolutions, but I am sure we may fairly congratulate ourselves with reference to the questions I have enumerated, and also upon the circumstance that the Conference has worked systematically and consistently, and has achieved a decided step in advance, not only with regard to the convenience of the public, but in the relations of the colonies to each other. (Applause.)

#### VOTE OF THANKS TO THE PRESIDENT.

The Hon. D. O'Connor—While we are waiting to hear from Mr. Derham and Mr. Powers, I beg to move a hearty vote of thanks to our President for the able manner in which he has conducted the proceedings of this Conference, and I beg to thank him and his Government, on behalf of the colony of New South Wales, which I have the honor to represent, and also at the request of the Postmaster-General of Victoria, on behalf of that great colony, for the kindness and consideration that we have received from the Government as soon as we arrived in this city, and indeed before we arrived here, from the kindly Postmaster-General, Mr. Todd. So far as I am personally concerned I never before became so thoroughly impressed with the fact that the crimson thread of kinship is not a mere sentiment, but a great reality, as I have been since I came to this portion of Australia. I was not here an hour before I felt as if I had lived amongst the people all my life. I recognise, and appreciate their kindly disposition and homeliness. The people of South Australia are the most considerate

considerate and hospitable in the whole of the continent, and when I say this I am speaking for Mr. Derham, who has returned home, as well as for myself. As to Adelaide, I cannot conceive of a more healthy or cleanly city on the face of the globe. It reflects the highest credit upon its founders, who displayed such foresight at the outset, and upon those who followed in aiming at the greatest of all blessings—the health of the people. And now, Mr. President, I have again to thank you: it is well for the people of South Australia that they can command the services of men like yourself. It has been a great pleasure to work here under your presidency, and whatever results have been achieved by the Conference is largely due to you. I feel unable alike to sufficiently thank you for your kindness, or to adequately congratulate you upon the marked ability with which you have conducted the proceedings. (Applause.)

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird—I have great pleasure in seconding the resolution proposed by Mr. O'Connor. Words are not needed, I am sure, to prove the sentiments I feel in common with the mover in regard to the resolution he has submitted, but I cannot help saying how thoroughly I have appreciated the way in which the President has conducted the business of the Conference. It has been my fortune to attend other intercolonial conferences, but, without making invidious comparisons, I can safely say that no Conference has ever been conducted with greater fairness or with more marked ability than has this one. I am sure the rapidity with which we have got through the business is due entirely to the manner in which the work was placed before the Conference. I also join with Mr. O'Connor in acknowledging the great kindness we have received from you, sir, and your Government, and from the people generally of South Australia, so far as we have met them. I may say that the delegates from Tasmania never anticipated to meet with such hospitality and consideration, and I can only express the hope that this will not be the last Conference in Adelaide before the greatest of all questions—federation—is settled. In conclusion, let me add the wish that any which are held may meet under as happy auspices and end as successfully as this one has done. (Applause.)

The Hon. D. O'Connor—Mr. President, I have to convey to you the heartiest and warmest congratulations from the delegates and heads of departments for the able manner in which you have conducted the business of this Conference.

The President—Gentlemen: You have taken me entirely aback by the encomiums which you have been so generous as to make upon the way in which the business of the Conference has been conducted. I know how my services have been over-estimated, but I feel highly complimented and very grateful to you for the too kind expressions which you have been pleased to convey. Of course the success of the Conference rested very much with the delegates, who came with the determination to make it a success, and not to dispute about small things, but to help on the great cause of federation by encouraging a spirit of reciprocity. Had it not been for this our labors would have not been so agreeable or so successful. Next to the delegates the success of the Conference has depended largely upon the energy, ability, and knowledge of the permanent heads of departments. If you will allow me to say so—although he is my secretary—we have had to thank Mr. Bath for the clear way in which he has kept the business before us. As to the hospitality which has been referred to, although I have never had the honor of attending a conference in any of the other colonies, many of my colleagues have, and if you take away as kindly recollections from Adelaide of the people of South Australia as they have brought back from your colonies, the little hospitality which I and my colleagues have been able to render is fully repaid. I sincerely thank you for the vote.

#### TELEGRAM FROM MR. DERHAM.

The President—I have received the following telegram from Mr. Derham—"I have received the missing telegram, and am quite agreeable to join the other members of the Conference in accepting the proposal now made, as it approximates so nearly to our own. Kindly let me know if you wish us to cable our Agent-General."

#### INSTRUCTIONS TO THE AGENT-GENERAL.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved—"That the President inform the Agent-General of South Australia of the acceptance by the Conference of the amended offer of the Eastern Extension Company, and request him to confer with the Agents-General of the several colonies represented at this Conference, in order that they may jointly urge upon the Imperial Government their acceptance of the proposal that England should contribute one-half of the subsidies and guarantees required in order to secure the reduced rates agreed to for telegraphic communication between England and the colonies of Australia."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

Carried.

#### OFFICIAL REPORTS.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved—"That the President be requested to prepare a report of the proceedings of this Conference, and to undertake the work of conducting any correspondence or other business necessary to give effect to the resolutions of the Conference."

The Hon. D. O'Connor seconded.

Carried.

#### CLOSE OF THE CONFERENCE.

At a few minutes before 1 o'clock the President declared the Conference closed.

## CABLEGRAMS—REDUCED RATES.

COPY of MESSAGE SENT to the AGENT-GENERAL for SOUTH AUSTRALIA, and  
COPY of the LETTER ADDRESSED by the PRESIDENT to HIS EXCELLENCY  
the GOVERNOR, in TERMS of the RESOLUTIONS of CONFERENCE.

Adelaide, May 27th, 1890.

Conference at Adelaide accepts amended offer Eastern Extension Company, and wishes you confer with the Agents-General of New South Wales, Victoria, and Tasmania, to jointly urge Imperial Government to contribute one-half of the subsidies and guarantees required to secure reduced rates agreed to between England and colonies. Both countries equally interested.

Sir Arthur Blyth, Conference, Paris.

J. H. GORDON.

Adelaide, May 28th, 1890.

My Lord—I have the honor to inform your Excellency that at the Postal Conference yesterday it was resolved:—"That the President forward to His Excellency the Governor of South Australia a copy of the resolutions agreed to by the Conference regarding the reduction of postal and cable rates to the United Kingdom, requesting that His Excellency will forward it to the British Government by cable, with the expression of the earnest desire of this Conference that, as England is equally interested with the colonies in securing and maintaining cheap telegraphic communication, the proposal of the Conference that Great Britain should contribute towards the subsidies and guarantees required may be accepted by the Imperial Government."

The proposals of the Conference are embodied in the following proceedings of the Conference:—  
"Resolved that the rate for cablegrams be:—For the public, 4s. per word; Government, 2s. 6d. per word; press, 1s. 10d. per word; the Eastern Extension Company bearing half the loss of revenue, and the other half being equitably divided between Great Britain and the Australasian colonies; to be tried for three years, the colonies having the option of extending the reduction to the remainder of the term of the existing subsidy." This resolution was cabled to the Agent-General of South Australia, in accordance with the following resolution:—"That the President be requested to cable the Agent-General for South Australia asking him to confer with the other Agents-General, and to inform the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, and ask Sir John Pender whether his company will agree to the proposals of the colony."

In reply the Cable Company made the proportionment embodied in the following telegram from the Agents-General of Victoria, New South Wales, New Zealand, and South Australia:—"In accordance with the desire of the Adelaide Conference the Agents-General for South Australia, New South Wales, Victoria, and New Zealand have conferred together, and have had repeated conferences with Sir John Pender, the Indian officers, and the Cable Companies whose interests are concerned, with the following result:—Firstly, the tariff will be reduced to 4s. for ordinary messages, 3s. 6d. for Government messages, and 1s. 10d. for press messages during one year of trial; if at end of first year no very serious loss is involved the experiment will be continued for two years more, but such extension must be at option of company; If the loss should be nearly recovered at the end of the three years, the arrangement will be extended for the remainder of the subsidy; but the whole proposal is conditional upon South Australia accepting 5d. as the transit rate. Secondly, Agents-General are unanimously of opinion that the proposal embodies the very best terms which can be obtained, and strongly urge its final acceptance by the Adelaide Conference, in order that Paris Conference may be informed. Thirdly, much will yet have to be done, both here and in London, to perfect the details with respective companies and Indian Government, and therefore presses greatly for proposal to be finally accepted at once.—BLYTH, SAMUEL, BERRY, BELL."

The counter proposal made in the foregoing telegram was accepted by the Conference.

The reduction in rates will involve an immediate responsibility of about £60,000 per annum, in addition to the present subsidies of £32,400 in respect of the Port Darwin cables and £4,200 in respect of the Tasmanian cables; and, in view of the fact that these reductions equally assist both British and colonial commerce, the Conference seeks the assistance of the Imperial Government to the extent mentioned in the resolution dealing with that subject.

I have the honor respectfully to place before your Excellency the views of the Conference, and to beg your kind compliance with the request that your Excellency will use your influence on behalf of all the colonies represented to secure the aid they ask.

I have, &c.,

J. H. GORDON, President of the Conference.

To His Excellency the Governor, the Right Honorable the Earl of Kintore, G.C.M.G., &c., &c.

REPORTS

# REPORTS AND PAPERS LAID BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.

## A.

### DRAFT of AUSTRALIAN POSTAL CONVENTION SUBMITTED to the CONFERENCE by HEADS of DEPARTMENTS.

AGREEMENT REGULATING THE EXCHANGE OF CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE AUSTRALASIAN  
COLONIES OF NEW SOUTH WALES, VICTORIA, SOUTH AUSTRALIA, QUEENSLAND, AND TASMANIA.

#### Article 1.

There shall be an exchange of correspondence between the Australasian colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, &c., one with the other, comprising letters, letter cards, post cards, newspapers, printed matter of every kind, packets, as per definition appended to Article 12, and such other postal articles as may be mutually agreed upon, originating in any one colony and addressed to and deliverable in another.

#### Article 2.

The rates of postage to be collected in each colony on intercolonial correspondence shall be as follows,  
viz. :—

Letters .....	2d. per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz.
Letter cards .....	1s. 3d. per dozen, face value 1d.
Post cards .....	1d. each
Books not exceeding 4ozs. ....	1d.
And for every additional 4ozs. or portion of 4ozs. (up to 3lbs.) ....	1d.
Packets not exceeding 2ozs. ....	1d.
And for every additional 2ozs. or fraction of 2ozs. (up to 1lb.) ....	1d.
Newspapers, as hereinafter defined, not exceeding 10ozs. in weight, $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, and if over 10ozs., $\frac{1}{2}$ d. for each additional 10ozs. or fraction thereof.	
Newspapers—Bulk parcels of newspapers posted by the publisher or newsvendor, registered or accepted by the Postmaster-General, 1d. per lb., no parcel containing less than six newspapers to pass at bulk rates.	
Registration fee, 3d. in addition to ordinary postage.	
Parcel Post—For each parcel not exceeding 1lb. ....	8d.
Each additional lb. or fraction thereof .....	6d.

#### Article 3.

Unpaid and insufficiently prepaid letters may be forwarded from one colony to another; but packets prepaid less than one rate, or unpaid or insufficiently prepaid newspapers, shall not be sent.

#### Article 4.

Correspondence forwarded as fully prepaid from one colony to another shall be delivered free of all charge whatsoever, but unpaid and insufficiently prepaid correspondence so forwarded shall be charged on delivery by the receiving colony with double the deficient postage due thereon.

#### Article 5.

No accounts shall be kept between the post departments of the several colonies enumerated, on the intercolonial letters, post cards, &c., &c., exchanged between them, but each shall retain to its own use the whole of the postage and fees which it may collect.

#### Article 6.

On correspondence dispatched to places beyond Australasia, the dispatching colony shall pay to each colony through which such correspondence shall be conveyed by rail the sum of 4d. per pound of letters, and 4s. per cwt. of other articles.

#### Article 7.

Prepayment of postage on every description of correspondence can be effected only by means of postage stamps valid in the country of origin, or (in cases where the dispatching postmaster is out of stamps) by money.

#### Article 8.

Dead letters which from any cause cannot be delivered shall be mutually returned, tied in a separate bundle labelled "Dead letters," to the respective colonies of origin, without charge, monthly, or as frequently as the regulations of the respective colonies will permit. But newspapers and all other articles of printed matter, which from any cause cannot be delivered, shall be retained at the disposition of the receiving colony.

#### Article 9.

Unpaid and insufficiently prepaid correspondence shall be stamped in black ink on the address side with the letter T, and the amount of deficient postage, and fine shall also be expressed in plain figures on the face thereof.

Article

*Article 10.*

The following shall be considered as newspapers, and be allowed to pass as such, viz. :

- (a) A publication consisting wholly or in great part of political or other news, or of articles relating thereto, or to other current topics, with or without advertisements.
  - (b) It must be printed and published in numbers at intervals not exceeding one month.
  - (c) The full title and date of publication must be printed at the top of the first page, and the whole or part of the title, and the date, at the top of every subsequent page. This regulation applies also to "Tables of Contents," and "Indices."
  - (d) A supplement must consist wholly or in great part of matter like that of a newspaper, or of advertisements, printed on paper stitched or unstitched; or wholly or in part of engravings, prints, or lithographs illustrative of articles in the paper. It must in every case be published with the paper, and have its title and date printed at the top of every page; or, if it consists of engravings, prints, or lithographs, at the top of every sheet or side. Handbills, or advertisement sheets, are not supplements.
  - (e) Collected numbers of any publication registered as a newspaper shall not be transmitted through the post as a single newspaper, but postage will be charged on each number of issue comprised therein.
- Any publication fulfilling the above conditions can, upon payment of an annual fee of 5s., be registered at the General Post Office of the several administrative parties to this convention for circulation as a newspaper, and also for transmission to places abroad, and unless so registered it cannot be transmitted as a newspaper.

*Article 11.*

The following shall be considered as books, and be allowed to pass as such, viz. :—

Printed books, pamphlets, magazines and reviews, and all other periodical publications that do not come within the definition of newspapers. Printed music (bound or loose), photographs, &c., bound and published in book form.

*Article 12.*

The following shall be considered as packets, and allowed to pass as such, viz. :—

- Acceptances,
- Accounts receipted or unreceipted (remarks such as "With thanks," "A cheque will oblige," or printed or written communications in the nature of a letter render them chargeable as letters).
- Affidavits.
- Balance-sheets and reports (printed) of public societies and companies.
- Bankers' packets, containing bank-notes, cheques, cheque-books, drafts, or orders sent by or to any bank.
- Bank passbooks may be sent from or to any bank within the colony at packet rates, provided they are enclosed in covers with the ends sufficiently open to admit of postal officials seeing that "passbooks" only are being transmitted. The packet must be indorsed "Passbook only."
- Bills of exchange.
- Bills of lading and ships' manifest.
- Bottles containing fluid, &c., very securely corked so that their contents cannot escape, and packed in boxes sufficiently strong so as to prevent breakage of the bottles and damage to the mails.
- Briefs.
- Cards either plain or bearing printed matter, or pictures, or both (the name only of the addressee may be written on the face of such cards).
- Catalogues, printed (prices in figures may be written).
- Circulars, i.e., letters wholly printed, engraved, lithographed, chromographed, or produced by other mechanical process, intended for transmission in identical terms to several persons (the name of the addressee may, however, be added in writing).
- Deeds, or copies thereof. Depositions. Drafts. Drawings.
- Engravings.
- Insurance documents, not being in the nature of a letter.
- Invoices or bills of parcels (an invoice may be receipted and may advise when or how goods are forwarded, but may contain no other written matter).
- Legal documents, not being in the nature of a letter.
- Manuscript for printing.
- Maps.
- Merchandise.
- Mineral specimens.
- Music (written).
- Notices of meetings, of subscriptions or premiums due, printed, engraved, lithographed, or produced by other mechanical process (names, dates, and amounts only to be inserted in writing).
- Paintings.
- Paper.
- Parchments or vellum.
- Passbooks or cards connected with any society.
- Patterns (manufacturers' or trade mark and prices may accompany them).
- Paysheets.
- Photographs (not on glass, except in cases of leather or other strong material).
- Pictures.
- Placards.
- Plans.
- Policies of insurance.
- Powers of attorney.
- Prices current, printed (prices of articles included therein may be filled in in writing).
- Printed matter.
- Printers' proofs.
- Prints.
- Prospectuses, printed.
- Receipts (see Accounts).
- Recognizances.
- Reports (printed) of societies or public companies.
- Returns or periodical statements on Government Service, if so indorsed on the cover.
- Samples (manufacturers' or trade mark and price may accompany them).
- Scrip.
- Seeds.
- Specifications.
- Stock-sheets.
- Valentines, printed.
- Way-bills.
- Other articles similar to above can also be forwarded as packets.

All packets containing jewellery or articles of high value must be registered, or they will be officially registered, and charged double registration fee on delivery.

None

None of the articles mentioned in above list will be forwarded as packets beyond the limits of the colony, if the law or postal regulations of the colony or country to which they may be addressed prohibit their reception into such colony or country as packets.

If any articles which can be sent by post only if paid as letters are posted bearing the packet rate of postage, they will be treated as insufficiently paid letters.

Officers of the post office may examine the contents of any package for the purposes of ascertaining whether they are in accordance with these regulations, but such officers must securely refasten any packet so opened.

*Articles not allowed to be sent as Packets.*

Gold or silver money, jewels, or precious articles, or anything liable to Customs duty, addressed to any country in the Postal Union, except the United Kingdom, to which latter place such articles may be forwarded if paid letter rate and registered.

Glass and perishable substances, such as game, fish, flesh, fruit, vegetables, &c.

Anything liable to injure the person of any officer of the post office or the contents of a mail.

Photographs on glass, when not in strong cases.

Anything sealed or fastened against inspection.

Anything in the nature of a letter, unless wholly printed or lithographed, &c.

Packets bearing on the outside or containing any profane, obscene, or libellous address, signature, picture, or thing.

Packets posted in fraud or violation of the Postal or Customs law.

*Unpaid Packets.*

Packets wholly unpaid to be forwarded to the Dead Letter Office, whence they are returned to the senders.

*Insufficiently Paid Packets.*

Insufficiently paid packets, except as mentioned below, to be returned to the senders through the Dead Letter Office.

If addressed to United Kingdom.—Forwarded to destination, charged with deficient postage, and fine of 4d.

If to Australasian colonies, Fiji, Hong Kong, Mauritius (if one rate be paid).—Forwarded to destination, charged with deficient postage, and fine of one rate (1d.).

*Transmission of Queen Bees, &c., by Post.*

Queen bees and live but harmless entomological specimens will be transmitted by post (in bags sufficiently perforated to allow of ventilation) to any place in the colony to which mails are conveyed by railway or coach, or both.

*Conditions.*—All live specimens must be secured in strong, safe, and properly ventilated boxes, or cages of wood or metal. Specimens enclosed in cardboard or other fragile material will not be forwarded.

Size of box or cage not to exceed 12in. x 6in. x 4in. Each box or cage to bear a label, securely attached, giving name and address of sender and particulars of contents.

Boxes, &c., posted in violation of these conditions, or *addressed beyond the colonies*, or containing poisonous or dangerous live specimens, or improperly or insecurely packed, will not be transmitted.

Rate of postage.—Every 2oz. or under, 1d.

Notice to postmasters.—Supplies of bags referred to above will, when required, be sent upon application being made for "Bee bags."

Bee bags having contents must not be enclosed in other bags, but *must be sent separately*, and care must be exercised in handling them, also to keep them from being covered by any other mailbags.

*Article 13.*

The dispatching colony shall pay to the forwarding colony whatever sums may be payable to masters of vessels under the regulations of the forwarding colony on any correspondence to be sent on to another colony or country by sea; it being understood that these rates shall not apply to correspondence conveyed by mail vessels under contract with any Australasian colony or colonies.

*Article 14.*

Each mail dispatched from one colony to another shall be accompanied by a letter-bill, on which shall be stated the contents of the mail, and if registered correspondence be enclosed the same shall be plainly stated. If correspondence to be forwarded on to destination by sea be sent in closed transit mails, the total number of letters and packets for each office of destination shall be stated in black ink on the labels of the bags.

*Article 15.*

The receipt of a mail at the office of exchange in one colony from that of another shall be acknowledged by return mail on the prescribed form, in which shall be pointed out any discrepancies which may occur.

*Article 16.*

The cost of special trains employed to convey mails through any colony shall be borne by the colonies for which such mails are intended, according to and on the basis of the respective estimated populations each year of those colonies; and the colony furnishing the special train shall credit such colonies with the transit rates due by the respective offices of origin for the conveyance of such correspondence through its territory in the same proportion as the cost of employing the special trains is borne by the respective colonies of destination.

*Article*

*Article 17.*

Registered articles must bear the impression of a stamp reproducing conspicuously the capital letter R in Roman type, such impression to be placed on the address side of the letter or packet. By each mail containing registered correspondence shall be forwarded a letter-bill, on which shall be entered the following particulars respecting every such articles, viz. :—The name of the office of origin, the name of the addressee, and number given to the article by office of origin.

*Article 18.*

Registered articles shall be made up in a separate packet from ordinary correspondence, and shall be suitably enclosed and sealed so as to preserve the contents. The post departments of the respective colonies undertake no liability with respect to any correspondence, registered or otherwise, which may be lost in transmission. But each agrees to exercise proper care and supervision in the forwarding and delivery of all correspondence.

*Article 19.*

Articles containing money or other valuable enclosures must be registered ; and where articles supposed to contain money, &c., are observed passing through the post unregistered the same shall be officially registered, and the addressee shall be subjected to a charge equal to double the ordinary registration fee upon delivery of such article.

*Article 20.*

On every letter or packet redirected and again forwarded from one colony to another (except on letters and packets addressed to commissioned officers or warrant officers whether in the Army or Navy, or midshipmen or mates of the Navy, or other parties actually in Her Majesty's service) there shall be charged for the postage thereof from the place at which the same shall be redirected to the place of ultimate delivery the same amount of postage in addition to the ordinary postage as would be payable if such letter or packet were originally posted at the place of redirection.

*Intercolonial Parcel Post.*

The following are the regulations under which parcels will be accepted from the public :—

1. Limit of weight—11lbs., except where otherwise stated in Table B.
2. Limit of size—3ft. 6in. in length, or 6ft. in length and girth combined, unless otherwise specified in Table B.
3. Rates of postage—See Table B. The postage must be fully prepaid by stamps affixed to the parcels.
4. Parcels will be received and delivered (on application of addressee) at parcel post offices only. (See list of Parcel Post Offices.)
5. The sender of any parcel will be required to sign a declaration, on a form provided for the purpose (to be obtained free of charge at any parcel post office), furnishing an accurate statement of its contents and the value thereof, address of the addressee, as well as the sender's signature and place of abode.
6. A certificate of posting may be obtained, if desired and applied for at the time, by the person posting a parcel.
7. No parcels will be received or delivered which contain articles of an explosive, combustible, dangerous, or offensive character, or articles likely to injure other parcels, or live animals, or articles, the admission of which is not authorised by the customs or other laws and regulations of the countries to which such parcels may be addressed.
8. No parcel may contain any letter or communication of the nature of a letter, and should any letter or communication be enclosed it will be treated as an unpaid letter, and charged for accordingly.
9. No parcel may consist of or contain two or more parcels addressed to different persons at different addresses. If such parcel be discovered, each of its contents will be treated as a separate parcel and be charged for accordingly.
10. In the case of parcels from the United Kingdom, or any other country or colony, their contents will be examined by the Customs officers employed in the post office, and, where duties are payable, the same must be paid or remitted before the parcels are delivered or forwarded to any other parcel post office in the colony for delivery. Parcels, the contents of which are not dutiable, will be forwarded at once to their destination.
11. The necessary Customs entries will be passed free of cost to the addressees of parcels received.
12. MODE OF DELIVERY.—Parcels will be delivered as addressed, in Adelaide, the suburbs, and certain of the larger towns in the colony where letter carriers are employed. In special cases, when the ordinary duties of the letter carriers will prevent the prompt delivery of a parcel, notice will be given to addressee, who will have the option of taking immediate delivery from the office, or of allowing the parcel to remain until business will admit of its delivery. Where there are no letter carriers employed delivery must be taken at the post office. In all cases senders should advise the addressee by post of dispatch of parcels, so as to ensure prompt delivery.
13. In the event of any parcel being addressed to a place beyond the limits for the transmission of parcels, the addressee, on being advised of the arrival of the parcel at the General Post Office, must state to what parcel post office he wishes the parcel to be forwarded.
14. Intercolonial parcels will be retained at the post office to which they are sent for delivery for a period of three months, and British or foreign parcels for six months, when, if unclaimed, they may be returned to the sender through the colony or country from which they were received, subject to surcharge specified in clause 16. Should any parcel be refused by the addressee, it may be forthwith returned to the sender.
15. If a parcel cannot be delivered from any cause, the sender will, if possible, be consulted as to its disposal.
16. Parcels returned to another country at the request of the sender will be surcharged with the ordinary parcel postage. Such surcharge, together with any other charges to which the parcel has become liable, will be collected on delivery, unless remitted by the sender or the addressee of the parcel.
17. At the written request of either the sender or addressee, or the authorised agent of either, a parcel can be re-directed to another country with which arrangements have been made for the exchange of postal parcels, but will be subject to fresh postage, and any other charges to which it may have become liable, which must be either prepaid or collected on delivery.
18. Parcels which cannot be delivered, or re-directed, or returned to the sender, will be sent back to the country from whence they came.
19. The contents of parcels returned to the colony being unclaimed or undeliverable, which cannot be returned to the sender, will be sold or destroyed by the order of the Postmaster-General.
20. The contents of parcels should be securely packed and closed in such a manner as to preserve them from injury.
21. Parcels will only be received and forwarded at the risk of the owners. In no case will the Postmaster-General be responsible for the delay, non-delivery, injury, or loss of any parcel.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General for South Australia.

JAMES SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.

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

THOS. H. MAGRATH, Secretary, Post Office, Tasmania.

B.



## B.

## REPORT by HEADS of DEPARTMENTS on UNIFORM TELEGRAPH REGULATIONS.

The Heads of Departments submit the following revised Telegraph Regulations for adoption by each of the colonies :—

1. All telegrams must be written distinctly with ink, on forms provided for that purpose, the signature of the sender in each case being required in authentication of his message; but all telegrams, whether written on the proper form or on plain paper, will be considered as presented for transmission under the conditions contained in the following regulations :

2. In order to prevent errors in the transmission of telegrams, all words must be written in full, and no abbreviations will be allowed that are not in general use, and in accordance with the usage of the language. All numbers should be written in words in full, and not in figures.

3. As a general rule all messages must be prepaid, except in the case of replies to messages on which the words "reply paid" have been written, or where special arrangements have been made for payment by receiver; but in all cases the sender will be held responsible for the cost of the message, should payment be refused by addressee.

4. Names and addresses will be counted as forming part of the message.\*

5. Messages will be delivered free within one mile of the office. For greater distances, portorage, or, where necessary, cab or boat hire will be charged, and must be prepaid or guaranteed. Where a special messenger has to be employed the department will make the best arrangements it can, but the telegram will only be so forwarded at the sender's risk and cost, and should no messenger be procurable the telegram will be posted, at the option of the sender.

6. With respect to cypher messages, every message in secret language, or consisting of words in any admitted language (English, French, German, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and Latin) having no connective meaning, groups of letters or figures, shall be regarded as a cypher message, and be subject to an additional charge of 50 per cent.; and in a message containing one or more words in cypher every such word shall be counted as two words, and the extra charge be added to the minimum rate for a message, provided that such extra charge shall not exceed 50 per cent. on the ordinary rate which would be payable on account of the said telegram. Groups of five letters or five figures shall count as one cypher word.

7. To facilitate delivery, care should be taken to give full name and address of person to whom the telegram is addressed.

8. The sender of any telegram can have the telegram repeated back to him by the office to which the message is addressed on payment of an additional half-rate.

9. The Government will not be responsible for mistakes in the transmission of un-repeated messages, from whatever cause they may arise, nor for any delay in the transmission and delivery, nor for non-transmission or non-delivery of any message, except in the case of a repeated message, and then only to the extent of £5.

10. Except in cases of emergency, illness, &c., or messages on the service of the State, or urgent messages on which double rates have been paid, messages will be transmitted in the order in which they are received. No person shall be entitled to the use of any telegraph line for transmission of any telegram or telegrams, not being Press messages, for more than half an hour. In the case of Press telegrams, the limit during the day (from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m.) will be five hundred (500) words.

11. Urgent telegrams or messages, on which double the usual rate has been paid by the sender, are to have priority of transmission over all other telegrams.

12. In the event of any interruption or accident to the lines which may prevent the transmission of any telegram within a reasonable time, or may destroy the value of such telegram, notice thereof will, where practicable, be sent to the sender of the telegram, who will have the option of withdrawing his telegram and receiving back the amount paid thereon, on application to the Superintendent of Telegraphs, through the officer in charge of the station at which such telegram was presented.

13. Applications for refund, except in cases specified in the preceding regulation, must be made in writing, addressed to the Superintendent of Telegraphs, stating reasons why the application is made.

14. Any telegram lodged in \_\_\_\_\_ for delivery within the colony may be cancelled at the request of the sender, provided delivery has not been effected. In the event of the telegram not having been transmitted the fee shall be returned, but if it has been transmitted no refund shall be made; a service telegram will, however, be sent to the office of address, if desired, at the cost of the sender, to stop delivery. Should such service telegram arrive too late the fact will, if practicable, be communicated to the sender of the original message, but the cost of the service telegram will not be repaid.

15. At the request of the sender or receiver a telegram may be redirected and transmitted to another station, but if it has already been transmitted to the original address it will be subject to an additional rate.

16. No application for copies of messages after delivery will be entertained unless at the request of the sender or the addressee; and in all cases the superintendent will require satisfactory reasons for the application. A search fee of two shillings and sixpence (2s. 6d.) for each telegram must accompany the application, and should the telegram have to be transmitted to another station one-half the usual rates will be charged for such transmission in addition to the above fee.

17. The strictest secrecy as to the contents or purport of any message is enjoined; no person not employed in the service of the Telegraph Department is allowed access to the operating-rooms without a special order from the superintendent; and any officer of the department allowing any person to enter the operating-rooms, or affording any information as to the contents or purport of any message, except under the preceding regulation, will render himself liable to the penalties specified in the Telegraph Act.

18. Telegrams will be kept in the custody of the Superintendent of Telegraphs for the space of one year, after which they will be burned or destroyed, by direction of the superintendent, in the presence of some duly authorised officer.

19. Messages

\* This depends on the Intercolonial telegraph rates being altered.

19. Messages upon which all fees payable in  
mitted by post as letters for delivery in

have been paid may be trans-  
or in any of the Australian colonies,  
Tasmania, or New Zealand, without any extra payment for postage; the sender must, however, write the  
words "To be posted from ————" under the address.

20. Code addresses will not be registered or accepted except in the case of international telegrams.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent  
of Telegraphs for South Australia.

E. C. CRACKNELL, Superintendent of Telegraphs, New  
South Wales.

JAMES SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.

Adelaide, May 26th, 1890.

ROBT. HENRY, Superintendent of Telegraphs, Tasmania.

## C.

### DRAFT POSTAL CONVENTION between UNITED STATES of AMERICA and the AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

#### Article 1.

There shall be an exchange of correspondence between the United States of America and the colony of New South Wales, by means of the direct line of contract mail packets plying between San Francisco and Sydney, as well as by such other means of direct mail steamship transportation between the United States and New South Wales as shall hereafter be established, with the approval of the respective post departments of the two countries, comprising letters, post cards, newspapers, printed matter of every kind, patterns and samples of merchandise, and such other postal articles as may be mutually agreed to, originating in either country, and addressed to and deliverable in the other country, as well as correspondence in closed mails originating in New South Wales and destined for foreign countries by way of the United States, and closed mails originating in the United States and destined for other Australasian colonies and foreign countries by way of the colony of New South Wales.

#### Article 2.

The post office of San Francisco shall be in the United States office of exchange, and Sydney the office of exchange of the colony of New South Wales, for all mails transmitted under this arrangement.

#### Article 3.

The dispatching country or colony shall pay the cost of sea and land conveyance to destination. The country or colony providing for the sea conveyance to charge the dispatching country or colony such sea rates as will cover the cost of carriage.

The land transit rates to be paid by the United States to New South Wales shall be as follows, namely:—On letters and post cards 4d. per lb., and on other matter 4s. per cwt. on mails conveyed through the colony of New South Wales for Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, and similar transit rates to each forwarding colony.

In the opposite direction New South Wales to pay to the United States for the cost of transit on correspondence for British Columbia, British North American Provinces, West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America, the following rates, namely:—\*

#### Article 4.

The single rate of international letter postage shall be twelve cents in the United States and sixpence in New South Wales, on each letter weighing half an ounce or less, and an additional rate of twelve cents (sixpence) for each single weight of half an ounce or fraction thereof, which shall be prepaid by means of postage stamps at the office of mailing in either country. Letters unpaid or prepaid less than one full rate of postage will be forwarded and charged with double the deficient postage, to be collected and retained by the post department of the country of destination. The rate of postage on post cards shall in the United States be , and in New South Wales 3d. each, which must in all cases be prepaid by means of postage stamps.

The United States post office shall levy and collect to its own use, on newspapers addressed to New South Wales, a postage charge of two cents, and on all other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise addressed to New South Wales, a postage charge of four cents per each weight of 4oz. or a fraction of 4oz.

The post office of New South Wales shall levy and collect to its own use, on newspapers and other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise addressed to the United States, the regular rates of domestic postage chargeable thereon by the laws and regulations of the colony of

Letters,

\* The rates to be filled in by the United States. It is to be hoped that they will be considerably less than those now charged, which are considered excessive, and tend to prohibit correspondence.

Letters, post cards, newspapers, and other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise, fully prepaid, which may be received in either country from the other, shall be delivered free of all charge whatever.

Newspapers and all other kinds of printed matter, and patterns and samples of merchandise, are to be subject to the laws and regulations of each country respectively, in regard to their liability to be rated with letter postage when containing written matter, or for any other cause specified in said laws and regulations, as well as in regard to their liability to Customs duty under the revenue laws.

*Article 5.*

The New South Wales post office shall render an account to the United States post office, upon letter-bills to accompany each mail, of the weight of the letters, post cards, and also of the printed and other matter contained in such closed mails forwarded to the United States for transmission to either of the countries and colonies mentioned in Article 3. And the United States post office shall render a similar account to the New South Wales post office as regards mails forwarded to New South Wales for transmission to the other Australasian colonies and to foreign countries.

The accounts arising on correspondence exchanged between the United States and the Australasian colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia, shall be stated, adjusted, and settled yearly between the offices of Washington and Sydney, and the office by which an amount shall then be due shall promptly pay same to the other office in such manner as may be required, and New South Wales undertakes to adjust with the other colonies referred to.

*Article 6.*

Prepaid letters from foreign countries addressed to places within the colony of New South Wales, or other Australian colony, received in and forwarded from the United States to New South Wales, shall be delivered in the said colony free of all charge whatsoever.

*Article 7.*

The two post departments may, by mutual agreement, provide for the transmission of registered articles in the mails exchanged between the two countries.

The register fee for each article shall be ten cents in the United States and fourpence in New South Wales.

*Article 8.*

The two post departments shall settle by agreement between them all measures of detail and arrangement required to carry this convention into execution, and may modify the same in like manner from time to time, as the exigencies of the service may require.

*Article 9.*

Unpaid and insufficiently prepaid correspondence dispatched from one country to the other shall be plainly stamped with the letter T on the right-hand upper corner of the address, in addition to the date stamp of the office at which it was posted. The amount of double the deficient postage shall also be inscribed in *black ink*.

*Article 10.*

Dead letters, which cannot be delivered from whatever cause, shall be mutually returned without charge monthly, or as frequently as the regulations of the respective offices will permit.

*Article 11.*

This convention shall come into operation on the \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 189\_\_\_\_, and shall be terminable at any time on a notice by either office of six months.

D.

PROPOSED REDUCTION OF POSTAGE RATES.

MR. GOSCHEN'S LETTER.

London, April 30th, 1890.

The London Post Office has written to the Agents-General of the Australian colonies asking them to bring Mr. Goschen's proposal to reduce postage to twopence halfpenny ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.) under the consideration of the colonial Governments, and says if the colonies are unanimous to reduce postage to twopence halfpenny ( $2\frac{1}{2}$ d.) the Imperial Government will reduce it forthwith. If diversity of opinion amongst the Australian colonies, the London Post Office will frame its policy in accordance with the views of the majority, or the views of the more important colonies. If their assent be obtained, will reduce postage to all colonies alike. New Zealand may be considered separately.

ARTHUR BLYTH, Agent-General.

E.

## E.

REPORT by the POSTMASTER-GENERAL of SOUTH AUSTRALIA on the PROPOSED REDUCTION of POSTAGE between the UNITED KINGDOM and the AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

C., 6481/90.]

General Post Office, Adelaide, April 29th, 1890.

The question of reducing the postage to the United Kingdom has for some time past occupied my attention. As the Government are aware, Germany and France charge only 2½d., not only to their own colonies, but to British India and China, and many other British colonies and possessions. Germany also charges 2½d. on letters to Australia, dispatched direct by the North-German Lloyd's steamers under contract.

With this fact before us, the existing postage rates between England and the colonies, including India and China, are clearly anomalous, and should be reduced as soon as possible.

Some steps have already been taken in this direction. At the Sydney Conference in 1888 it was agreed, subject, of course, to the concurrence of the British post office, to send letters to the United Kingdom by the all-sea route per Peninsular and Oriental and Orient steamers, *via* Plymouth, for 4d. per ½ oz., and, at the same time, a uniform rate of 6d. was adopted to all the countries of Europe.

These rates came into force during the year. So far, however, the cheap sea route has not, I believe, been so largely availed of as might have been expected—the longer time occupied in transit of about a week may, however, to some extent explain this. So far as correspondence from South Australia is concerned, I find that the number of letters by the two routes, *viz.*, Brindisi and Plymouth (all-sea), in 1889, was respectively as follows:—

<i>Via</i> Brindisi .....	119,540
<i>Via</i> all sea route .....	33,614

[Since writing this I have ascertained the number of letters dispatched by both routes by Victoria and New South Wales, in 1889, was as follows:—

Victoria .....	<i>Via</i> Brindisi. 679,768	All Sea. 67,561
New South Wales .....	526,784	19,554]

Inquiry would no doubt show that the experience of the other colonies and the British post office has been similar.

Making every allowance for the fact that the value of the all-sea route, with its reduced rate of postage, is largely discounted by the loss of time involved, which restricts its use to unimportant and domestic correspondence, it nevertheless, to some extent, seems to show that there is not on the part of the public such a demand for cheap postage as Mr. Henniker Heaton and other advocates suppose, nor does it justify any sanguine expectations of a large or equivalent increase of letters following the adoption of reduced rates.

So far as domestic letters are concerned, I fear we can hardly look for any rapid expansion. On the contrary, unless there is a steady stream of immigration, the letters of the class I am referring to, per head of population, show a tendency to decrease rather than increase. New comers write frequently to their friends at home, but as years roll on old ties are weakened, new ones are formed, and homeward letters drop off, till, in many cases, they cease altogether. Commercial correspondence, of course, grows with the progress of the colony, but merchants are more anxious for reliable and rapid means of communication than for cheap postage, which might lead in the future to a less efficient service.

With regard to Mr. Goschen's proposals, combined action on the part of the colonies is clearly necessary, and the question could, perhaps, be best dealt with by a special conference at Melbourne.

Under the new contracts there is a large saving (over £60,000, I believe) on the cost of the combined mail services between Great Britain, India, China, and Australia; and as regards these colonies the loss is not so large as it used to be, and is yearly becoming less; indeed, if present rates are maintained, the postage will, in course of time, cover the cost. With a federal mail service such as we now possess the conditions are therefore favorable to the concession proposed.

It will be seen from the statement appended to this letter that the cost to the colony of the ocean mail services by all routes, after allowing for postages, is at present about £3,000 a year.

If the rate on letters is reduced to 2½d. *via* Brindisi the loss on postages, I estimate, will be £3,000, making the deficit or net cost £6,000 a year.

In 1876 with a four-weekly service the net cost was £10,098, and in 1877, £10,407. We had at that time, however, to pay Victoria £5,000 a year for the steamers calling at Glenelg. To a colony which for many years maintained a branch mail service to King George's Sound at a cost of £14,000 a year, the sacrifice of £3,000 will hardly be regarded as a serious obstacle should the other colonies favor the proposed reduction.

It will, however, be open for consideration whether the rate of 2½d. should not in the first instance apply to the all-sea route, the postage *via* Brindisi being fixed at 4d. instead of 6d. Here the question arises whether the accelerated service between Brindisi and Calais is necessary. The homeward mails per Peninsular and Oriental steamers go to Brindisi and are forwarded thence, together with the India and China mails, by a special or accelerated train reaching London in sixty hours. The mails by the Orient steamers are landed at Naples, and are sent on *via* Rome by the ordinary mail trains. Only the outward mails are forwarded by the accelerated trains branching off to Naples from Foggia, the London post office having recently arranged for an accelerated train between these places.

The transit rates paid to Italy and France for mails conveyed by the through accelerated train *via* Brindisi are—

On letters .....	45·78d. per lb.
On other articles .....	2·81d. per lb.

or nearly 1d. per single rate letter.

The transit rates *via* Naples per ordinary mail trains are—

On letters .....	17·28d. per lb.
“ other articles .....	2·16d. “

or a little over ½ of a penny per single rate letter.

In 1889 we dispatched and paid transit rates by these two routes as follows:—

<i>By P. &amp; O. Steamers—</i>		£	s.	d.
Letters, 2,725½lbs., at 45·78d. per lb. ....		519	17	9
Other articles, 20,659lbs., at 2·81d. per lb. ....		241	17	7
<i>By Orient Steamers—</i>				
Letters, 2,609½lbs., at 17·28d. per lb. ....		187	18	7
Other articles, 23,518lbs., at 2·16d. per lb. ....		211	13	4
		<u>£1,161</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>3</u>

If

If all the mails had gone by ordinary mail trains at Naples rates we should have paid £768 8s. 7d., and have saved £392 18s. 8d.

It may be well to see what we gain for this extra expenditure, and how much earlier our mails arrive in London. The Peninsular and Oriental and Orient steamers leave on the same day of the week. The following table shows the date of arrival of mails by both lines during the past year:—

Departure from Adelaide (Mondays).	Due in London by P. & O. Steamers (Mondays), by Orient Steamers (Sundays).	Date of Arrival.			
		Peninsular and Oriental.		Orient.	
		Steamer.	Date.	Steamer.	Date.
1889.	1889.				
Jan. 7	Feb. 11			Orient	Friday, Feb. 8th, 8.35 p.m.
" 14	" 18	Massilia	Sunday, Feb. 17th, 6.12 p.m.	Lusitania	Sunday, Feb. 24th, 6.27 p.m.
" 21	" 25			Oroya	Wednesday, March 6th, 8.5 p.m.
" 28	March 4	Oceana	Saturday, March 2nd, 5.25 p.m.	Orizaba	Thursday, March 21st, 6.15 p.m.
Feb. 4	" 11	Carthage	Monday, March 18th, 3.58 a.m.	Liguria	Saturday, April 6th, 6.13 p.m.
" 11	" 18			Austral	Saturday, April 20th, 7.55 p.m.
" 18	" 25	Rome	Sunday, March 31st, 6.1 p.m.	Iberia	Sunday, May 5th, 6.16 p.m.
" 25	April 1	Arcadia	Saturday, April 13th, 12.23 p.m.	Ormuz	Saturday, May 18th, 8.1 p.m.
March 4	" 8	Valetta	Sunday, April 28th, 6.2 p.m.	Cuzco	Friday, May 31st, 6.8 p.m.
" 11	" 15	Britannia	Sunday, May 12th, 6.35 a.m.	Orient	Saturday, June 15th, 8.7 p.m.
" 18	" 22	Ballarat	Monday, May 27th, 4.8 a.m.	Lusitania	Saturday, June 29th, 6.0 p.m.
" 25	" 29	Victoria	Thursday, June 6th, 12.33 p.m.	Oroya	Thursday, July 11th, 7.53 p.m.
April 1	May 6	Parramatta	Saturday, June 22nd, 2.46 p.m.	Orizaba	Saturday, July 27th, 6.7 p.m.
" 8	" 13	Oceana	Friday, July 5th, 6.8 p.m.	Liguria	Friday, Aug. 9th, 6.1 p.m.
" 15	" 20	Massilia	Saturday, July 20th, 8.58 a.m.	Austral	Sunday, Aug. 25th, 6.17 p.m.
" 22	" 27	Carthage	Saturday, Aug. 3, 8.16 p.m.	Iberia	Sunday, Sept. 8th, 7.4 a.m.
" 29	June 3	Rome	Saturday, Aug. 17th, 12.46 p.m.	Garonne	Sunday, Sept. 22nd, 8.20 p.m.
May 6	" 9	Arcadia	Friday, Aug. 30th, 2.55 p.m.	Cuzco	Saturday, Oct. 5th, 5.50 p.m.
" 13	" 16	Britannia	No reports	Orient	Sunday, Oct. 20th, 6.0 p.m.
" 20	" 23	Valetta	Saturday, Sept. 28th, 10.58 a.m.	Lusitania	*Wednesday, Nov. 6, 5.58 p.m.
" 27	July 1	Victoria	Saturday, October 12th, 6.5 p.m.	Oroya	Thursday, Nov. 14th, 5.55 p.m.
June 3	" 7	Ballarat	No reports	Orizaba	Thursday, Nov. 28th, 8.30 p.m.
" 10	" 15	Parramatta	Sunday, Nov. 10th, 5.55 p.m.	Liguria	Sunday, Dec. 15th, 6.10 p.m.
" 17	" 21	Rosetta	*Tuesday, Nov. 26th, 12.25 p.m.	Ormuz	Saturday, Dec. 28th, 6.55 a.m.
" 24	" 29	Massilia	*Tuesday, Dec. 10th, 10.40 a.m.		
July 1	Aug. 4	Arcadia	Sunday, Dec. 22nd, 7.20 a.m.		
" 8	" 12				
" 15	" 18				
" 22	" 26				
" 29	Sept. 1				
August 5	" 9				
" 12	" 15				
" 19	" 23				
" 26	" 29				
Sept. 2	Oct. 7				
" 9	" 14				
" 16	" 21				
" 23	" 28				
" 30	Nov. 4				
October 7	" 11				
" 14	" 18				
" 21	" 25				
" 28	Dec. 2				
Nov. 4	" 9				
" 11	" 16				
" 18	" 23				
" 25	" 30				
Dec. 2	1890.				
" 9	Jan. 6	Rome	Sunday, Jan. 5th, 6.20 p.m.	Iberia	1890 Sunday, Jan. 12th, 6.18 p.m.
" 15	" 13	Britannia	Saturday, Jan. 18th, 5.45 p.m.	Austral	Sunday, Jan. 26th, 7.40 a.m.
" 23	" 20				
" 30	" 27				
	Feb. 3	Carthage	Monday, Feb. 3, 6.40 a.m.		

\* Late

It will be seen, that, with three exceptions, the mails arrived in advance of contract time. On two occasions, the P. & O. steamers (the *Massilia* and *Rosetta*), arrived a day late, and the Orient steamers (the *Lusitania*) on one occasion, late by over two days.

The Peninsular and Oriental steamers arrived before time on Thursday, once; on Friday, twice; on Saturday, nine times; on Sunday, seven times; and three times early on Monday. On two occasions we have no record. The Orient steamers arrived on Wednesday, once; on Thursday, four times; on Friday, three times; on Saturday, eight times; and on Sunday, nine times.

This shows how splendidly both companies are carrying out their contract, and it also seems to show that no serious delay has arisen through the mails by the Orient steamers being sent on from Naples by the ordinary mail trains. The steamers of both lines have called at Colombo, with the exception of five (5) of the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and six (6) of the Orient Company.

By the San Francisco route, under existing arrangements, South Australia and other non-contracting colonies, have to pay the contracting colony (New South Wales) for sea conveyance both ways, at the following rates, viz:—

	s.	d.
On letters.....	1	7 per oz.
" packets .....	1	6 " lb.
" newspapers .....	0	6 " "

The

The bulk of the correspondence received by these mails is from the United States, which retain the postage, but do not pay for sea conveyance. Very few letters came from England. Thus, in 1889, we received only seventy-seven British letters, but 9134 foreign letters, mostly American, weighing 285lbs.

We dispatched *via* San Francisco:—

	lbs.	oz.
Letters, 4,682, weighing .....	116	4
Packets, 1,152, " .....	205	15½
Newspapers, 7,899, " .....	1,672	2½

Estimated postage receipts £202 10s. and received by this route:—

	lbs.	oz.
Letters, 9,211, weighing .....	287	12
Packets, 9,143 " .....	3,292	12½
Newspapers, 69,102 " .....	11,350	11

Transit rates paid to New South Wales:—

	£	s.	d.
On mails dispatched .....	204	9	11
" received .....	895	3	9
Postage receipts .....	1,099	13	8
Loss .....	202	10	0
	£897	3	8

At the recent Postal Conference at Sydney, attention was drawn to the very one-sided character of the conventions between the United States post office and Victoria and New South Wales, and it was agreed to recommend that notice should be given to terminate the existing conventions, and that in any future arrangement provision should be made for each dispatching country to pay cost of conveyance by sea and land to destination of the mails it dispatches. Steps are now being taken to give effect to this decision. The result to South Australia will be a saving of nearly £900 a year.

By the Torres Straits route, under contract with the Queensland post office, the same transit rates are paid—also both ways. Our mails are, however, very light, being in 1889:—

	Received.	Dispatched.
Letters .....	82	142
Packets .....	nil.	75
Newspapers .....	52	37

As the sea transit by both these routes taken one way, *i.e.*, on mails dispatched, absorbs all the postage at existing rates there is no margin for reduced postage except at a loss.

It will be seen from the foregoing that if we are relieved of the sea transit on inward mails *via* San Francisco the cost of the ocean mail services will be reduced next year, by say £900; and if the accelerated train through Italy and France for the homeward mails could be dispensed with a further saving of say £450 would be effected, thus reducing the deficit, under the lower postage rates, to about £4,650.

As I have before said, the whole question—united action being necessary—would be best dealt with at a special conference, which would have to consider, not only the proposal now submitted by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but have to revise the postage rates generally, as the reduction of postage to the United Kingdom would involve corresponding reductions on correspondence to several other countries and colonies.

The postage to British India, China, the Straits Settlements, and Egypt I would suggest should be the same as to England, say:—

Letters .....	2½d. per ½oz.
Packets (as recommended at the recent departmental conference) .....	1d. per 1oz.
Newspapers .....	1d. each

To Europe the rate on letters might be 4d. *via* Italy—the present rate is 6d. We have proposed to charge 4d. on letters by the all-sea route to Germany, per German contract steamers.

To the United States and Canada, to South America, Africa, and other countries the postage must depend on the cost of conveyance, and the forward rates charged by the London post office.

In conclusion, I would express myself as strongly in favor of cheap postage, and, as far as possible, of uniform rates; but I may, perhaps, be permitted to point out that the adoption of the reduced rates of postage proposed will in the near future lead to a penny postage on inland letters, which would absorb nearly the whole of our present surplus revenue. Victoria has led the way and New South Wales is following the example.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General, and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

The Hon. the Minister of Education and Northern Territory.

#### STATEMENT SHOWING NET COST OF ENGLISH MAIL SERVICES, *via* SUKZ.—

	EXPENDITURE.	£	s.	d.
S. A. proportion of subsidy to P. & O., and Orient Companies .....		7,973	0	0
European transit rates .....		1,200	0	0
Landing and embarking .....		700	0	0
Special trains .....		160	0	0
Other charges .....		150	0	0
Sea transit on mails <i>via</i> San Francisco, both ways .....		1,099	13	8
“ “ <i>via</i> Torres Straits .....		6	16	3
“ “ by French steamers .....		44	3	5
“ “ by German steamers .....		50	0	0
		11,383	18	4
Postages at present rates ..		8,400	0	0
	Net cost ..	£2,983	18	4
Cost of ocean mail services by all routes .....		11,383	18	4
Postage at present rates .....		8,400	0	0
		3,000	0	0
Present loss, 2,983 18s. 4d., say ....		3,000	0	0
Loss by reduction of postage to 2½d. ...		3,000	0	0
	Loss, if postage reduced ..	£6,000	0	0

## F.

## REPORT by HEADS of DEPARTMENTS on the PROPOSED REDUCTION of POSTAGE.

If the postage to the United Kingdom is reduced to 2½d. *via* Brindisi and Naples, the same rate being adopted to India, the Straits Settlements, and some other intermediate places, and a uniform rate to Europe of 4d., the approximate loss of revenue to the several Australian colonies will be as follows:—

	£		£
Victoria .....	15,150	Queensland .....	5,300
New South Wales .....	15,000	Tasmania .....	1,480
South Australia .....	4,000	Western Australia, say .....	500

If a uniform rate of 2½d. is adopted for all parts of the world the loss of revenue will be—

	£		£
Victoria .....	15,900	Queensland .....	5,740
New South Wales .....	17,000	Tasmania .....	1,580
South Australia .....	4,500	Western Australia ..	550

An important point for consideration in connection with the proposed reduction of postage is whether it is necessary or desirable to maintain the accelerated train service between Brindisi and Calais, which, so far as the homeward mails are concerned, is only available for mails carried by the P. & O. Company's steamers, as the Orient Company's steamers land their mails at Naples.

From information gathered from returns supplied by the London post office we find that, owing to the P. & O. steamers having to fit in with the Indian mail service, the accelerated service referred to is of little or no use, as the P. & O. steamers incur certain detention at Colombo or Aden in connection with the Indian steamers. This is shown by the fact that the mails by Orient steamers, which steamers do not connect with the Indian line, and, as already stated, are not taken on by accelerated trains, yet reach London even earlier than those by the P. and O., as shown by Mr. Todd's report. We think, therefore, that the accelerated train service should be discontinued, and thus enable a saving to be effected of about 1d. per letter in connection with overland transit.

Assuming that the accelerated service be discontinued, and the postage to the United Kingdom be reduced to 2½d. per ½oz. *via* Italy, the total loss to the Australian colonies, on the basis of present returns would be considerably reduced, say to the extent of about £7,000.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General, of South Australia.  
S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary Post Office, New South Wales.  
JAMES SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.  
THOS. H. MAGRATH, Secretary of the Post Office, Tasmania.

May 23rd, 1890.

## G.

## PROPOSED REDUCTION OF CABLE RATES.

COPY of LETTER from CHAIRMAN EASTERN EXTENSION TELEGRAPH COMPANY (SIR JOHN PENDER) to AGENTS-GENERAL for the AUSTRALIAN COLONIES.

Gentleman—As you are aware a proposal was submitted some time ago by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company to your Governments for a considerable reduction of the cable charges to the Australasian colonies upon certain guarantee conditions, the company offering to accept one-fourth of any loss that might be sustained by such reduction; and we now learn from a telegram just received from the company's agent at Melbourne, that the proposal is to be discussed at a conference of Ministers on the 20th instant. In view, however, of the early assembling of the International Telegraph Conference to be held at Paris, when the question of reduced tariffs might come up for discussion—although the conference has no power to compel the company to alter its rates, and consequently if any reduction is to be brought about it must be made between the company and the Australasian Governments outside the conference—the company considered it advisable to invite the Agents-General of the Colonies to meet its Chairman and Sir James Anderson to discuss the question, in order to ascertain whether some solution could not be arrived at satisfactory to all parties. At the conference with you yesterday you urged that a considerable reduction in rates ought to take place at once, and that the method that in your opinion would best invite the support of the telegraphing public and the colonial Governments and most effectually test the result of a reduction, would be to reduce the tariff at the earliest date to five shillings (5s.) per word, the companies taking half the risk of any loss that might ensue and the colonies the other half, the reduction to be for one year certain, with the right to revert to a tariff not exceeding eight shillings (8s.) per word, if the test of the year showed that the reduction to five shillings (5s.) could not be maintained.

These views have been carefully considered by my board, and as an evidence of their desire to meet the wishes of the colonies as far as possible, and to test the effect on the traffic of a large reduction of the tariff, the Eastern Extension Company is prepared, subject to the approval of its allies, the Eastern and Indo-European Companies, to reduce the tariff between Europe and Adelaide, from the 1st of January next,

from 9s. 4d. to 5s. 0d. per word for ordinary telegrams,  
“ 7s. 1d. to 4s. 5d. “ “ “ Government telegrams, and  
“ 2s. 8d. to 1s. 10d. “ “ “ press telegrams,

on condition that the Australasian Governments will guarantee to make up one-half of any loss that may be sustained by such reduction, the companies taking the risk of the other half. The guarantee to be based on the present cable traffic of 1889, and to be for a fixed term of one year, at the expiration of which, if the result of the reduction is found to be encouraging, it might be tested for a further period to be agreed upon. Should the arrangement not be extended the companies to at once revert to a tariff not exceeding eight shillings (8s.) per word, provided that such a rate gave the companies the same amount of revenue as they at present derive from the Australasian traffic.

		£
The companies' present revenue from the Australasian traffic amounts to .....	231,163	
and at the proposed reduced rates, and assuming that South Australia would accept a transit rate of 75 centimes per word, it is estimated that it would amount to .....	120,429	
Leaving, if no increase of traffic took place, a loss of.....		£110,734
to be divided between the companies and the Governments, or, £55,367		
respectively.		
If the traffic were increased by—		£
10 per cent. the Governments would have to make up .....	49,345	
20 “ “ “ “ .....	43,324	
25 “ “ “ “ .....	40,314	
33 “ “ “ “ .....	35,295	
50 “ “ “ “ .....	25,260	
75 “ “ “ “ .....	10,206	
92 “ “ “ “ .....	Nil.	
distributed as follows :—		

Colony.	Population— 1888 basis.	10 per cent.	20 per cent.	25 per cent.	33 per cent.	50 per cent.	75 per cent.	92 per cent.
		£	£	£	£	£	£	
Victoria .....	1,090,869	14,634	12,850	11,957	10,468	7,491	3,027	Nil.
New South Wales.....	1,085,740	14,565	12,790	11,901	10,417	7,456	3,012	“
New Zealand .....	607,380	8,147	7,154	6,658	5,832	4,171	1,686	“
Queensland .....	387,463	5,197	4,564	4,246	3,718	2,662	1,076	“
South Australia .....	318,308	4,270	3,749	3,490	3,054	2,186	884	“
Tasmania .....	146,149	1,967	1,721	1,601	1,402	1,005	405	“
Western Australia .....	42,137	565	496	461	404	289	116	“
	3,678,046	£49,345	£43,324	£40,314	£35,295	£25,260	£10,206	

It will be seen that this proposal is much more favorable to the colonies than the former one, the companies taking one-half instead of one-fourth of the risk of the reduction, and the liability of the Governments being limited to one year, instead of eleven years, and I therefore trust that it will commend itself to your favorable consideration, and that you will be able to recommend it to your Governments for approval.

I have, &c.,

The Agents-General of the Australasian Colonies.

JOHN PENDER, Chairman.

H.

REPORT by POSTMASTER-GENERAL of SOUTH AUSTRALIA on PROPOSED REDUCTION of CABLE RATES.

PROPOSAL OF EASTERN EXTENSION TELEGRAPH COMPANY.

Under existing agreement with the company, which terminates on the 31st October, 1899, the contributing colonies pay a subsidy for duplicate cable between Port Darwin and Singapore of £32,400 a year, apportioned on basis of population as follows :—

Colony.	Population on 31st Dec., 1886.	Contribution.		
		£	s.	d.
Victoria .....	1,003,043	13,786	1	4
New South Wales .....	1,001,966	13,771	5	3
South Australia .....	312,758	4,298	12	5
West Australia .....	39,584	544	1	0
	2,357,351	32,400	0	0

The present rates between England and South Australia are, for :—

	s.	d.	
Private messages .....	9	4	a word
Government messages .....	7	1	“
Press messages .....	2	8	“

Divided thus :—

Apportionment of Cable Rates for Each Class of Messages.

	Ordinary.	Government.	Press.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Eastern and Indo-European.....	2 11	2 11	1 0
India .....	0 7½	0 7½	0 2½
Java .....	0 1½	0 1½	0 0½
Eastern Extension .....	4 6	2 3	1 1
South Australia.....	1 2	1 2	0 4
	9 4	7 1	2 8



The following table shows the amount of business during the year 1889 :—

Colony.	Forwarded.		Received.		Total.	
	No. of Messages.	Amount.	No. of Messages.	Amount.	No. of Messages.	Amount.
		£ s. d.		£ s. d.		£ s. d.
South Australia .....	3,321	12,894 7 0	4,801	26,172 18 5	8,122	39,067 5 5
Victoria .....	10,079	60,596 2 2	11,462	59,084 4 10	21,541	119,680 7 0
Tasmania .....	429	2,071 16 10	362	1,471 9 11	791	3,543 6 9
New South Wales .....	9,599	45,765 17 1	8,612	39,541 0 1	18,211	85,306 17 2
New Zealand .....	4,339	25,583 5 0	4,022	22,573 14 11	8,361	48,156 19 11
Queensland .....	2,622	14,280 14 0	1,997	10,474 14 5	4,619	24,755 8 5
West Australia .....	744	2,230 8 7	520	1,895 11 1	1,264	4,125 19 8
	31,133	163,422 10 8	31,776	161,213 13 8	62,909	324,636 4 4

The total number of words transmitted in 1889 was :—

Forwarded .....	358,406
Received .....	435,511
Total .....	793,917

A reduction of one penny a word, it will therefore be seen, involves a loss of £3,308 a year to each administration making the reduction, which would have to be made good by increase of business; and unless a substantial reduction is made, such increase cannot be looked for.

At the conference in 1888, all the colonies, except Queensland, agreed to the following resolution :—  
 “That, as all the Australasian colonies are interested in the maintenance of cable communication with Great Britain, this conference is of opinion that each of these colonies should contribute, in proportion to the extent of its population, to the subsidies now paid by the contracting colonies to the Eastern Extension Company, and that a like division of cost should be made between all the colonies represented at this conference of the cables communicating with Tasmania and New Zealand; Great Britain to be requested to contribute towards the subsidy given to the Eastern Extension Company in respect of the cables connected with the traffic with the United Kingdom: Provided always that it is understood that the right to purchase the Australasian cables of the Eastern Extension Company is to be in the hands of the colonies who are now paying, or may consent to pay, the above subsidies in the manner provided, at any time upon giving the company the notice prescribed in the subsidy agreement.”

“Queensland dissented.”

If all the colonies would contribute, the subsidy of £32,400 would be apportioned on populations, as on 31st December, 1888, thus :—

Colony.	Population on 31st December, 1888.*	Contributions.
		£ s. d.
Victoria .....	1,090,869	9,609 9 10
New South Wales .....	1,085,740	9,564 6 2
Queensland .....	387,463	3,413 3 5
New Zealand .....	607,380	5,350 8 6
South Australia .....	318,308	2,803 19 9
Tasmania .....	146,149	1,287 8 7
West Australia .....	42,137	371 3 9
	3,678,046	32,400 0 0

\* Vide “Year Book of Australia, 1890,” page 98.

And the guarantee in similar ratio.

The Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, after conferring with the Agents-General, submit the following proposition, as per telegram from the chairman :—“To give a 5s. tariff a trial for one year, commencing first of January, 1891, taking half risk themselves, the colonies guaranteeing the other half. At the end of the year, if the traffic were encouraging, it might be further tested, but if guaranteed terminated, the companies to have power to at once revert to a tariff not exceeding 8s. a word, provided this gave them their present revenue.

“If 5s. tariff introduced, and traffic increased—

“25 per cent., the combined colonies would have to make up.....	£40,000	0	0
“50 “ “ “ “ “ “ .....	25,000	0	0
“75 “ “ “ “ “ “ “ .....	10,000	0	0

“which last, spread over the colonies, would be an insignificant contribution.

“If traffic increased 92 per cent. the guarantee would be wiped out.

“Government telegrams would be reduced to 4s. 5d., and press 1s. 10d., a word.”

In submitting this offer the Eastern Extension Company assume that South Australia will reduce her rate from 1s. 1d. a word (our transit rate on through messages\*) to 7½d. a word. This would involve a loss—allowing for no increase of business—of over £16,000 a year; and, under these circumstances, it is submitted that South Australia should be guaranteed by the other colonies against loss, or be relieved of any contribution to the guarantee. In addition to paying her part of the original subsidy, South Australia has entered into a guarantee to pay Western Australia £1,000 a year.

It is further suggested that, carrying out the terms of the resolution agreed to at the Sydney Conference in 1888, the Home Government should be asked to accept some responsibility, and contribute a fair share—not only to the existing subsidy, but also to the guarantee now required to secure the substantial reduction offered by the company. The Imperial Government and British merchants are clearly as much interested as the colonies in cheapening telegraphic communication.

In.

\* The local rate on South Australian cables is 1s. 2d.

In considering the offer now submitted by the Eastern Extension Company, it is only fair to mention that the company have gone to a large outlay in duplicating the cables between India and Port Darwin, besides laying a cable from Banjoewangie to Roebuck Bay. They have also recently laid a second cable to New Zealand, at a cost of £190,000, and have two cables to Tasmania.

No subsidy has been paid for the New Zealand cables for the last four years, but the company receive a subsidy of £4,200 a year for the Tasmanian cables.

Nothing is said by Sir John Pender about any concession by the Indian Government, who now charge 7½d. a word for the transmission of Australian and eastern messages between Madras and Bombay, but it may be assumed that lower rates will be agreed to. This matter is in the hands of the Victorian Government.

May 17th, 1890.

C. TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

## I.

TABLE showing the REVENUE and EXPENDITURE on the ADELAIDE and PORT DARWIN TELEGRAPH LINE during the YEARS 1873 and 1889, both inclusive.

Year.	Revenue.	Working Expenses.	Annual Interest on Loans.	Total.	Loss or Gain.	Interest on Annual Gain or Loss, calculated at 4 per cent. per annum, up to say 31st December, 1889.			
	£	£	£	£	£	£	s.	d.	£ s. d.
1873 .....	23,464	13,483	9,244	22,727	Gain, 737	—	—	—	501 3 2
1874 .....	19,780	17,858	11,744	29,602	Loss, 9,822	6,286	1	7	—
1875 .....	15,708	29,444	15,144	44,588	" 28,880	17,328	0	0	—
1876 .....	*11,551	25,422	15,144	40,566	" 29,015	16,248	8	0	—
1877 .....	17,535	22,992	15,144	38,136	" 20,601	10,712	10	5	—
1878 .....	20,306	26,611	15,144	41,755	" 21,449	10,295	10	5	—
1879 .....	22,332	28,266	23,580	51,846	" 29,514	12,986	3	2	—
1880 .....	23,606	26,472	23,580	50,052	" 26,446	10,578	8	0	—
1881 .....	27,529	30,169	23,580	53,749	" 26,220	9,439	4	0	—
1882 .....	29,857	30,916	23,580	54,496	" 24,639	7,884	9	7	—
1883 .....	32,130	29,227	23,580	52,807	" 20,677	5,789	11	2	—
1884 .....	33,811	29,052	23,580	52,632	" 18,821	4,517	0	10	—
1885 .....	34,685	24,432	24,180	48,612	" 13,927	2,785	8	0	—
1886 .....	33,947	18,004	24,380	42,384	" 8,437	1,349	18	5	—
1887 .....	37,989	18,211	24,380	42,591	" 4,602	552	4	10	—
1888 .....	44,786	19,010	24,380	43,390	Gain 1,396	—	—	—	111 13 7
1889 .....	42,755	19,729	24,380	44,109	Loss 1,354	54	3	2	—
Total Loss .....				£284,404		£116,807	1	7	612 16 9
" Gain .....				2,133					
Loss exclusive of interest on annual loss .....				£282,271		Or .....			£116,194 4s. 10d.
Interest on annual loss .....				116,194					
Total loss .....				£398,465					

Cable subsidy *not* included.

\* Owing to cable interruptions.

May 23rd, 1890.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

## J.

### WESTERN AUSTRALIAN ROEBUCK CABLE AGREEMENT.

Memorandum of agreement made this 30th day of June, 1889, between His Excellency the Right Honorable Algernon Hawkins Thomond, Earl of Kintore, Lord Falconer of Halkerton, Lord Keith of Inverurie, a member of Her Majesty's Most Honorable Privy Council, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Province of South Australia and the Dependencies thereof, &c., of the one part, and His Excellency Sir Frederick Napier Broome, Knight Commander of the Most Distinguished Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, Governor and Commander-in-Chief in and over the Territory of Western Australia and its dependencies, &c., of the other part:

Whereas it is desirable that an agreement should be arrived at between the Governments of South Australia and Western Australia in respect of transmission of international messages *via* Port Darwin, in South Australia, and Roebuck, in Western Australia, respectively, it is hereby agreed as follows:—

1. That this agreement shall come into operation on the 20th day of April, 1889, and shall continue in force until the 30th day of June, 1894, or any later day, of which six calendar months notice in writing shall have been given by either of the parties hereto to the other of them.

2. The through rates on international telegrams between any Australasian colony, including Western Australia, and the United Kingdom or any other country, shall be the same whether such messages be transmitted *via* Port Darwin or *via* Roebuck.

3. The transit rates over the Western Australian and South Australian lines *via* Eucla, and the South Australian line *via* Port Darwin, shall be the same.

4. All international messages to or from Western Australia shall, if that route be open, be transmitted *via* Roebuck, and the Western Australian Telegraph Department shall retain the whole of the terminal land rates in respect of such messages; but if the said route be interrupted, such messages shall be transmitted *via* Port Darwin, and the terminal land rates in respect thereof shall be equally divided between the respective telegraph departments of South Australia and Western Australia.

5. All

5. All international messages to or from South Australia, or to or from any other Australasian colony, except Western Australia, shall, if that route be open, be transmitted *via* Port Darwin, and the South Australian Telegraph Department shall retain the whole of the South Australian land rates in respect of such messages; but if the route be interrupted, such messages shall be transmitted *via* Roebuck, and the South Australian and Western Australian land rates in respect thereof shall be equally divided between the respective telegraph departments of South Australia and Western Australia.

6. In the event of the amount receivable by the Western Australian Telegraph Department, under the preceding clause, No. 5, falling during any year below £1,000, for each year that it so falls short, the Telegraph Department of South Australia shall pay to the Telegraph Department of Western Australia, a sum equal to the amount by which in that same year it so falls short, and the provisions of this present clause shall apply proportionately to the broken period in the event of this agreement being determined otherwise than at the end of an even year.

Signed by His Excellency the Governor of South Australia,  
in the presence of (Sgd.) E. P. LEMPRIERE. (Sgd.) KINTORE.

Signed by His Excellency the Governor of Western Australia,  
in the presence of (Sgd.) H. L. PILKINGTON. (Sgd.) F. NAPIER BROOME.

#### SCHEDULE OF EXISTING LAND AND INTERCOLONIAL RATES UPON INTERNATIONAL MESSAGES VIA PORT DARWIN.

To and from South Australia—					s. d.
Private and Government telegrams .....					1 2
Press telegrams .....					0 4
		S.A. Transit Rate.		Vict. and W.A. Rates.	
To and from Western Australia and Victoria—		s. d.		s. d.	
Private and Government telegrams .....		1 1		0 1	
Press telegrams .....		0 4		0 1	
		S.A. Rate.		N.S.W. Rate.	
To and from New South Wales—		s. d.		s. d.	
Private and Government telegrams .....		1 1		0 3	
Press telegrams .....		0 4		0 1	
		S.A. Rate.		N.S.W. Rate.	Queen'd Rate.
To and from Queensland—		s. d.		s. d.	s. d.
Private and Government telegrams .....		1 1		0 3	0 3
Press telegrams .....		0 4		0 1	0 1
		S.A. Rate.	Vict. Rate.	Cable Rate.	Tasm'n Rate.
To and from Tasmania—		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Private and Government telegrams .....		1 1	0 1	0 6	0 1
Press telegrams .....		0 4	0 1	0 6	0 1
		S.A. Rate.	N.S.W. Rate.	Cable Rate.	N.Z. Rate.
To and from New Zealand—		s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Private and Government telegrams .....		1 1	0 1	1 1	0 1
Press telegrams .....		0 4	0 1	0 4	0 1

## K.

### REPORT by POSTMASTER-GENERAL of SOUTH AUSTRALIA on PROPOSED REDUCTION of INTERCOLONIAL TELEGRAPH RATES.

#### VICTORIA—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

If intercolonial rates with Victoria are reduced to 1s. for ten words, counting names and addresses, but 2d. a word is still charged after the first ten words, the loss to each colony will be £1,300 a year.

#### NEW SOUTH WALES—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

If the same rate is adopted between South Australia and New South Wales, the loss, excluding messages to and from the Barrier or Broken Hill district, will be £500 to each colony.

We now charge only 1s. for ten words, exclusive of names and addresses, on Barrier messages; and without some equivalent concession is granted, it would perhaps be difficult to count names and addresses.

#### TASMANIA—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

With regard to Tasmania, the present rate for ten words, exclusive of names and addresses, for which ten words are allowed, is 3s., apportioned thus—

	s. d.
South Australia .....	1 0
Victoria .....	0 6
Tasmania .....	0 6
Cable Company .....	1 0

Victoria and Tasmania, it will be seen, charge only 6d. If South Australia reduces her rate to 6d. the loss to this colony will be £20.

#### QUEENSLAND—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The present rates are 3s. for ten words, exclusive of names and addresses, and 3d. for every additional word, equally divided between the three colonies—South Australia, New South Wales, and Queensland.

If rate reduced to 1s. 6d. for ten words, counting names and addresses, retaining the rate of 3d. for each additional word, the loss would be about £60 to each colony on South Australian business.

WESTERN

## WESTERN AUSTRALIA—SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

The rates between South Australia and Western Australia are 2s. for ten words, exclusive of names and addresses, and 2d. for each additional word.

Between Victoria and Western Australia .....	3s.
“ New South Wales and Western Australia .....	3s.
“ Queensland and Western Australia .....	4s.

equally divided between the colonies concerned.

It will no doubt be thought that, looking at the vast distance, and the small amount of business, these rates are low enough, still, if the system of charging for names and addresses is adopted in regard to messages to Victoria and the other colonies, it would be better, for the sake of uniformity, to extend the principle to Western Australian traffic. The reduction, if made, would involve approximately a loss to—

	£	s.	d.
Western Australia, of .....	149	1	8
South Australia, of .....	149	1	8
Victoria, of .....	50	9	8
Tasmania, of .....	0	13	0
New South Wales, of .....	22	19	4
Queensland, of .....	4	19	8

## NEW ZEALAND.

The rates between South Australia and New Zealand are 11s. for the first ten words and 1s. 1d. for every additional word. Names and addresses are counted as part of the message. Messages must in all cases be prepaid. Messages to be counted in the same manner as foreign telegrams, with the exception that the limit of letters allowed to a word is fifteen instead of ten.

I presume no alteration will be made.

The practice of charging for names and addresses is generally adopted in other countries, and has been followed in England since 1885, when the rate on inland telegrams was reduced from 1s. for twenty words, exclusive of names and addresses, to 6d. for twelve words, including names and addresses.

The Australian intercolonial rates cannot be considered extravagant or high as compared with inter-European charges, especially when distance and limited population are taken into account.

Thus between—

London and Paris the charge is .....	2d. a word
“ “ Brussels “ .....	2d. “
“ “ Berlin “ .....	2d. “
“ “ Vienna “ .....	4½d. “

with a minimum charge of 10d. for each telegram.

May 17th, 1890.

C. TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

## L.

## DEPARTMENTAL POSTAL and TELEGRAPH CONFERENCE, HELD in SYDNEY, 1890.

Post Office and Telegraph Department,

C., 3697/90.

General Post Office, Adelaide, March 12th, 1890.

Sir—I have the honor to submit for approval report of the conference of permanent heads of the postal and telegraph services recently held at Sydney. The departments represented were Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia. The principal subjects discussed and considered were—

- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1. German proposals for convention with Australian colonies. | 10. Postal notes.                   |
| 2. Proposed new convention with the United States.           | 11. Unclaimed letters.              |
| 3. Adjustment of Australian transit rates.                   | 12. Re-direction.                   |
| 4. Special train service from Adelaide.                      | 13. Compulsory registration.        |
| 5. Parcels to and from Germany.                              | 14. Letter cards.                   |
| 6. Uniform postal rates and regulations                      | 15. Indian telegraph transit rates. |
| 7. Packet rates.   | 16. Urgent messages.                |
| 8. Intercolonial parcel post.                                | 17. Telegraph rates.                |
| 9. Money orders.   | 18. McGauran's patent.              |
|  | 19. Weather reports.                |

Besides a number of other matters of departmental detail requiring no special report.

With regard to the first, it will be seen that we recommend, *inter alia*, that letters posted in Germany bearing a postage per ½oz. of only 2½d. shall be restricted to correspondence forwarded direct by the German contract steamers.

2. *Convention with United States.*—Acting on my advice, South Australia has hitherto abstained from entering into a postal convention with the United States, as the conventions agreed to by Victoria and New South Wales were one sided in favor of the States, which retained all the postages but paid practically nothing for the cost of sea conveyance, which has consequently fallen on the colonies of destination, viz., 1s. 7d. an ounce on letters, 1s. 6d. per lb. on packets, and 6d. per lb. on newspapers, being paid to the contracting colonies providing the service (New South Wales and New Zealand) on correspondence both ways.

We recommend that the existing conventions be terminated, and that in any new convention it should be stipulated that the dispatching country should pay carriage to destination. This will effect a very considerable saving to the colonies.

A convention, including all the colonies, on the basis proposed, is urgently required, as at present we cannot exchange registered letters, and, in the case of money orders, only through the United Kingdom.

4. *Special*

4. *Special Train Service from Adelaide*.—The South Australian post office will pay the Railway Commissioners for the special trains when required, apportioning the cost between Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland on population basis, and credit those colonies on their respective mails with the South Australian transit rates paid by the United Kingdom and other dispatching countries, but retain the rates paid on mails to Tasmania, New Zealand, &c. As the latter colonies will bear no proportion of the cost of these special trains, the arrangement proposed seems fair and equitable, and will remunerate this department for the trouble and expense incurred in acting as intermediary.

6. *Uniform Postal Regulations*.—See also note by Messrs. Lambton, McDonnell, and Todd, at end of report.—Mr. Derham suggests that the Hon. the Postmaster-General of New South Wales should draw up and submit an intercolonial postal convention, and it is proposed that I should prepare an outline, setting forth the principal points to be embodied in the convention. I will submit this for your approval in a few days.

7. *Packet Rates*.—A uniform rate of 1d. per oz. will be a great improvement on the present practice.

8. *Intercolonial Parcel Post*.—The proposed equal division of postage after paying transit rates will, I feel sure, be approved.

9. *Money Orders*.—Section 58, part 3, of our Post Office Act, 1876, fixes the limit at £10. I strongly recommend extension to £20, as adopted by Victoria.

11. *Unclaimed Letters*.—Letters frequently bear on the envelopes request from sender to be returned if not claimed within specified time. It is proposed that these requests be complied with, but section 34, part 1, of our Act will have to be amended.

12. *Re-direction of Letters*.—These should, I think, be subject to fresh postage. (See clause 63, page 10 of Rules and Regulations.)

13. *Compulsory Registration*.—Letters containing money or articles of value ought to be registered, or refused.

14. *Letter Cards*.—I do not think these will be much used, and see no reason why, if we introduce them, they should go at less rates than a letter. The department will provide the card. Mr. Derham thinks 2s. a dozen too high, but I consider the rate is reasonable for intercolonial correspondence.

15. *Indian Transit Rates on International Telegrams*.—This received very careful consideration, and requires no special comment here. I certainly think that the Eastern Extension Company might fairly be asked to make a reduction corresponding to that claimed from India. The statistics showing the growth of Australian international business were prepared by me for the information of the conference, and the agent of the Eastern Extension Company courteously obtained for me a statement showing the total revenue derived by the Indian Telegraph Department on international messages.

16. *Urgent Messages*.—Our regulations already provide for messages of an urgent nature relating to sickness, death, &c., having precedence. I think it would be unwise to extend the system to ordinary commercial telegrams, and in this view Mr. Cracknell (representing New South Wales in telegraph matters) concurred.

17. *Telegraph Rates*.—There was no disposition to reduce existing rates, but there was a consensus of opinion that names and addresses should be counted. It would be difficult to introduce such a change unless some equivalent concession were granted.

18. *McGauran's Patent*.—I cannot make any special recommendation until I possess further information promised by Mr. Kingsbury. It is highly spoken of by the officers in Melbourne and Sydney, where it has been in use for some time.

19. *Weather Reports*.—This section requires no remark.

In conclusion, I am pleased to think that the labors of the conference will bear good fruit, and tend to secure uniformity of practice and harmonious action between the postal and telegraph services in the different colonies.

I may add that it is proposed by the Postmasters-General of Victoria and New South Wales to publish the report, or give it to the press, as soon as it has been submitted to and approved by the other responsible Ministers of the departments represented. I have, &c.,

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Your report *re* Postal and Telegraph Conference may be published; but I regret the conclusion expressed in paragraph 17, referring to intercolonial telegraph rates. I am strongly of opinion that the rates to Victoria and New South Wales should be reduced to 1s. for ten words, including names and addresses. With respect to the report generally, I congratulate you upon the work done by the conference, which will, I consider, be of great advantage to all the colonies represented.

To the P.M.G.

J. H. G., M.E. and N.T.  
14/4/90.

[Minute by Hon. Fredk. T. Derham, Postmaster-General, Victoria, on Report of Sydney Conference of 1890.]

Seen. *Vide* my notes on the report.—I desire to express my approval of the work done by this conference, which promises to be useful to the public, to have a tendency to smooth away difficulties between the colonies, and to save expense to the State.

General Post Office, Sydney, March 3rd, 1890.

In accordance with instructions from Ministers, we met in Sydney on Monday, the 24th ultimo, and subsequent days. Having considered various matters of intercolonial interest, we beg to submit the following report:—

#### 1.—GERMAN PROPOSALS.

The secretary to the London post office wrote on July 31st, 1889, informing the Sydney and Adelaide post offices that, in terms of the request contained in the letters from the latter offices of the 6th and 8th March respectively, embodying suggestions made at the conference held in Melbourne in January, 1889, a draft of the proposed agreement had been prepared and forwarded to Berlin, adding that the German office had replied that it would accept the draft in the main, but had certain counter proposals to make, and asking that the Sydney, or some other Australian post office who had taken the matter in hand, would endeavor to obtain a unanimous decision from the post offices of the other colonies upon these proposals. We have taken into

into consideration the letter from Mr. Lambton, of December 23rd, to the other colonies, suggesting the nature of the reply to be sent to London and Berlin, and make the following recommendations:—

1.—*Extraordinary Services.*

Acting on the advice of Sir A. Blackwood, we recommend that objection be taken to the proposed addition to the second paragraph of Article 2 of the words “in the sense of the Postal Union Convention,” and that Article 2 of the Italian Convention be adopted for the convention with Germany.

2.—*German Offices of Exchange.*

With regard to the German offices of exchange, we advise that we only undertake to make up mails for the port of landing, and for Berlin. It is thought that the port of landing should be specified, though it may be changed as often as desired.

3.—*Post Cards.*

Whilst the Australian colonies will only forward post cards issued by their own offices, we see no objection to accepting from Germany those issued or recognised by the German post office.

4.—*Postage on Letters Exchanged between the Australian Colonies and Germany.*

As regards the rates of postage, we consider that the existing rates between the colonies and Europe, namely, 6d. *vid* Brindisi and 4d. by the all sea route, direct by German packets, should be insisted on, but leaving it optional to the German post office to fix a lower rate of postage on correspondence forwarded direct by the German contract steamers, it being understood that the lower rate of postage is absolutely restricted to those steamers.

5.—*Limitation in Weight and Size of Sample Packets.*

The proposed limitation in the weight and size of sample packets, as fixed by the regulations of the Postal Union, should we think, be agreed to, namely:—

Weight .....	250 grammes .....	say 10 ounces
Length .....	20 centimetres .....	“ 8 inches
Breadth .....	10 “ .....	“ 4 “
Depth .....	5 “ .....	“ 2 “

But we are of opinion that there should be no distinction between sample packets and any other packets coming within the prescribed dimensions that can be sent by post, and no such distinction has been adopted by the colonies.

6.—*Date of Commencement.*

We see no objection, so soon as the other colonies have intimated their concurrence in the proposed convention, to the date of commencement being fixed by telegraph.

7.—*New South Wales to arrange with other Colonies.*

With reference to the request that New South Wales, or one of the other two colonies who have undertaken the matter, will endeavor to obtain a unanimous decision from all the Australasian colonies, including Tasmania, New Zealand, and Fiji, it is proposed that the Sydney post office shall act as intermediary.

8.—*Transit Rates.*

In regard to the request of the London office for more precise information as to the transit rates payable to the colonies other than South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales, we advise that the following information be furnished, namely:—That the countries of origin will have to account as under:—

*Tasmania.*—On mails for Tasmania, they will have to account to South Australia, in addition to the South Australian and Victorian transit rates, for  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per letter, and 3s. per cwt. of other mail matter, to cover cost of sea transit from Melbourne to Tasmania.

*New Zealand.*—On mails for New Zealand, similar charges, the additional rate being to cover cost of transit from Melbourne to New Zealand. But New Zealand mails should in all cases be put out at Melbourne, thus saving the New South Wales transit rates, as well as gaining time.

*Queensland.*—On mails for Queensland, the ordinary land transit rates payable to Victoria, South Australia, and New South Wales.

*Fiji.*—On mails for Fiji, in addition to the three territorial transit rates,  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per letter, and 3s. per cwt. of other mail matter, to cover the cost of sea transit to Fiji.

APPENDIX A.

The report on this subject of the officers present at the conference in Melbourne last year is appended, together with the correspondence which has since taken place.

2.—PROPOSED NEW CONVENTION WITH THE UNITED STATES.

In reference to the objections to the existing arrangements, as described in the report of the conference held in Melbourne in January, 1889, Mr. Lambton having informed the members of the conference that the present temporary contract for the San Francisco mail service will expire in November next, and that it is in contemplation, should any fresh contract be entered into, to omit the stipulation in the existing one which entitles the contractors, instead of the contracting post office, to receive certain payments from the United States, and to provide in lieu thereof for the United States post office paying the cost to destination of its own correspondence on the same principle as has been adopted between the United Kingdom and the colonies in connection with the present mail contracts via Suez, we think that the United States post office should be requested to carry out the suggestions made in the report of the last departmental conference above referred to, namely, “that the United States post office be invited to enter into new conventions with the colonies.” We therefore submit a draft of a new convention [Appendix B], which, after careful consideration, we think will meet the case, and we suggest that those colonies having conventions should be asked to give the stipulated notice of termination of the existing conventions, to clear the way for the proposed amended one.

3.—ADJUSTMENT

## 3.—ADJUSTMENT OF AUSTRALIAN TRANSIT RATES.

At the departmental conference held at Melbourne last year it was recommended, and subsequently approved by Ministers, that the Adelaide office should collect and distribute the Australian transit rates payable by other countries and colonies.

Mr. Todd reported that steps had been taken to give effect to the foregoing arrangement, and explained that some of the countries and colonies had not furnished statements of the net weight of mails. He has therefore prepared forms, which are submitted herewith [Appendix C], one of which we propose shall be forwarded by each dispatching country and colony to the Adelaide office by each mail.

Mr. Todd having inquired who is to bear the cost of remitting the Australian transit rates received by him on behalf of other colonies, it is recommended that each colony interested bear the expense; but, in order to avoid interfering with the mail service accounts, that separate accounts be rendered periodically for these amounts.

We have also dealt with a number of questions necessarily arising out of the adjustment of ocean mail service accounts with European countries and Australian colonies, but on which, relating as they do purely to departmental details, no Ministerial action is needed.

## 4.—SPECIAL TRAIN SERVICE FROM ADELAIDE.

When a special train is employed between Adelaide and Melbourne, the cost of such service should be apportioned between Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland *pro rata* on the usual population basis, South Australia in such case to credit each of these three colonies with the South Australian transit rates on their respective mails, which rates under other circumstances would be retained by South Australia. This arrangement to commence from the 1st April next.

## 5.—PARCELS TO AND FROM GERMANY.

Mr. Todd produced a letter to him from the London office, dated 18th April, 1889, saying that if the colonies would agree to the following inland rates to Germany, and the other countries of Europe, namely:—

	s.	d.
Not exceeding 2lbs .....	0	9
Exceeding 2lbs., and not exceeding 7lbs. ....	2	3
Exceeding 7lbs., and not exceeding 11lbs. ....	3	9

The London post office would be prepared to make a considerable reduction of sea transit rates on parcels for Germany, &c., *via* the United Kingdom, namely on a parcel:—

	s.	d.	s.	d.
Not exceeding 2lbs. ....	0	10, instead of	1	8
Exceeding 2lbs., and not exceeding 7lbs. ....	1	8 “ “	2	6
Exceeding 7lbs., and not exceeding 11lbs. ....	2	6 “ “	3	9

These rates would permit of parcels being sent at the following rates without loss to the colonies, namely:—

	s.	d.
On a parcel not exceeding 2lbs. ....	2	8
Exceeding 2lbs., and not exceeding 7lbs. ....	5	5

NOTE.—The London office does not advise the total rate for 11lbs.

These rates will actually, in the case of parcels of 2lbs. weight, be less than those charged by direct German steamers.

We recommend the adoption of the reduced rates to which South Australia has already agreed.

## 6.—UNIFORM POSTAL RATES AND REGULATIONS.—PROPOSED CONVENTION.

Mr. Todd called attention to No. 6 of the questions reported upon by the permanent officers at the Sydney Conference of 1888—copy appended [Appendix D]—and pointed out the urgent necessity for an Intercolonial Postal Convention, providing not only for newspapers but for exchange of correspondence generally at uniform rates of postage and under uniform regulations, as the inconveniences mentioned in 1888 still exist and create great public dissatisfaction. Having given this important matter careful consideration, we respectfully urge that such convention should be entered into as early as possible.

With regard to newspapers, we would repeat the desirableness of adopting uniformly throughout Australia the London post office definition of a newspaper, as follows—with the exception, perhaps, of a modification of sub-section “b.”

“Any publication fulfilling the subjoined conditions can, upon payment of an annual fee of 5s., be registered at the general post office for circulation within the United Kingdom as a newspaper, as also for transmission to places abroad:—

“a. The publication must consist wholly or in great part of political or other news, or of articles relating thereto, or to other current topics, with or without advertisements.

“b. It must be printed and published in the United Kingdom, and in numbers at intervals of not more than seven days.

“c. The full title and date of publication must be printed at the top of the first page, and the whole or part of the title and the date at the top of every subsequent page. This regulation applies also to tables of contents and indexes.

“d. A supplement must consist wholly or in great part of matter like that of a newspaper, or of advertisements printed on paper unstitched, or wholly or in part of engravings, prints, or lithographs illustrative of articles in the paper. It must in every case be published with the paper, and have its title and date printed at the top of every page, or, if it consists of engravings, prints, or lithographs at the top of every sheet or side.

“The title of every newspaper should be exposed to view.”

## 7.—PACKET RATES.

We recommend that in lieu of charging on packets for Europe, 1d. for the first ounce, 2d. for two ounces, and 2d. for every additional two ounces or portion thereof, or, in the case of some of the colonies, 4d. for every additional four ounces, the rates should be 1d. per ounce, or fraction thereof, and that the same principle be adopted in case of packets for those places for which the postage is the same as to Europe.

## 8.—INTERCOLONIAL

8.—INTERCOLONIAL PARCEL POST.

The following colonies exchange parcels:—Victoria, South Australia, New Zealand, Tasmania, and Western Australia. We think the time has arrived for an exchange throughout all the colonies, as recommended at the conference of Ministers held in Sydney in January, 1888, and we suggest for consideration that the intercolonial rate of postage should be 3d. for the first pound, as at present charged for packets under the packet post, and 6d. for every additional pound or fraction thereof; and that after the dispatching colony has paid the transit rates, to be hereafter arranged, the postage should be equally divided between the colony of dispatch and that of destination.

9.—MONEY ORDERS.

We recommend that the limit of the amount of money orders be increased from £10 to £20, the latter being the limit in Victoria, the United States, and some other places.

10.—POSTAL NOTES.

Postal notes are now exchanged between Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania; and we would recommend that the post offices of those colonies which have not yet adopted the postal-note system be invited to do so as early as possible, in accordance with the resolution of the Sydney Ministerial Conference of 1888.

11.—UNCLAIMED LETTERS.

We are of opinion that unclaimed letters indorsed by the senders to be returned within a specified time, such specified time to be regulated by each colony, should be so returned without being opened, and that on all letters so returned an additional charge equal to that payable to the place or country of destination should be levied. We further suggest for the consideration of Ministers, in connection with any amendment of the existing postal laws, the question of imposing an inland postage rate on all letters returned to the senders through the dead letter office.

12.—RE-DIRECTION.

We also venture to suggest that the London rules as regards re-direction be observed generally, namely, when re-addressed and again forwarded by post, letters to be charged the usual rate of postage to new destination; but when merely re-addressed from one part of a city or town to another part, no charge be made. This is the practice adopted in New South Wales and Queensland.

13.—COMPULSORY REGISTRATION.

It appears that in some colonies letters containing money or valuable enclosures can pass through the post without registration, whilst in others registration is compulsory. In view of the temptation to post office employes and the suspicion which attaches not only to them but to all persons through whose hands any missing value letter would in ordinary course have passed, we are strongly of opinion that the system of compulsory registration should be adopted by all the colonies, and that the regulations should provide that, should any letter containing money or valuable enclosures not be registered by the sender, such letter should be officially registered, a double registration fee being charged on delivery.

14.—LETTER CARDS.

The extension, intercolonially, of the system now existing in Victoria of letter cards, which are sold at the rate of 1s. 3d. per dozen, has been carefully considered. We think that those cards might be introduced with advantage, intercolonially, but are of opinion that the charge should be 2d. each.

15.—INDIAN TELEGRAPH TRANSIT RATES.

Mr. Smibert put in a letter, copy of which is appended [Appendix E], from the Indian Government explaining their reasons for maintaining their present high transit tariff, and urging that the Australian colonies should endeavor to induce the Eastern Extension Company to reduce their rates, especially over the section between Madras and Singapore. The same letter states that the Indian Government would not object to make some reduction in their transit charges provided that such reduction should be in proportion to a general re-arrangement of tariffs, calculated to directly benefit the senders of messages, and suggesting that one of the Australian delegates to the Paris International Telegraph Conference should visit India *en route* and confer with the General Director of Telegraphs in that country on this and other matters of common interest.

It will serve to make this matter of tariffs clear if we explain that the present rates between England and Australia are apportioned as follows:—

Message.	South Australia.	Dutch Government.	Eastern Extension Company	Indian Government.	Eastern Company.	Total.
	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
Ordinary .....	1 2	0 1½	4 6	0 7½	2 11	9 4
Government .....	1 2	0 1½	2 3	0 7½	2 11	7 1
Press .....	0 4	0 0½	1 2	0 2½	0 11	2 8

The charges of the Indian Telegraph Department on local messages between Bombay and Madras are, we understand, 2½d. per word, the distance being only 690 miles.

As showing the rapid growth of the Australian international traffic, Mr. Todd put in the following table giving the total number of words in the years 1875, 1880, 1885, 1889:—

	Forwarded.	Received.	Total.
1875.....	117,260	117,900	235,160
1880.....	161,722	191,626	353,348
1885.....	264,969	272,386	537,355
1889.....	358,406	435,511	793,917

Whilst



Whilst the receipts of the Indian department derived from all international messages, including the Straits Settlements, China, Java, and Australia, &c., were—

In 1884 .....	1,333,081	Rupees
1885 .....	1,329,746	"
1886 .....	1,398,442	"
1887 .....	1,391,815	"
1888 .....	1,545,434	"
1889 .....	1,688,812	"
Total six years .....	8,687,330	"

Looking at the rapid growth of Australian traffic alone, it is obvious that rates which might have been quite fair and equitable in 1875, are exorbitant now and cannot be defended. It is no excuse to say that any reduction made by India would form but a small proportion of the total through cost. India can very well afford to reduce her charges to the same as her local rate, namely, 2½d. per word; this would give a substantial relief to the public using the telegraph, and as it may be reasonably assumed that it would be followed by some further reduction by the Eastern Extension Company, a large increase of business would inevitably ensue.

The Indian Government refer to the high rates obtaining on the Adelaide and Port Darwin line; but in reply to this we feel bound to point out that this line was built specially for international traffic, and that it passes for the most part through, practically speaking, an uninhabited country, and has consequently a very small local traffic. It is, moreover, nearly three times the length of the Indian line between Bombay and Madras, which has the advantage of a large local traffic. In other words, South Australia has had to erect a special line, at a cost of £500,000, whilst India has only had to put up an additional wire on a line already existing.

In connection with this matter it is worth considering whether it would not pay the Eastern and Eastern Extension companies to lay cables from Aden to Penang, *via* Colombo, and thus save the large amount now paid annually to the Indian Government, and enable the cable companies to make a substantial reduction in the through rates.

In the event of federation of the Australian colonies, the rates on the Port Darwin line will no doubt be largely reduced, as the policy of all the colonies has been to cheapen the cost of telegraphing to the lowest possible limit.

We submit these views for the consideration of our respective Ministers, and should they be concurred in we suggest that the Victorian Postal Department should write to India in the foregoing terms.

#### 16.—URGENT MESSAGES.

The system of urgent messages was very carefully considered. At the conference held at Sydney in 1888 all the colonies, except New South Wales and South Australia, agreed to adopt the system, and it has been introduced within and between Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, and Western Australia, and accepted by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, so far as the New Zealand and Bass's Straits cables are concerned; but New South Wales and South Australia still decline to fall in with the arrangement.

We can only report that we have been unable to arrive at any unanimous agreement on the subject.

#### 17.—TELEGRAPH RATES.

In the event of any modification in the existing telegraph rates, we strongly recommend that the almost universal practice of counting names and addresses and including them in the charge should be adopted; but the acceptance and registration of code addresses should be strictly prohibited except for international cablegrams.

#### 18.—McGAURAN'S PATENT.

The adoption of Mr. McGauran's invention for improving quadruplex working, by which means the speed of transmission is greatly increased, was discussed, and its recommendation to the several Governments agreed upon. Mr. Kingsbury was requested to submit a minimum price to be paid by each colony using the apparatus.

#### 19.—WEATHER REPORTS.

Mr. Cracknell called attention to the time the lines are occupied in collecting and transmitting weather reports from the different telegraph offices. There are two classes of reports:—

1. Reports from nearly every telegraph office in the colony, which include direction of wind, rainfall, state of weather, and height of rivers, which are posted outside the head office and some other places.
2. Detailed meteorological reports from the observatory in connection with the system of intercolonial exchanges between the Government astronomers in the different colonies, who issue a daily bulletin, weather map, and forecast.

With regard to the first class, the practice in New South Wales has been to collect and post out reports at 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., and the department is asked to post a third series collected at 7.30 p.m. In South Australia and Victoria, and we believe generally in the other colonies, there is only one issue, collected at 9 a.m., which we think is quite sufficient for all practical purposes, and we accordingly recommend that this class of reports should be restricted to 9 a.m.

As regards the second class, as these possess a greater scientific value, and are necessary for the publication of weather maps and forecasting, we have no desire to limit them, but, with a view to avoid unnecessary delay to ordinary business, we urge that the Government astronomers should restrict the number of observing stations as far as possible to such principal points as are absolutely necessary.

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary Postal Department, New South Wales.

E. C. CRACKNELL, Superintendent of Telegraphs New South Wales.

JAS. SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General, Victoria.

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs, South Australia.

JOHN McDONNELL, Under Secretary Post and Telegraph Department, Queensland.

NOTE.—Mr. Cracknell signs as regards Telegraph questions.

A.

## A.

EXTRACT FROM THE REPORT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE HELD AT  
MELBOURNE, IN JANUARY, 1889.*Appendix A.*

The undernamed permanent heads of postal administrations met by arrangement in Melbourne, on Saturday, January 26th, 1889, for the purpose of considering various matters in connection with the newly-established Federal Mail Service, and also certain proposals made by the German post office, together with some departmental questions in which difficulties had arisen:—

*South Australia*—Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., Postmaster-General.

*New South Wales*—S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary to the Post Office Department.

*Victoria*—James Smibert, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General.

After full discussion, extending over several days, the following report was adopted:—

## I.—GERMAN PROPOSALS.

*Convention Proposed.*

The letter from Berlin containing these proposals is appended, together with a summary of its contents (the Sydney translation of the Berlin letter being accepted), and in reference to these proposals, we suggest that the German office be invited to join in a convention, to be framed on a somewhat similar basis to that recently executed between the British post office, acting on behalf of the Australian colonies, and Italy, which provides, amongst other things, for the assimilation of postage rates levied in each country. In the proposed agreement with Germany the rates should be those specified in the Italian convention, with the exception of commercial papers and correspondence by the long sea route (hereinafter referred to).

*Post Cards.*

In addition, however, to the provisions of such convention, we recommend that the convention now proposed shall provide for an exchange of post cards at the following rates, namely:—

3d. (or 25 pfennigs) *vid* Italy;

2d. (or 17 pfennigs) by German packet—by steamer—all the way between Bremen (or other German port) and Adelaide.

We are of opinion that no cards should be used in either direction except those issued by the respective administrations.

Any other cards to be considered as letters, and treated as such.

*Direct Mails.*

We see no objection to the exchange of direct mails between Germany and the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, by either British, German, or French steamers, on the understanding that such direct mails are only made up in Berlin for transmission *vid* Brindisi, or in Bremen (or any other German port) for transmission by German steamer, all the way to Adelaide; and in the other direction, only the offices of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide to dispatch direct mails to Berlin or Bremen (or any other port which the German office may determine), in the case of all sea letters.

*Rates of Postage by all Sea Route.*

On letters conveyed all the way by sea between Bremen (or other port in Germany) and Adelaide, we see no objection to the rate of 4d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$ -oz.; the rates by other routes to be as at present.

*Commercial Papers.*

The colonies make no distinction between commercial papers and other printed matter (exclusive of newspapers), packets, and samples, all of which are forwarded from the colonies at a minimum rate of 1d. for the first oz., 2d. for 2ozs., and an additional 2d. for every additional 2ozs. or portion of 2ozs., and we would advise these rates to be retained.

*Particulars of Mails.*

The German office should send to Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney, by each mail, particulars of the net weight of mail matter dispatched, on which the German office will have to account to the Australian offices as follows, to cover the cost of Australian railway transit,\* namely:—

To South Australia, 4d. per lb. on letters, and 4s. per cwt. on other matter, for the carriage of mails through her territory for Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand, Fiji, &c.

To Victoria, at same rates on mail matter for Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, Fiji, &c.

To New South Wales, at same rates on mails for Queensland, Fiji, &c., these rates to be paid to the Adelaide office, who will distribute the amounts due to Melbourne and Sydney. We suggest, in the event of our recommendations being adopted by our respective Ministers, that a copy of the letter to the German post office be forwarded to the other colonies, who may think fit to address the German office in similar terms; as it is, we think, very desirable that uniform action in regard to international and intercolonial mail exchanges and postage rates should be adopted.

*Correspondence for Tasmania, New Zealand, &c.*

There is no objection to correspondence for Tasmania (in the case of Victoria), and New Zealand, Fiji, Marshall Islands, &c. (in the case of New South Wales), being included in the Melbourne and Sydney mails respectively; provided, of course, that the Australian transit rates be duly accounted for to the colonies concerned, in addition to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. (halfpenny) per letter to Tasmania to cover cost of conveyance from Melbourne to Tasmania, and possibly a sea rate would have to be paid to New Zealand, Fiji, &c., if claimed by those offices.

*German*

\* These are subject to our recommendations under head No. 2 being approved.

*German Proposals.*

Suggesting the exchange of post cards between Australia and Germany from 1st January, 1889, and exchange of commercial papers from above date at reduced rate of postage. The Imperial office further intends to let the matter of direct mails between the two countries commence from the first of next year by English and French steamers.

As to treatment of correspondence for Marshall Islands, New Zealand, and Fiji, giving reduced rates to be levied on correspondence between Germany and Australian colonies from 1st January, 1889, *re same* :—

[TRANSLATION.]

Berlin, 22nd October, 1888.

1. The Imperial post office has been informed by the General Post Office, London, that an understanding has now been arrived at with the Australian colonies regarding the *exchange of post cards* with these colonies, and that as the date of commencement of the exchange the 1st January, 1889, is in contemplation.

2. The introduction of post cards in German-Australian intercourse has, as is known to the post office department, already been mooted from here. Against the proposals submitted from here in this respect to the several colonial postal administrations by letter of the 24th July, 1887, I. 24960, objections of any consequence have in no instance been raised; only by a few administrations it was stipulated that post cards would have to be first introduced in the postal relations between these administrations and the United Kingdom.

3. This latter matter having now been arranged, the Imperial post office believes it may take for granted that no further cause of impediment exists to allowing the exchange of post cards between Australia and Germany to start also into life.

4. The Imperial post office will therefore instruct the German post offices to admit from the above date post cards in correspondence with Australia.

5. The Imperial post office has the honor to request the post office department to notify its approval of this measure, and to issue likewise the necessary instructions with regard to the admission of post cards in the direction to Germany. The Imperial post office respectfully awaits information as to the rates proposed to be levied over there.

6. For post cards from Germany for Australia, the postage, payable by sender, will be a uniform one of 20 pfennig each. For use as post cards, the forms issued for the inland post, as well as those introduced for the Union Service, will be admitted on this side.

7. In the case of forms already provided with an embossed stamp of 5 or 10 pfennigs, the postage deficient must be prepaid by sender by affixing adhesive stamps.

8. Admissible here are moreover also post cards without embossed stamps, upon which, of course, the entire postage must be prepaid by affixing adhesive postage stamps of the required value.

9. The opportunity now offering, it appears desirable to introduce at the same time several *further facilities* in the postal service between Germany and Australia. The admission of commercial papers may be mentioned first. Commercial papers (*papiers de commerce ou d'affaires*) have, so the Imperial post office learns, been admitted in the Italian-Australian interchange at reduced rate, in accordance with the new postal convention concluded between Italy and the Australian colonies.

10. It seems, therefore, that there can be no objection to admit articles of correspondence of this description which could henceforth be forwarded *via* Italy in the direct German-Australian exchange. The Imperial post office will therefore, as regards Germany, issue the necessary directions for the introduction of commercial or business papers, from the 1st January, 1889, at the reduced rate; as judging by the position of affairs, and trusting to the willingness to meet the wishes of the Imperial post office always exhibited by the post office department, it may be assumed that the measure will not meet with any objections on the other side. The Imperial office would, at the same time, request that the necessary instructions be likewise issued for the New South Wales district, *i.e.*, for the opposite direction of the traffic, and that the arrangements made be kindly notified to this office.

11. The rate for commercial papers from Germany to Australia will be 10 pfennigs per each 50 grammes, with a minimum charge of 40 pfennig.

12. The Imperial office further intends to let the exchange of direct mails between Germany and Australia by English and French mail steamers, mentioned in the letter from this office No. I. 22792 of the 11th July, also start into existence with the beginning of next year. Although replies to the proposal made from here have not as yet been received from all the administrations interested, it can nevertheless be safely assumed that no serious objections exist, inasmuch as the making-up of direct mails, which is also favored by the Italian administrations, offers in comparison with dispatch *à découvert* the advantage of securing to a far greater extent a regular and punctual transmission of correspondence.

13. The Imperial office will therefore allow the dispatch of mails for the Sydney Office by all steamship lines offering, to commence from the 1st January, 1889.

14. A detailed communication as to what post offices have to make up mails for dispatch by the various steamer lines, and to receive from your side, the Imperial post office will forward later on. As regards the postage arising from the exchange of post cards and commercial papers, as well as from the exchange of correspondence by non-German steamers, the same arrangements would apply which were agreed upon at the time of negotiation through the general post office, London, with the Australian colonial postal administrations for the exchange in the first instance of mails by German steamers. In accordance therewith each postal administration retains undivided, as the post office department is aware, the postage collected by same, but has, however, to defray out of this the transit charges on correspondence originating in its own country.

15. Correspondence from here for the Marshall Islands, New Zealand, and Fiji Islands will, for the present, and till a direct exchange with the countries mentioned is established, be enclosed in the mails for Sydney office. As only a small amount of correspondence for these places is at present in question, and therefore, no appreciable increase of work is likely to be caused thereby to the Sydney office, the Imperial post office assumes that no objections to this arrangement exist over there. The question of remuneration for transit may stand over for special arrangement. The Imperial post office will have the honour to shortly submit to the post office department proposals with regard thereto.

16. The

16. The reduction of sea transit charges, agreed upon by the new postal convention between Italy and Australia, further enables the German postal administrations to make a reduction in the rates of postage on letters exchanged with Australia.

17. The rates on postal matter from Germany for Australia will consequently, from the 1st January, 1889, be fixed as follows for the route *via* Italy, without making any distinction as to steamship lines:—

- (1) For prepaid letters, 40 pfennig per each 15 grammes.
- (2) For post cards, 20 pfennig each.
- (3) For printed matter (newspapers as well as other printed matter) up to a weight-limit of 2 kilogrammes, 10 pfennig per each 50 grammes.
- (4) For commercial papers, likewise up to a weight-limit of 2 kilogrammes, 10 pfennig for each 50 grammes, with, however, a minimum charge of 40 pfennig for each parcel sent.
- (5) For samples of merchandise, up to a weight-limit of 250 grammes, 10 pfennig for each 50 grammes, with, however, a minimum charge of 20 pfennig for each parcel sent. For registered articles, a registration fee of 20 pfennig each will be charged in addition to postage. The reduced rates for ship letters to be forwarded *via* Bremen by German steamers to Australian ports of call will also remain in force in future. Unpaid letters from Australia are subject to a charge of 80 pfennig for each 15 grammes. Articles other than letters must at least be partly prepaid. Articles of correspondence of any description are, in case of insufficient pre-payment, to be taxed with double the deficient postage, the tax to be collected from the addressee.

18. In order to facilitate the calculation of the amount chargeable by exchange offices in cases of this kind, it would be advisable to instruct the post offices making up mails to state (mark) upon the insufficiently prepaid correspondence, close alongside the postage stamps affixed, in black figures, the amount of the postage deficient in francs and centimes, and besides to mark the insufficiently prepaid as well as the wholly unpaid correspondence with a T.

19. The Imperial post office has the honour to request the post office department to also adopt this procedure, which has long since been proved efficient in the Universal Postal Union Service for the German-Australian Interchange.

20. The Imperial post office deems it of great value to let the public have the benefit of the advantages offered by the above business facilities without delay, and, on that account, believes it may venture to fix already on the 1st January, 1889, for the realisation of these innovations without previous conclusion of a written exchange of opinions, which could only take place after the beginning of the new year, at the same time counting upon the readiness of the post office department, as well as the other chief postal administrations of Australia, to assist in the matter.

21. Should, however, contrary to expectations, obstacles arise in one direction or another which would make the acceptance of any of the proposals contained herein impossible, so would the Imperial post office be grateful if the post office department would immediately forward a short cablegram on the subject to Berlin.

The Post Office Department, Sydney.

(Signed) SACHSE.

Copy.

[The Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney, to the Secretary to the Post Office, London.]

General Post Office, Sydney, March 6th, 1889.

Sir—On the 22nd October the Berlin post office addressed a circular letter to the post offices of the Australian colonies and New Zealand, a translated copy of which is enclosed, advocating a direct exchange of mails between Germany and those colonies; also an exchange of post cards, commercial papers, &c., and suggested that these proposals should, if possible, take effect from the 1st January last.

This department replied by wire that as it would be necessary to consult with the other colonies, such proposals could not be adopted from the date mentioned, so far as New South Wales is concerned.

Since then these proposals, as well as certain other matters, have been discussed by the Deputy Postmaster-General of Victoria, the Postmaster-General of South Australia, and myself, who met at Melbourne for that purpose, when it was determined to submit to each respective Ministerial head a similar recommendation as regards the proposals under notice.

No doubt the post offices of Victoria and South Australia will each communicate with your department on this subject, and I have now, on the part of the post office of New South Wales, to intimate that the joint recommendation above alluded to, and which has been concurred in by the Ministerial head of this department, is embodied in the reply sent by this office to Germany, a copy of which is enclosed herewith for your information, from which you will gather that there is no objection to a convention being made with Germany, framed on a somewhat similar basis to that executed in May and June last between the British post office, acting on behalf of the Australian colonies and Italy, with certain exceptions and additions, which are duly specified in that communication.

I am to add that a copy of this correspondence will be sent to the colonies who were not represented at the discussion referred to.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary.

Enclosure.]

[The Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney, to the Director-General of Posts, Berlin.]

General Post Offices, Sydney, March 6th, 1889.

Sir—With reference to my cablegram of the 14th December last, stating that as it would be necessary to consult the other colonies on the several proposals set forth in your letter of the 22nd October, this Department could not adopt the same from the 1st January, 1889, as requested, I have the honor to inform you that the postal departments of this colony, Victoria, and South Australia have conferred, and the following decision was arrived at in connection with those proposals, namely:—

That the German post office should be invited to join in a convention to be framed on a somewhat similar basis to that recently executed between the British post office (acting on behalf of the Australian colonies)

colonies) and Italy, which provides, amongst other things, for the assimilation of postage rates levied in each country. In the proposed agreement with Germany, the rates should be those specified in the Italian convention, with the exception of commercial papers and correspondence by the long sea route, hereinafter referred to.

*Post Cards.*—In addition, however, to the provisions of the agreement with Italy, the convention now proposed should provide for an exchange of post cards at the following rates:—3d., or 25 pfennigs, *viâ* Italy; 2d., or 17 pfennigs, by German packet all the way between Bremen, or other German port, and Adelaide.

Cards should not be used in either direction except those issued by the respective administrations. Any other cards to be considered as letters, and treated as such.

*Direct Mails.*—There is no objection to the exchange of direct mails between Germany and the colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, and South Australia, by either British, German, or French steamers, provided that such direct mails are only made up in Berlin, for transmission *viâ* Brindisi, or in Bremen, or other German port, for transmission by German steamer all the way to Adelaide; and, in the other direction, only the offices of Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide to dispatch direct mails to Berlin or Bremen, or any other port which the German office may determine, in the case of all sea letters.

*Rates of Postage by All-Sea Route.*—On letters conveyed all the way by sea between Bremen, or other port in Germany, and Adelaide, there is no objection to the rate of 4d. per  $\frac{1}{2}$  oz.—the rates by other routes to be as at present.

*Commercial Papers.*—The colonies make no distinction between commercial papers and other printed matter—exclusive of newspapers—packets, and samples, all of which are forwarded from the colonies at a minimum rate of 1d. for the first ounce, 2d. for 2ozs., and an additional 2d. for every additional 2ozs. or portion of 2ozs., which rates should be retained.

*Particulars of Mails.*—The German office should send to Adelaide, Melbourne, and Sydney by each mail particulars of the net weight of mail matter dispatched, on which the German office will have to account to the Australian offices as follows, to cover the cost of Australian railway transit:—

To South Australia—4d. per lb. on letters and 4s. per cwt. on other matter, for the carriage of mails through her territory for Victoria, Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, New Zealand, Fiji, &c.

To Victoria—At the same rates on mails for Tasmania, New South Wales, Queensland, Fiji, &c.

To New South Wales—At the same rates on mails for Fiji, Queensland, &c.

These rates to be paid to the Adelaide office, who will distribute the amount due to Melbourne and Sydney.

*Correspondence for Tasmania, New Zealand, &c.*—There is no objection to correspondence for Tasmania in the case of Victoria, and New Zealand, Fiji, Marshall Islands, &c., in the case of New South Wales, being included in the Melbourne and Sydney mails respectively; provided, of course, that the Australian transit rates be duly accounted for to the colonies concerned, in addition to  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. per letter to Tasmania to cover cost of conveyance from Melbourne to Tasmania, and possibly a sea rate would have to be paid to New Zealand, Fiji, &c., if claimed by those offices.

A copy of this letter has been sent to the London post office, as well as to the post offices of the colonies who were not represented at the meeting herein referred to, and who may perhaps think fit to address your administration in similar terms.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary.

Copy.]

[The Secretary to the Post Office, London, to the Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney.]

General Post Office, London, July 31st, 1889.

Sir—In order to comply with the request implied in your letter of the 6th March last, I have prepared and forwarded to the post office in Berlin, a draft of the proposed agreement, for regulating the postal relations between Germany and the Australasian colonies. The draft has been based upon the agreement of the same description with Italy, embodying, however, the points of divergence, which I understand the colonies desire to introduce.

The German post office has now replied that it could accept the draft in the main, but has certain counter proposals to make.

The first of these is an addition to the second paragraph of article 2, which concludes with the words, "whenever the service employed is not an extraordinary one." To these words the German post office wishes to add, "in the sense of the Postal Union Convention." There may not be any serious objection to this addition; but, it is, perhaps, a question whether it would be good policy on the part of the colonies to agree to it, inasmuch as services might hereafter be established by them which they might consider extraordinary services, but which might not properly be so regarded under the terms of the Postal Union Convention.

The specification of Berlin and Bremen, as the offices of exchange in Germany is said to be inconvenient, as the work would be better performed by the travelling post offices, which collect mails on their way from various points. The German post office would prefer, therefore, that no distinct stipulation of this kind should be made in the agreement; and, seeing that the amendment is in a matter of detail, I have little doubt that it will be found unobjectionable.

The next alteration of importance suggested by the Director-General of Posts in Berlin relates to post-cards. It appears that the transmission of such cards is not in Germany restricted to those issued by the German post-office, and that cards of private manufacture are allowed to pass through the post. The introduction in Germany of different rules on the same point would naturally lead to confusion and irregularity, and seeing that the proposed agreement is mainly founded on the Postal Union Convention, the Director-General urges that there shall be no deviation therefrom so far as regards post cards. Perhaps this point would be met by defining the cards as "those issued or recognised by the respective administrations," and I shall be glad to learn whether the colonies will agree to such a proposal.

In the table of postage rates annexed to the draft agreement this department has entered the letter rate chargeable in Australia for the route *viâ* Italy as 6d., and the rate chargeable in Germany as 50 pfennig—the nearest equivalent. The rate for letters to be conveyed by German packets all the way by sea being

being fixed at 4d. and 35 pfennig in Australia and Germany respectively. To this, however, the German post offices cannot consent, as somewhat lower rates are already in force in Germany, and it would be impossible to return to the higher rates of postage without causing the greatest indignation amongst the German public. To meet this point the Berlin office suggests a paragraph providing that the rates shall not exceed those given in Table A, and this appears to be a reasonable solution of the difficulty.

In regard to the weight and size of sample packets, the German post-office lays stress upon the desirability of adhering to the regulations of the Postal Union, under which the limits of size and weight are fixed as follows :—

Weight.....	250 grammes.
Length.....	20 centimetres.
Breadth.....	10 “
Depth.....	5 “

Lastly, the German Director-General of Posts points out that, in consequence of the separation by so great a distance of the countries concerned, some unnecessary delay might take place by fixing in the agreement a date for commencing the new measure, and he thinks it would be more satisfactory, after all the other points have been settled, to arrange the date of commencement by telegraph. I am answering that there will probably be no difficulty on this point.

In leaving these counter-suggestions in the hands of the colonial post offices, I beg that either you or one of the two other colonial Postmasters-General who have taken this matter in hand, will endeavour to obtain a unanimous decision from all the Australasian colonies, including New Zealand, Tasmania, and Fiji.

I should also be glad of more precise information as to the transit rates payable to colonies other than South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales; they are not very definitely stated in the joint report of the three Postmasters-General, dated the 22nd of October last.

Perhaps I ought to remind you of what took place at the meeting held last January at Melbourne between the heads of the three Australian post offices concerned in the present question. I refer to the comparison set up between the Union land transit rates and the transit rates charged in the colonies; and I may say at once that there is no prospect of obtaining from France and Italy a reduction of the rates at present charged, there being no precedent for the acceptance of lower rates than those prescribed throughout the Union.

I do not observe that this point is urged in connection with the proposed agreement with Germany; and I may say at once that it is most unlikely that that country would, in any circumstances, accept lower transit rates than those fixed by the Postal Union convention; but it seems desirable to mention the subject now in order to prevent any question of this kind arising after the conclusion of an agreement with Germany.

I may add that I have written in similar terms to the Postmaster-General of South Australia, who has also addressed this department on the subject.

I am, &c.,

S. A. BLACKWOOD.

Copy.]

[The Postmaster-General, Adelaide, to the Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney.]

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office, Adelaide, December 12th, 1889.

Sir—Referring to London letter of July 31st, *re* German proposals, I am sorry there should have been so much delay on my part in dealing with the matter, owing to heavy pressure of official business.

Taking the several questions *seriatim* :—Article 2, second paragraph—*Convention with Italy*.—Germany suggests that the following words should be inserted after “whenever the service employed is not an extra-ordinary one,” viz., “in the sense of the Postal Union.” As London advises that we should object to this addition, we had, I think, better do so, as the Postal Union might alter the signification of the term “extraordinary service,” otherwise I should see no objection to their inclusion in treaty.

I think we might leave it open to Germany to select its own offices of exchange, Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide being the offices here.

*Post Cards*.—In all the colonies these are restricted to official cards, or cards embossed by the department. There would probably be no great objection to accept private cards bearing ordinary stamps if uniformity of size were preserved. In the case of cards from Germany, I would advise that we accept those issued or recognised by the German post office.

The rate of postage on letters is the most serious question to deal with.

Germany insists on maintaining the present low rates of 5d. per English steamer *via* Italy and 2½d. per German packet direct.

I see very grave objections to lower rates obtaining between the colonies and Germany than between the United Kingdom and the colonies; but as the Berlin post office will not give way, we shall, I suppose, have to adopt the compromise suggested by London, *i.e.*, the rates to be as per table A, and make our own rates 6d. *via* Italy and 4d. all sea route either by British or German contract steamers. I am the more willing to do this because I fully recognise that we shall very shortly have to still further reduce our rates of postage to England.

With regard to packet post, we should adhere to a uniform limit of 1lb., except in the case of samples of seeds, which we now restrict to 8ozs., and books, the limit on which might be 3lbs. If the Berlin authorities will agree to this, we might leave them to fix their limits as they suggest.

The date on which the convention comes into force can be fixed by telegraph, as suggested.

I shall be glad to know whether you agree with me, and whether we shall seek the concurrence of the other colonies before replying to London, or wait till we hear that Germany agrees.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES TODD, Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

Copy.

Copy.

[The Deputy Postmaster-General, Melbourne, to the Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney.]

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office, Melbourne, December 12th, 1889.

Sir—I have the honor to acknowledge, with thanks, receipt of your memorandum of the 6th instant forwarding copy of the letter from London of July 31st, addressed to you by Sir Arthur Blackwood, and, by direction, I now submit the views of the Honorable the Postmaster-General on the points proposed by Germany to be introduced into the convention to be entered into by that country and the Australian colonies.

1st. The proposed addition to the second paragraph of Article 2 of the words “in the sense of the “Postal Union Convention.” This addition is not approved of, and it is considered the article should remain unaltered, as in the Italian convention.

2nd. The specification of Berlin and Bremen as the offices of exchange in Germany. This department can only undertake to make up mails for the port of landing and for Berlin. It is thought the port of landing should be specified, though it might be changed as often as desired.

3rd. Post cards. This department agrees with Sir Arthur Blackwood's suggestion to add the words “or recognised” by the respective administrations to the definition of the post cards to be accepted.

4th. The postage rates as given will be agreed to by this colony, but there will be no objection to the German post office charging lower rates, and to a paragraph being added, as suggested, providing that the rates shall not exceed those charged in Table A. It is considered, however, as a measure of protection, the colonies having to deliver the correspondence, that a minimum rate should be named by Germany.

5th. The limitation of the weight and size of sample packets as fixed by the regulations of the Postal Union is agreed to.

6th. There will be no objection to the date for commencing the new measure being arranged by telegraph.

In conclusion, I am to state that it is understood that you will act as intermediary in this matter between London and this colony, and that you will be so good as to supply the information required *re* Australian transit rates, &c., and that it is quite accepted that the European transit rates will not be lower than those fixed by the Postal Union Convention.

I have, &c.,

JAMES SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General.

Copy.

[The Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney, to the Deputy Postmaster-General, Melbourne.]

General Post Office, Sydney, December 23rd, 1889.

Sir—In reference to your letter of the 12th instant, numbered F <sup>R.B.</sup><sub>89-6,142</sub>, *re* the German Convention, I have to state that if the following correctly embodies your views and those of South Australia, I propose—as it seems to be desired that this office should act as intermediary in the matter—to forward copies of the whole correspondence, commencing with the Proceedings of the Conference of January, 1888, to each post office asking its concurrence, and when this has been obtained to notify the same to the London office.

1. Sir A. Blackwood's suggestion that we object to the proposed addition to the second paragraph of Article 2 of the words “in the sense of the Postal Union Convention” is agreed to.

2. So far as New South Wales and South Australia are concerned, we agree to exchange with whatever office Berlin wishes. Victoria prefers to exchange with the port of landing and with Berlin, and thinks the port of landing should be specified, though it might be changed as often as desired.

3. We think that to the post card definition should be added the words “or recognised by the “respective Administrations.”

4. New South Wales and Victoria consider that we cannot fairly take exception to Germany charging whatever rates she pleases to Australia, provided they do not exceed those given in Table A. South Australia, however, thinks that the rates from Germany to the colonies should not be less than those from England; but as Germany will not give way, we should agree to their charging those mentioned in Table A. It is, however, suggested as a measure of protection—the colonies having to deliver the correspondence—that a minimum rate should be named by Germany.

5. The limitation of the weight and size of sample packets, as fixed by the regulations of the Postal Union, is agreed to.

6. There will be no objection to the date for commencing the new measure being fixed by telegraph.

7. The following are the particulars of the Australian transit rates:—

Sea .....	{ 25 francs per kilogramme of letters
	{ 1 franc “ “ other articles
Land .....	{ 4 pence per lb. of letters
	{ 4 shillings per cwt. of other articles

8. It is accepted that the European transit rates will not be lower than those fixed by the Postal Union Convention.

I have, &c.,

S. H. LAMBTON, Secretary.

The Postmaster-General, Adelaide, was addressed in identical terms.

Copy.

[The Deputy Postmaster-General, Melbourne, to the Secretary to the Post Office, Sydney.]

Post and Telegraph Department, General Post Office, Melbourne, January 8th, 1890.

Sir—Adverting to your letter of the 23rd ultimo, relative to the proposed postal convention with Germany, I have the honor to state that the views of this colony on the question, as given in my letter of the 12th idem., are correctly set forth by you.

As regards paragraph No. 2, it is considered by this department that the restriction of the offices of exchange in Germany to Berlin and the port of arrival, which should be specified, but might be altered as desired, would be preferable to allowing Germany to name, perhaps, a number of centres for which separate mails would have to be made up. Such a practice is not adopted with the United Kingdom, and should not, it is thought, be initiated with Germany, more especially as the mails, to judge by the present amount of correspondence, would probably be of insignificant dimensions.

I have, &c.,

JAMES SMIBERT, Deputy Postmaster-General.

B.



## B.

## DRAFT.

POSTAL CONVENTION BETWEEN UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE GOVERNMENT OF  
NEW SOUTH WALES.*Article 1.*

There shall be an exchange of correspondence between the United States of America and the colony of New South Wales, by means of the direct line of contract mail packets plying between San Francisco and Sydney, as well as by such other means of direct mail steamship transportation between the United States and New South Wales, as shall hereafter be established, with the approval of the respective post departments of the two countries, comprising letters, newspapers, printed matter of every kind, patterns and samples of merchandise, and such other postal articles as may be mutually agreed to, originating in either country, and addressed to and deliverable in the other country, as well as correspondence in closed mails originating in New South Wales and destined for foreign countries by way of the United States, and closed mails originating in the United States and destined for other Australasian colonies and foreign countries by way of the colony of New South Wales.

*Article 2.*

The post office of San Francisco shall be in the United States office of exchange, and Sydney the office of exchange of the colony of New South Wales, for all mails transmitted under this arrangement.

*Article 3.*

The dispatching country or colony shall pay the cost of sea and land conveyance to destination. The country or colony providing for the sea conveyance to charge the dispatching country or colony such sea rates as will cover the cost of carriage.

The land transit rates to be paid by the United States to each forwarding colony shall be as follows, namely:—On letters, 4d. per lb., and on other matter, 4s. per cwt., to New South Wales on mails for Victoria, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Western Australia. In addition, the same rates to be paid to Victoria on mails for Tasmania, South Australia, and Western Australia. In addition the same rates to be paid to South Australia on mails for Western Australia.

In the opposite direction the Australian colonies to pay to the United States for the cost of transit on correspondence for British Columbia, British North American Provinces, West Indies, Mexico, Central and South America, the following rates, namely—\*

*Article 4.*

The single rate of international letter postage shall be twelve cents in the United States and sixpence in New South Wales on each letter weighing half an ounce or less, and an additional rate of twelve cents (sixpence) for each single weight of half an ounce or fraction thereof, which shall in all cases be prepaid, at least one single rate, by means of postage stamps, at the office of mailing in either country. Letters unpaid or prepaid less than one full rate of postage shall not be forwarded, but insufficiently paid letters on which a single rate or more has been prepaid shall be forwarded, charged with the deficient postage and a fine of a single rate, to be collected and retained by the post department of the country of destination.

The United States post office shall levy and collect to its own use, on newspapers addressed to New South Wales, a postage charge of two cents, and on all other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise addressed to New South Wales, a postage charge of four cents per each weight of 4ozs. or a fraction of 4ozs.

The post office of New South Wales shall levy and collect to its own use, on newspapers and other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise addressed to the United States, the regular rates of domestic postage chargeable thereon by the laws and regulations of the colony of New South Wales.

Letters, newspapers, and other articles of printed matter, patterns, and samples of merchandise, fully prepaid, which may be received in either country from the other, shall be delivered free of all charges whatever.

Newspapers and all other kinds of printed matter, and patterns and samples of merchandise, are to be subject to the laws and regulations of each country respectively, in regard to their liability to be rated with letter postage when containing written matter, or for any other cause specified in said laws and regulations, as well as in regard to their liability to Customs duty under the revenue laws.

*Article 5.*

The New South Wales post office shall render an account to the United States post office, upon letter-bills to accompany each mail, of the weight of the letters, and also of the printed and other matter contained in such closed mails forwarded to the United States for transmission to either of the countries and colonies mentioned in Article 3. And the United States post office shall render a similar account to the New South Wales post office as regards mails forwarded to New South Wales for transmission to the other Australasian colonies and to foreign countries.

The accounts arising between the two offices on correspondence exchanged shall be stated, adjusted, and settled yearly, and the office by which an amount shall then be due shall promptly pay the same to the other office in such manner as may be required.

*Article 6.*

Prepaid letters from foreign countries addressed to places within the colony of New South Wales, received in and forwarded from the United States to New South Wales, shall be delivered in the said colony free of all charge whatsoever.

*Article*

\* The rates to be filled in by the United States. It is to be hoped that they will be considerably less than those now charged, which are considered excessive, and tend to prohibit correspondence.



*Article 7.*

The two post departments may, by mutual agreement, provide for the transmission of registered articles in the mails exchanged between the two countries.

The register fee for each article shall be ten cents in the United States and fourpence in New South Wales.

*Article 8.*

The two post departments shall settle by agreement between them all measures of detail and arrangement required to carry this convention into execution, and may modify the same in like manner from time to time, as the exigencies of the service may require.

*Article 9.*

Insufficiently prepaid correspondence dispatched from one country to the other shall be plainly stamped with the letter T on the right-hand upper corner of the address, in addition to the date stamp of the office at which it was posted. The amount of the deficient postage and fine shall also be inscribed in *black ink*.

*Article 10.*

Dead letters, which cannot be delivered from whatever cause, shall be mutually returned without charge monthly, or as frequently as the regulations of the respective offices will permit.

## C.

## MAILS TO AUSTRALIA.—ITALY.

*Statement showing the Net Weight of Mails Dispatched from Italy, and from the Countries for which Italy acts as intermediary, to Australia and New Zealand.*

Mail of the ..... 189  
Per S.S. ....

Mails for—	Net Weight of—		Remarks.
	Letters.	Other Articles.	
	Grammes.	Grammes.	
Victoria .....			
New South Wales .....			
Queensland .....			
Tasmania .....			
New Zealand .....			
Fiji .....			

## MAILS TO AUSTRALIA.

*Statement showing the Net Weight of Mails Dispatched from ..... to Australia and New Zealand.*

Mail of the ..... 189  
Per S.S. ....

Mails for—	Net Weight of—					Remarks.
	Letters.		Other Articles.			
	lbs.	oz.	cwt.	qrs.	lbs.	
Victoria.....						
New South Wales .....						
Queensland .....						
Tasmania .....						
New Zealand .....						
Fiji .....						

## HOMEWARD MAILS.

*Statement showing the Net Weight of Mails Dispatched from .....*

Mail of the ..... 189  
Per S.S. ....

Mails for—	Net Weight of—					Remarks.
	Letters.		Other Articles.			
	lbs.	oz.	cwt.	qrs.	lbs.	
Western Australia .....						
Colombo .....						
Aden .....						
Suez .....						
Italy .....						
France .....						
United Kingdom .....						

## D.

## UNIFORM POSTAL REGULATIONS.

[Being No 6 of the questions submitted to the conference by the Hon. C. J. Roberts.]

We believe that the public convenience would be met by an assimilation of the regulations governing the transmission of letters, packets, and newspapers, the class of matter which should be sent as packets, and a uniform definition of newspapers and of supplements.

The question, however, is, we find, a large one, and the preparation of a uniform code of regulations would occupy more time than we fear we could command during the sitting of the conference, and, moreover, it is found on many points on which uniformity is thought desirable, an amendment of the existing laws of some of the colonies would be necessary.

Having, however, had the advantage of an interchange of ideas on this important question, it is suggested that the framing of draft regulations should be remitted to the post offices of Melbourne, Sydney, and Adelaide, for consideration of the respective Ministers, these draft regulations being afterwards forwarded for the consideration of the Postmasters-General of the remaining colonies.

## E.

## GOVERNMENT OF INDIA.—PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT—CIVIL WORKS—TELEGRAPH.

No. 223T.]

Simla, August 26th, 1889.

Sir—In your letter (No. 86-4, 517), dated the 16th December, 1886, you addressed this Government on the subject of the charge made for the transit of through Australian telegrams over the Indian telegraph lines, and communicated the opinion of an Intercolonial Postal and Telegraph Conference held in Melbourne that this rate was too high, that it militated against the use of the telegraph, and that the rate should not be in excess of the Indian rate for inland telegrams.

2. In reply to this representation you were informed that the matter would receive the very careful consideration of the Government of India; at the same time it was pointed out that the Indian Government is put to great expense in maintaining alternative routes; and that its transit rate compared not unfavorably with the charge levied on the Adelaide-Port Darwin line.

3. I am now directed to inform you that the reduction of the Indian transit rate charge on international telegrams has recently been again urged by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company in connection with the demands made by the Australian colonies for a reduction in the rates to and from England; but it appears to this Government inexpedient to discuss with this company any change in a portion of the charge without referring in the first instance to the representatives of the colonies, who are endeavoring to make better terms for the whole.

4. As you are aware, at the Berlin Conference when the Australian delegates advocated a reduction of 2.50 francs in the word charge to Australia, and when it was found impossible to carry the reduction, an attempt was made to show that India alone in refusing to reduce her transit charge from 75 centimes to 50 centimes was responsible for the failure of the negotiations. This responsibility was, as you may know, repudiated at the seventh sitting of the Conference in the following words:—

“Le Gouvernement des Indes Britanniques considère que sa taxe de transit moyenne est très modérée.

“Si quelque réduction de cette taxe était possible, elle serait si faible qu’elle n’exercerait aucune influence appréciable sur le taux total du tarif entre l’Europe et l’Australie.

“Le Gouvernement des Indes Britanniques repousse en conséquence toute responsabilité au sujet du maintien des taux élevés pour l’Australie, qui résultent presque entièrement du tarif de la Compagnie Eastern Extension pour le parcours au delà des Indes, un tarif qui est hors du contrôle de la Conférence et échappe même à la discussion par son absence du tableau des tarifs.”

5. In support of this statement of the delegates that the high charge to Australia was attributable to the tariff of the Eastern Extension Company, I would refer you to the Annual Administration Report for the year 1887, of the Post Office and Telegraph Department of your colony, in which, on page 64, the word rate per 100 miles by different routes is given; and in further exemplification of the high tariffs of this company, two tables are attached—one showing the charges on the trans-Indian messages sent to or from England, and the other the charges on messages, trans-Indian messages, originating in India.

6. In the former it will be noticed that the word-charge per 100 nautical miles on a message from England to Port Darwin is:—

From England to India <i>via</i> Suez .....	5.24 centimes.
“ “ <i>via</i> Russia and Germany .....	6.45 “
Or an average of .....	5.84 “
From India to Port Darwin .....	18.22 “

Rather more than the latter rate per word per 100 knots prevails also on the Madras-Singapore section of the cable, which—*vide* Mr. Taylor’s evidence on page 78 of your above-mentioned Post Office and Telegraph Report—earned 19.9 per cent. in the year 1885.

7. I am now desired to bring under your notice that, although this Government has been asked to reduce its transmit charges as the one condition on which a reduction could be made in the cost of telegrams to Australia, it is not to those telegrams alone to which those charges apply. On the contrary, the Australian telegrams form but about one-third of the total trans-Indian telegrams passing over the Indian lines, all of which messages pass over the section of cable which your colony’s report shows to pay such a very high dividend; and it is obvious that, if to benefit Australia alone, a reduction were made in the transit tariff, Australia would get the benefit of but one-third of the loss to India; and unless the charges to other places were reduced in proportion, two-thirds of India’s loss would directly benefit the company alone, and form a by no means inconsiderable set-off on any reduction it might make to Australia.

8. The Government of India would not object to some reduction in its transmit charges, provided that such were in proportion to a general re-arrangement of tariffs calculated to directly benefit the senders of messages; and it will cordially co-operate with the Australian colonies in any endeavors they may make to induce

induce the Eastern Extension Company to be more moderate, especially in its tariffs over the Indian and Singapore section, which, as I observed above, carries the whole of the trans-Indian traffic, and earns 19·9 per cent.

9. I am directed to further suggest that, should such a course be convenient, it would tend to facilitate a settlement of this matter, and secure harmonious working at the ensuing Paris Conference if, when *en route* to that conference, one of the Australian delegates were deputed to visit India, in order to confer with the Director-General of Telegraphs in this country on this and other matters of common interest.

I have, &c.,

R. C. B. PEMBERTON, Col. R.E., Secretary to the Government of India.

To the Hon. the Premier, Colony of Victoria, Melbourne.

[Enclosure to Public Works Department. Letter No. 223T, dated the 26th August, 1889.]

*Table showing the Rates per 100 Knots charged for Trans-Indian Messages to or from England by—*

The Eastern Extension Company .....	A non-adherent to the International Convention
The Eastern Company .....	An adherent to the International Convention
The Indo-European route .....	" " "
India, for land lines in India .....	" " "

	From	To	Knots.	Francs per Word.	Rate per 100 Knots.	
Eastern Extension Company	Rangoon Madras " " " " " "	Penang .....	864	2·50	0·2893	Trans-Indian
		Penang .....	1,455	2·50	0·1718	
		Singapore .....	1,870	3·50	0·1871	
		Port Darwin .....	3,923	7·15	0·1822	
		New Zealand .. { excluding Australian } ..	5,206	8·60	0·1651	
		Tasmania .. { land line } ..	4,103	7·85	0·1913	
		Cochin China .....	2,507	2·50	0·0997	
		Hong Kong .....	3,490	4·25	0·1217	
		Shanghai .....	4,410	4·25	0·0963	
Eastern Company	Bombay	England .....	6,674	3·50	0·0524	Cis-Indian
Indo-European route	Kurrachee	England .....	5,419	3·50	0·0645	
India land line	Bombay "	Madras .....	691	0·75	0·1085	Indian
		Rangoon .....	1,969	0·75	0·0380	
		Mean distance between Bombay-Madras and Bombay-Rangoon .....	1,330	0·75	0·0564	

*Table showing the Rates per 100 Knots charged by the Eastern Extension Company on Messages originating in India.*

From	To	Knots.	Francs per Word.	Rate per 100 Knots.
Rangoon Madras " " " " " "	Penang .....	864	2·50	0·2893
	Penang .....	1,455	2·50	0·1718
	Singapore .....	1,870	3·50	0·1871
	Port Darwin .....	3,923	8·55	0·2179
	New Zealand, } excluding Australian land line { .....	5,206	10·00	0·1920
	Tasmania .. { .....	4,103	9·25	0·2254
	Cochin China .....	2,507	2·50	0·0997
	Hong Kong .....	3,490	6·00	0·1719
	Shanghai .....	4,410	8·00	0·1814

[Note by Messrs. Lambton, Todd, and McDonnell, on Article 6, as to uniform postal rates and regulations.]

"We wish to point out the inequitable system which exists in Victoria, of permitting four or five weekly numbers of English or foreign periodicals stitched together to go as newspapers for a  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. rate of postage to other colonies where the charge for each weekly number is  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. or 1d. In like manner, Victoria allows quarterly reviews and other publications to pass to other colonies as newspapers at  $\frac{1}{2}$ d. each, in which colonies they are not regarded as newspapers but as magazines, and therefore subject to the book rate of postage of 4d. per lb. Whilst we think the right should be conceded to each Australian post office to fix what rates it pleases on inland mail matter for delivery within its own territory, we are strongly of opinion that mail matter for transmission to another colony should be subject to rates and regulations to be mutually agreed upon."

S. H. LAMBTON.

CHARLES TODD.

JOHN M'DONNELL.

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