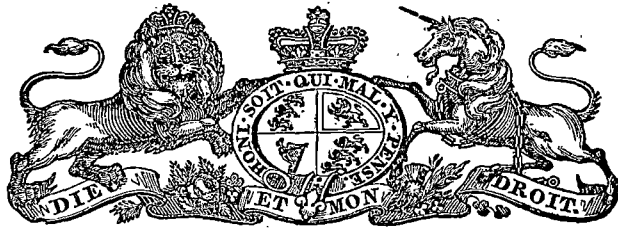


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1869.

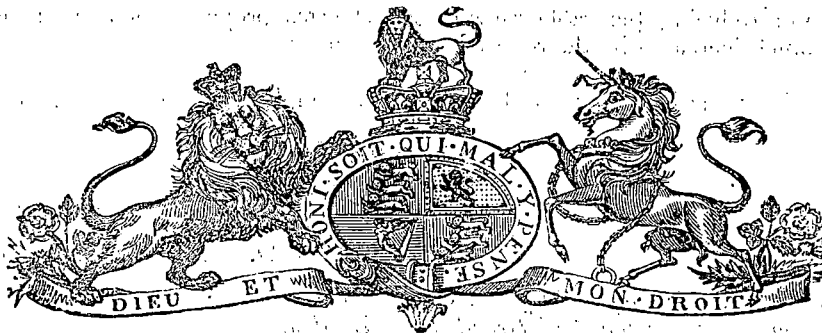
T A S M A N I A.

LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.

CORRESPONDENCE RESPECTING SCALE OF CHARGES.

Laid upon the Table by Mr. Wilson, and ordered by the Council to be printed,
September 1, 1869.



Tasmania,
Colonial Treasury, Hobart Town, May 20th, 1869.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd January last, addressed to Sir Richard Dry, Chief Secretary, Tasmania, which has been forwarded by the Honorable the Colonial Secretary to this Department.

The Government of Tasmania have great pleasure in congratulating the Directors of your Company on the successful laying of the Submarine Cable between Tasmania and Victoria; and sincerely hope that your Company will realise a fair profit on the capital embarked therein.

The Cable was open for the transmission of Messages between Tasmania and Victoria on the 1st instant.

I forward herewith two copies of the Hobart Town *Mercury* of this day's date, containing full particulars of the laying of the Cable, which will no doubt be interesting to your Directors.

Mr. Blackett, the Manager of your Company in this Colony, accompanied by Captain Cruickshank, the Commander of the S. S. S. *Investigator*, arrived here on the 6th instant, when they immediately placed themselves in communication with this Government, and arranged several matters in connexion with the working of the Line.

The Cable has been working exceedingly well; but the very high charges fixed by your Directors for the transmission of Messages has prevented the general community in Tasmania and Victoria from availing themselves of the opportunity offered for the transmission of Messages.

This Government embraced the earliest opportunity of urging on Mr. Blackett the necessity for an immediate reduction in the scale of charges for the transmission of Messages by the Cable, and suggested a reduction from 5s. to 3s. for Messages not exceeding 10 words, with an additional charge of 3d. for every additional word. Telegrams addressed to Newspapers containing intelligence for publication to be transmitted at half the foregoing rates. Mr. Blackett, however, stated that he was not authorised by his instructions to reduce the Cable charges until the matter was referred to your Directors for consideration.

This Government informed Mr. Blackett, that if the Cable charges were reduced as proposed, the charges by the Land Lines throughout Tasmania for Cable Messages should be at once reduced from 3s. to 1s. for Messages not exceeding 10 words, with an additional charge of 1d. for every additional word; and that Telegrams addressed to Newspapers should be transmitted at half the above rates; and further, that this Government would use its influence with the Governments of Victoria, New South Wales, South Australia, and Queensland to reduce their rates accordingly.

On behalf of the Tasmanian Government I have now to request that you will bring the subject under the immediate notice of your Directors, in the hope that the Scale of charges for the transmission of Messages by the Cable will be immediately reduced to the rates suggested by this Government.

I feel assured that if the community can make use of the line from Hobart Town to Melbourne at charges not exceeding the rate proposed, viz., 5s. for a message of 10 words, your Company will realize a very fair revenue; but, should your Directors insist on maintaining the existing rates, the community will not use the line except for the transmission of very important business messages. I hope, therefore, you will be able to advise a reduced scale of charges by the return mail.

So convinced of the importance of a reduced scale of charges, this Government has this day reduced the charges on the Land Lines in Tasmania to the rates proposed; and Mr. Blackett has

just forwarded a telegram stating that the Victorian Government has done the same. These reductions will no doubt be very acceptable to the public, but I must urge upon your Directors the great importance of reducing the cable rates to the charges proposed, as I feel assured that your revenue will be much increased by the reduced scale of charges.

In the hope that your Directors will be induced to comply with the recommendations of this Government,

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

THOS. D. CHAPMAN, *Colonial Treasurer.*

SHERARD OSBORNE, *Esq., Manager Telegraph Construction
and Maintenance Company, Old Broad-street, London.*

*Tasmania,
Colonial Treasury, Hobart Town, 17th June, 1869.*

SIR,

I HAD the honor of addressing you on the 20th ult. by the last mail, *viâ* Marseilles, to which I refer you.

I am happy to be able to report the Cable as working exceedingly well, and all that is now necessary to make this work a complete success is a great reduction in the Scale of charges for the transmission of Messages, and I confidently hope that your Directors will see the importance of reducing the charges to the rates suggested in my letter of the 20th ult., viz.—3s. for a Message of Ten words and 3d. for every additional word, and Press Messages to half those rates. I feel assured that if your Directors adopt these rates, the Line will be much more frequently used by the public and the revenue improved.

I forward herewith a notice showing the rates now payable in Tasmania.

The necessity of some arrangements being made for the transmission of messages by the Cable from Tasmania to London by way of Ceylon is constantly pressed on my attention; and it occurs to me that if your Directors could make some arrangement with the London Company conducting the Telegraphic business between London and Ceylon for the transmission of messages to Tasmania, several messages would be sent to catch the mail steamer leaving Galle for Australia; and the public here would be glad to adopt the same agency for transmitting messages to London, by forwarding messages by the Cable on to Adelaide to catch the mail steamer leaving that port. May I request your good services in endeavouring to get such an arrangement made, as the increased facilities offered to the public will improve the revenue to your Company.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

THOS. D. CHAPMAN, *Colonial Treasurer.*

Please forward half a dozen copies of the scale of charges for messages between London and Ceylon.

SHERARD OSBORNE, *Esq., Manager Telegraph Construction and
Maintenance Company, Old Broad-street, London.*

TASMANIA AND VICTORIA SUBMARINE TELEGRAPH.

*Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, Limited,
Offices, 38, Old Broad-street, London, E.C., 16th July, 1869.*

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 20th May, and beg leave to express my thanks for the congratulations it contains on the successful laying of the Cable between Tasmania and Victoria.

I have also to acknowledge the readiness with which the two Colonial Governments acceded to the request of this Company's Manager, in reducing their local rates for Telegrams sent over the Cable.

Immediately on the receipt of your letter, viz. on 12th instant, I telegraphed to our Manager *viâ* Galle, instructions to reduce the amount of this Company's charge from 5s. to 4s. per 10 words thus making the "through" rate for Messages the same as it was when the old Cable was at work, viz. 6s., the figure on which our calculations were based when we entered into the Contract with your Government.

I am quite alive to the advantages of a low tariff, and I might even be prepared to advise the Directors of this Company to reduce their rate to the sum suggested in your letter, if I were in possession of more information as to the traffic over the line; but, without some knowledge on the subject, you will not be surprised that I should hesitate before lowering the tariff to a point which might possibly render the working of the Cable unremunerative.

I have written to our Manager by the present mail confirming the reduction authorised by my telegram of 12th instant, and requesting him to furnish me, at the end of three months, with a statement showing the receipts for messages before and after the reduction. If the result should be satisfactory, the question of a further abatement of charges will receive our fullest consideration.

I have the honor to be,
Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

SHERARD OSBORNE, *Captain R.N.,*
Managing Director.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN, *Esq., Colonial Treasurer,*
Hobart Town, Tasmania.

TELEGRAM.

Colonial Treasury, 11:30 A.M. 1st September, 1869.

I AM in receipt of a Letter from Mr. Sherard Osborne, the Manager of your Company in London, in which he informs me that he had telegraphed to you on the 12th July, *viâ* Galle, authorising you to reduce the charges on Cable Messages between Tasmania and Victoria, and Victoria and Tasmania, to Four Shillings (4s.) for Messages not exceeding Ten words. May I request that you will immediately give instructions to your Officers of the reduction proposed, and communicate with the authorities in Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, and South Australia, to reduce the charges in accordance with the decision of your Directors. May I also request a Telegram from you in the course of the morning, authorising the reduced Rates to come into force in Tasmania immediately on my receiving your Telegram.

THOS. D. CHAPMAN, *Colonial Treasurer.*

J. W. BLACKETT, *Esq., Manager Telegraph*
Construction and Maintenance Company, Launceston.