

(No. 35.)



1878.

T A S M A N I A.

H O U S E O F A S S E M B L Y.

D U P L I C A T E C A B L E :

R E P O R T O F C O N F E R E N C E.

Laid upon the Table by the Colonial Treasurer, and ordered by the House to be printed, July 16, 1878.



Colonial Secretary's Office, 7th May, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint you as the Delegate from this Colony to the forthcoming Conference to be held in Melbourne upon the question of the Duplication of the Cable between Australia and Singapore Line.

The Conference is to meet on the 9th instant; and I shall have the pleasure of forwarding to your address in Melbourne, by the next mail, such instructions as the Government may deem it desirable to convey to you in connection with the subjects which may probably engage the attention of the Conference.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

The Honorable Sir JAMES MILNE WILSON, M.L.C., Melrose.

WM. MOORE.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Hobart Town, 7th May, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to inform you that His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the Honorable Sir James Milne Wilson, President of the Legislative Council, to represent this Colony at the forthcoming Conference in Melbourne upon the important question of the Duplication as far as Singapore of the Line of Telegraph between Australia and England.

It is not improbable that other subjects of deep interest to these Colonies may engage the attention of the Conference: I more especially refer to Intercolonial reciprocity in trade, and to the question of Defences.

Sir James Wilson is fully aware of the views of this Government on these matters; and should they be included among the topics discussed, I trust the result may tend to greater unity of action, and a fuller recognition of the advantages of combination, among the various Governments of the Australasian Colonies.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

The Hon. the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

WM. MOORE.

Colonial Secretary's Office, 10th May, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to convey to you an outline of the views of the Government upon the chief question which has led to the assembling of the forthcoming Conference of Delegates from the several Australasian Colonies in Melbourne.

The Government consider that the relatively small interest of Tasmania, in a pecuniary sense, in the duplication of the Cable between Australia and Singapore necessitates an acceptance on their part of the scheme that may be most generally approved by the larger Colonies on the main-land; but they are not disposed to recommend to Parliament any proposals involving additional liability, whatever may be the prospective advantages, that do not include the Cable between Victoria and Tasmania as an integral portion of the entire Line, for the construction and maintenance of which these Colonies are called upon to contribute rateably.

I forwarded by last mail copy of a letter addressed to the Chief Secretary of Victoria; and with reference to the latter portion, the Government will be glad to learn that the members of the Conference realise the importance of endeavouring to arrive at such conclusions in connection with an equitable reciprocity in trade as may lead to the removal of existing restrictions which check production, and retard the commercial progress of these Colonies without affording any equivalent advantages.

With regard also to the subject of Colonial Defences, it cannot be denied that the absence of any general scheme which shall include the protection of all the Colonies from aggression, both as regards their territory and their commerce, to a great extent neutralises the efforts made by each; and should the subject be brought under the consideration of the Conference, the Government would desire to impress upon you the practical advantages to be derived from united action on the part of the several Colonies, so that the burthen may be equitably distributed, and the safety of the whole group may not be imperilled by the inability of any one member to provide, from its own resources, for the defence of its harbours.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

The Honorable Sir JAMES MILNE WILSON, M.L.C., Melbourne.

WM. MOORE.

Melbourne, 20th May, 1878.

SIR,

I HAVE the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th instant, conveying to me an outline of the views of the Government of Tasmania upon the chief question which had led to the assembling of the Conference of Delegates from the several Australasian Colonies, recently held in Melbourne.

I have now the honor to transmit to you herewith a copy of the Report adopted by the Conference, which closed its sittings on Saturday last, the 18th instant, together with Minutes of the Proceedings and of the Evidence taken, and other official papers submitted for consideration and discussion.

It will be seen from this Report that the Conference carried resolutions which, if ultimately sanctioned by the Legislatures of the Colonies interested, will secure (1) a duplication of the means of Telegraphic communication between Port Darwin and Singapore at an annual cost to the Australian Colonies of £32,000; and, (2), a reduction of the charges for the transmission of Government messages between England and Port Darwin to the extent of 50 per cent., and for that of Press messages to the extent of 75 per cent., on present rates.

The cost of this subsidy it is proposed should be borne by the different Australasian Colonies rateably in proportion to their respective population.

I endeavoured to secure for the Tasmanian and the New Zealand Cables recognition as an integral portion of the common system of Telegraphic communication between England and Australia.

I regret that the resolutions embodying this principle, which I brought forward for consideration by the Conference, failed to secure the concurrence of a majority of the assembled Delegates.

Under these circumstances, I thought it incumbent on me as the representative of Tasmania, and in the interests of that Colony and of New Zealand, to place on record my reasons for dissenting from the conclusions arrived at by the Conference on that question. These will be found in a Memorandum appended as a note to my signature to the Report.

I was more fortunate in securing the assent of the Conference to resolutions recommending concurrent legislation by the Colonies represented, with a view to affording additional facilities for enforcing judgments recovered in the Supreme Court of one Colony against the property of judgment debtors in other Colonies; and to provide for the simplification of the present method of registering probates of wills in cases where the testator leaves personal property in more than one Colony.

A resolution was also carried, on my motion, on the subject of the joint defence of the Australian Colonies in view of the present unsettled state of Europe.

It affords me much pleasure to acquaint you that, as the representative of Tasmania and the Delegate of its Government at the Conference, I was welcomed and received with the utmost courtesy and attention by His Excellency the Governor of Victoria and by the members of the Victorian Ministry, and that my official intercourse with the assembled Delegates was such as to strengthen the already subsisting friendly relations between the Continental Colonies and Tasmania.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient Servant,

The Honorable the Colonial Secretary, Tasmania.

J. M. WILSON.



1878.

TASMANIA.

R E P O R T

OF THE

PROCEEDINGS OF THE CONFERENCE

RESPECTING THE

DUPLICATION OF THE TELEGRAPH LINES
BETWEEN AUSTRALASIA AND EUROPE,

HELD IN MELBOURNE IN MAY 1878 ;

TOGETHER WITH

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS, NOTICES OF MOTION, MINUTES OF EVIDENCE, AND
APPENDICES.

REPORT

THE Conference assembled in Melbourne, and held their first meeting on the 9th day of May 1878.

The colonies of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, Tasmania, and Victoria were represented as follows, viz. :—

<i>New South Wales</i> ...	The Honorable J. F. BURNS, Postmaster General.
<i>Queensland</i> ...	The Honorable CHARLES STUART MEIN, Postmaster-General.
<i>South Australia</i> ...	The Honorable JAMES P. BOUCAUT, Prime Minister and Treasurer ; CHARLES TODD, Esq., C.M.G., Postmaster-General.
<i>Tasmania</i> ...	The Honorable Sir JAMES MILNE WILSON, President of the Legislative Council, and Member of the Executive Council.
<i>Victoria</i> ...	The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY, Prime Minister, and Chief Secretary and Treasurer ; The Honorable HENRY CUTHBERT, Postmaster-General.

The colony of New Zealand was not represented at the Conference ; but a letter was received from the Colonial Secretary, which contained the views of the Government of that colony as to the duplication of the cable between Australia and Singapore.

The colony of Western Australia was also not represented.

At the first meeting of the Conference the Honorable Graham Berry was unanimously elected President, and Mr. Webb Ware was appointed Secretary.

The Conference unanimously agreed to the following resolution :—

“That in the opinion of this Conference provision should be made as early as
“practicable for ensuring greater certainty of telegraphic communication
“between Great Britain and the Australian Colonies and New Zealand.”

The Conference then proceeded to discuss the whole question of the duplication of the telegraph lines between Australasia and Europe and the different routes proposed ; and, after mature deliberation, the followed resolutions were agreed to :—

“That the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria be empowered
“to enter into an agreement and contract with the Eastern Extension
“Telegraph Company for a second cable from Singapore direct to
“Banjoewangie, avoiding the Java land lines, and thence direct to Port
“Darwin, for an annual subsidy of not exceeding £32,400.”

(NOTE.—*Queensland refrained from voting on this resolution.*)

“That such subsidy shall be payable for a period of not more than twenty
“years, and that in consideration thereof the said company—

“(1.) Shall, throughout the whole of the period during which such
“subsidy shall be payable, maintain in full working order such
“second cable, and also its present lines of cable between Singa-
“pore and Batavia, and Banjoewangie and Port Darwin.

“(2.) Shall, before such subsidy shall become payable, lay a second
“cable between Singapore and Penang, and thereafter shall
“maintain the same, and its present lines of cable between
“Singapore and Penang, Penang and Madras, Madras and Rangoon,
“in full working order.”

“That the Eastern Extension Company should, without any additional subsidy,
“other than already agreed to for the duplication of the line from Singa-
“pore to Port Darwin, reduce their charge for governmental messages
“between England and Port Darwin to the extent of 50 per cent., and
“their charges for press messages to the extent of 75 per cent. on the
“present rates.”

"That provision be made in the contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for the purchase, by the combined colonies, of the duplicate cable, on equitable terms, at any time during the currency of the subsidy."

"That in calculating the amount of subsidy to be paid to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, the actual cost of the duplicate cable shall be the basis."

"That the cost of the subsidy be paid by the different Australasian Colonies rateably in proportion to their respective populations."

"That, in the first instance, the populations of the several colonies, as officially estimated on 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each."

"That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once every five years."

(NOTE.—*Queensland refrained from voting on the last three resolutions.*)

The following motions proposed by the Representative of Queensland were negatived, all the colonies represented, excepting Queensland, voting against the motions, viz. :—

"(1.) That in the interest of all the Australasian Colonies it is essential that there should be a complete system of telegraphic communication between British India and the Continent of Australia, unconnected with the existing lines of the Eastern Extension Company, and under the control of an independent company or proprietary."

"(2.) That the second system of communication should be connected with the capitals of the several Australian Colonies by means of land lines entirely independent of the lines connecting Port Darwin with Adelaide."

"(3.) That on the completion of the second system of telegraphic communication with British India there should be paid to the Eastern Extension Company, throughout the period during which a subsidy shall be paid to the proprietors of such second system, a subsidy equal to per centum of the original capital cost of the construction of such company's present lines of cable between Singapore and Batavia, and Banjoewangie and Port Darwin, if they shall throughout such period maintain in effective working order a separate line of telegraphic communication between Port Darwin and British India."

"(4.) That all subsidies which may be required for the construction or maintenance of ocean cables between British India and Australia should be paid and borne by the several Australian Colonies in such proportions as may be mutually determined."

The following motions proposed by the Representative of Tasmania were negatived, Queensland and Tasmania voting for, and New South Wales, South Australia, and Victoria voting against the motions, viz. :—

"(1.) That the cables connecting New South Wales with New Zealand, Tasmania with Victoria, and Port Darwin with Singapore, shall be considered as ocean lines, forming one common system of telegraphic communication between the Australasian Colonies and Europe."

"(2.) That the cost of the subsidies now paid, or to be paid, towards those cables be borne by the colonies benefiting by the same rateably in proportion to their respective populations."

"(3.) That South Australia be exempt from contribution to the line between Port Darwin and Singapore, in consideration of her large outlay in erecting and maintaining the trans-continental line of telegraph."

"(4.) That, in the first instance, the populations of the several colonies, as officially estimated on the 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each."

"(5.) That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once in every five years."

"(6.) That New Zealand be invited to concur in the foregoing resolutions."

- “(7.) That in case New Zealand declines to adopt the principle laid down in
 “Resolution No. 1, the other Australasian Colonies represented at this
 “Conference consent to recognise the New Zealand cable as an ocean line
 “under the meaning of that resolution to the extent of the contribution
 “now paid towards its maintenance by New South Wales, viz., £2,500.”

The following motions proposed by the Representative of Queensland were also negatived, Queensland and Tasmania voting for, and New South Wales, South Australia and Victoria voting against the motions, viz. :—

- “That the Queensland lines of telegraph terminating at Kimberley, in the Gulf
 “of Carpentaria, be connected with the terminus of the Eastern Extension
 “Telegraph Company’s cables at Port Darwin by means of a cable from
 “Kimberley to the mouth of the Roper River, and thence by a land line
 “to Port Darwin.
 “That the land line from the Roper River be constructed and maintained at the
 “cost of South Australia, and that so long as such line shall be maintained
 “in full working order the other colonies shall pay to South Australia an
 “annual sum equal to six pounds per centum of the original capital amount
 “expended by that colony in the construction of such line.
 “That the cable between Kimberley and the Roper River be constructed at
 “the joint cost of the different Australasian Colonies, except South
 “Australia, such colonies to contribute thereto in amounts proportionate
 “to their population as officially estimated on the 31st day of December
 “1877 ; and that the income derivable from such cable be set apart as a
 “reserve fund for the renewal thereof.
 “That the rate payable to South Australia for international messages trans-
 “mitted across the present trans-continental line be reduced to 1s. per word.
 “That the rate to be charged by South Australia for international messages
 “between Port Darwin and the Roper River be 4d. per word.
 “That the rate to be charged for international messages by the cable between
 “the Roper River and Kimberley be 6d. per word.
 “That the rate to be charged by Queensland for international messages across
 “her lines of telegraph shall not exceed 2d. per word.
 “That in all instances the senders of international messages shall be at liberty
 “to elect the route by which such messages shall be forwarded ; and, in
 “the event of no election being made at the time of the delivery of
 “messages for transmission, messages to and from New Zealand, New
 “South Wales, and Queensland shall be transmitted by way of the
 “Queensland lines, and the new route to be established between Kimberley
 “and Port Darwin, and all other messages shall be transmitted by way of
 “the present trans-continental line of South Australia.”

After the foregoing motions had been discussed, the following resolution was carried, South Australia refraining from voting thereon, viz :—

- “That whilst the Conference has not made any provision for the duplication,
 “at the present time, of the continental line of telegraph from Port
 “Darwin, the Representatives of the different Colonies expressly reserve
 “for confederate action a future decision on this important point, and
 “empower the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria, before
 “entering into and making any contract with the Eastern Extension
 “Telegraph Company for the construction of the second cable between
 “Port Darwin and Singapore, to receive an engagement from South
 “Australia to co-operate with the other Australian Colonies in con-
 “structing and maintaining a new line of telegraph from Port Darwin,
 “to be connected with the telegraphic system of Queensland. Provided
 “that, in the event of such line being decided upon, South Australia
 “shall not be called upon to contribute thereto.”

The Conference having decided to discuss any question of intercolonial interest other than that of telegraphic communication with Europe, the following resolutions were, after mature deliberation, unanimously agreed to, viz. :—

- “That the adoption of the amended treaty agreed to by the Berne Postal
 “Convention be recommended for the favorable consideration of the
 “Governments of Australia and New Zealand.”

- “That it is desirable to make provision by legislation that probate of wills
 “taken out in one colony may be registered in the Registry of Wills
 “Office in any other colony, in cases of testators dying in one colony
 “leaving personal property in other colonies.”
- “That the Government of Tasmania be requested to prepare a Bill dealing
 “with the question raised by the foregoing resolution, and submit the
 “same for the approval of the Governments of the several Australasian
 “Colonies with a view to united legislation on the subject.”
- “That additional facilities should be afforded to suitors for enforcing judgments
 “recovered in the Supreme Court of one colony against the property of
 “judgment debtors in other colonies.”
- “That the Representatives of the different colonies undertake, in the event of
 “the law advisers of their Governments approving of the same, to endeavor
 “to procure the passing in their respective Legislatures of a Bill dealing
 “with the question raised by the foregoing resolution similar to that
 “submitted by Tasmania and appended to the proceedings of the Con-
 “ference.”
- “That it is desirable that the Governments of the Continental Colonies should,
 “at as early a period as possible, interchange views as to the intended routes
 “of their principal railway lines, so as to enable junctions of the various
 “systems to be arranged for at the most suitable points.”
- “That in the opinion of this Conference the necessity of the joint defence of the
 “Australian Colonies should be recognised and acted upon promptly by
 “their respective Governments and Legislatures, in view of the present
 “unsettled state of Europe, and having regard to future contingencies.”
- “That the Agents-General be requested, in view of the early termination of the
 “Postal Treaty of 1873 between the Imperial Government and the
 “Colonies, to elicit from the Secretary of State for the Colonies the
 “intentions of the Imperial Government in reference to the Suez, Pacific,
 “and Torres Straits Mail Services.”

The Conference also discussed other questions on which no definite action was taken.

Attention is directed to the Appendix of Minutes of Proceedings, Report of Evidence taken, and Documents laid before the Conference.

J. F. BURNS,

New South Wales.

CHARLES STUART MEIN,

Queensland.

JAS. P. BOUCAUT,

CHARLES TODD,

} *South Australia.*

J. M. WILSON,

*Tasmania.**

GRAHAM BERRY,

H. CUTHBERT,

} *Victoria.*

THOS. WEBB WARE,

Secretary.

Melbourne, 18th May 1878.

* Sir JAMES WILSON, on the part of the Government of Tasmania, and in the interests of that colony and of New Zealand, desires to place on record an expression of his regret that the Conference should have declined to entertain the suggestion that the cables which connect Tasmania and New Zealand with the continent should be dealt with as forming, with the lines of telegraph from Port Darwin to England, a common system of communication between Australasia and Europe.

The lines of telegraph which traverse the several territories of the continental colonies, with the exception of the direct line from the South Australia frontier to Port Darwin, constitute a means of communication, not only between the capitals of those colonies, but also between the numerous centres of population throughout their respective areas. They exist primarily for the convenience of the domestic communities which they traverse.

That they connect Melbourne and Sydney with the cables that connect Australia with Europe is a mere accidental circumstance, which cannot divest them of what may be called their purely municipal character.

The cables between New South Wales and New Zealand, and between Tasmania and Victoria, occupy a very different position. They exist for the mutual advantage of the communities which they connect. They possess, so to speak, an international, as distinguished from a municipal, character.

It will scarcely be denied that such large communities as New South Wales and Victoria derive considerable advantage from the existence of a means of rapid communication with such colonies as New Zealand and Tasmania, which constitute ready and convenient markets for their respective productions, and with which they are intimately connected by social as well as by commercial ties.

New South Wales has recognised this principle by contributing to the maintenance of the New Zealand cable. But the Bass' Straits cable owes its existence to the enterprise of Tasmania, and was laid down, and is, and always has been, maintained at the sole cost of that colony. The time would seem to have arrived when mutual advantage should command reciprocal aid.

Naturally, in the first instance, the remote and outlying members of such a group of colonies as that which comprises Continental Australia, Tasmania, and New Zealand, feeling their practical isolation, provide, at their own risk, the means of telegraphic intercourse with their wealthier and more populous neighbors. But those neighbors soon come to derive fully as much benefit from the connection as the originators of the means of intercourse. And it then becomes a simple matter of equity and fairness that what benefits each should be supported by both.

In other matters of a common intercolonial interest it has happened, before now, that one colony has undertaken the initiative in costly public works which primarily and immediately concern itself, but which incidentally, and even directly, prove beneficial to those who have borne no share in their construction.

The maintenance of the lighthouses in Bass' and Banks' Straits, by Tasmania, almost unassisted, is a familiar instance of such action by a single colony. But the equitable sense of her neighbors has recognised their liability to contribution for the maintenance of what are now, by common consent, regarded as ocean lights.

The cables between the continent of Australia and the colonies of New Zealand and Tasmania seem to fall within the principle which governs the precedent just quoted. They originated in the necessity of individual members, they now constitute the common advantage of the collective group. The conclusion is obvious. They should be included in the same category with the cables, or lines of telegraph, by which it is now proposed to connect Australia with Europe. The duplication of those lines is admittedly a matter of common interest to the Australias; but, since it can only be effected by a subsidy, the larger and wealthier colonies invite their neighbors to share the cost. Hitherto telegraphic communication has cost these colonies nothing beyond the price charged for the transmission of messages; and, when a common subsidy was demanded, it seemed only reasonable that the claim of New Zealand and Tasmania to be relieved, to some extent at all events, of the burden of their subsidies to intercolonial cables should be urged by their representatives, and admitted by those of the other colonies. This natural and equitable view of the question the Conference has declined to entertain, as foreign to the primary object of its assembly.

Sir James Wilson submits that the claim to consideration thus advanced on behalf of Tasmania and New Zealand fell fairly and legitimately within the scope of the power of the Conference. He is also of opinion that a frank recognition of the principle enunciated in his resolutions would have approved itself to the public sense of the Australian colonies, and would have found ready acceptance with the Australian Legislatures.

Impressed with these considerations, Sir James Wilson feels bound, on the part of the colony which he has the honor to represent, to place on the minutes a record of his dissent from the conclusion arrived at by the Conference on this question, and of his regret that its decision will, in all probability, preclude the co-operation of Tasmania in the proposed duplication of the telegraph from Port Darwin to Singapore.

J. M. WILSON.

MINUTES OF THE PROCEEDINGS.

9TH MAY 1878.

THE following gentlemen assembled in the Executive Council Chamber, Government Offices, Melbourne, 9th May, at eleven o'clock :—

The Honorable J. F. BURNS, Postmaster-General, representing New South Wales ;
The Honorable CHARLES STUART MEIN, Postmaster-General, representing Queensland ;
CHARLES TODD, Esq., C.M.G., representing South Australia ;
The Honorable Sir JAMES MILNE WILSON, M.E.C., President of the Legislative Council, representing Tasmania ;
The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY, Chief Secretary and Treasurer ; and
The Honorable HENRY CUTHBERT, Postmaster-General, representing Victoria.

Sir JAMES WILSON moved, seconded by Mr. BURNS—"That the Honorable Graham Berry be elected the President of the Conference."—*Carried unanimously.*

Mr. Berry took his seat accordingly.

Mr. Webb Ware was appointed Secretary to the Conference.

Mr. BURNS moved, seconded by Mr. MEIN—"That the Proceedings of the Conference shall not be made public until sanctioned by its authority."—*Carried unanimously.*

Mr. BURNS moved, seconded by Mr. TODD—"That divisions upon questions proposed to the Conference shall be taken by the votes of the Colonies."—*Carried unanimously.*

Mr. MEIN moved, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—"That the Secretary be required to prepare minutes of each day's proceedings, which shall be read over and confirmed at the next sitting before any new business shall be entered upon ; and that such minutes shall be printed confidentially for the use of Members. 2. That in referring in any proceedings of the Conference to the several colonies represented the names be placed in alphabetical order."—*Carried unanimously.*

Mr. TODD laid before the Conference a telegram from the Government of New Zealand stating that a letter was on its way explaining the views of that Government on the proposed duplication of the Telegraph, and moved—"That it be appended to the proceedings of the Conference." Seconded by Mr. MEIN.—*Carried unanimously.* (*Vide Appendix No. 1.*)

Mr. BURNS moved, seconded by Mr. TODD—"That a copy of the circular letter from the Chief Secretary of South Australia to the other Australian Governments, dated 24th January 1878, regarding the negotiations with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, be appended to the proceedings of the Conference."—*Carried unanimously.* (*Vide Appendix No. 2.*)

Mr. BERRY laid on the table a letter from Colonel Glover, offering to afford any information in his power on the questions before the Conference.

Mr. BERRY also read a letter addressed to him by Mr. Linden (Reuter's agent) suggesting that the letters a.m. or p.m. should be added to the date attached to messages at receiving stations, and that the office in Adelaide should maintain continuous communication with that at Melbourne, which, under existing regulations, is closed between the hours of 8 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Mr. MEIN laid on the table, for the information of Members, a telegraph map of Queensland.

Notices of motion for the next day's sitting were given.

The Conference then adjourned until the following day at half-past two o'clock.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

10TH MAY 1878.

Present :

The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY, in the Chair ;

The Honorable J. F. BURNS,
The Honorable C. S. MEIN,
The Honorable Sir J. M. WILSON,

C. TODD, Esq., C.M.G.,
The Honorable H. CUTHBERT.

The Honorable JAMES P. BOUCAUT took his place as a representative of South Australia.

The minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. CUTHBERT laid on the Table a map of the world showing the telegraph lines in operation.

Mr. CUTHBERT also laid upon the Table papers dealing with the subject of telegraphic communication between Australasia and Europe. (*Vide Appendix No. 3.*)

The following gentlemen were called in and gave evidence :—

Colonel Glover, Managing Director of The Eastern Extension Telegraph Company ;
Mr. Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs, New South Wales ;
Mr. McGowan, Superintendent of Telegraphs, Victoria ;
Mr. W. J. Cracknell, Superintendent of Telegraphs, Queensland.

Mr. BOUCAUT laid on the Table a plan of the overland line between Adelaide and Port Darwin, and stated that Mr. Todd was available to be examined, notwithstanding that he was a delegate, if the Conference desired.

The Conference adjourned until the next day at half-past ten o'clock.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

11TH MAY 1878.

Present :

The Honorable GRAHAM BERRY, in the Chair :

The Honorable J. F. BURNS,
 The Honorable C. S. MEIN,
 The Honorable Sir J. M. WILSON,

The Honorable J. P. BOUCAUT,
 C. TODD, Esq., C.M.G.,
 The Honorable H. CUTHBERT.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

Mr. CUTHBERT moved, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—"That Mr. Todd be examined on the subject matter of the inquiry."—*Carried unanimously.*

At the request of the Members of the Conference, Mr. BOUCAUT proceeded to examine Mr. Todd.

Mr. CUTHBERT laid before the Conference copy of a telegram from the Colonial Secretary of Western Australia, explaining the basis on which that Government would contribute to a second line of telegraph, and moved—"That it be printed as an appendix to the minutes of the day."—*Carried unanimously.*

The following is the telegram referred to :—

Telegram for the Honorable the Chief Secretary of Victoria.

Perth, Western Australia, 6/4/78.

The subjoined telegram has this day been forwarded by this Government to that of South Australia, *in re* Cable Conference :—

"Replying to your telegram of March 20th, inviting this Government to send a representative to the Conference to be held at Melbourne on 25th April, to consider the question of duplicating cable, I would ask Colonel Glover's scheme alone to be considered. This colony is willing to consent to any negotiations for a cable to start from its shores either to Banjoewangie, Anjer, or Ceylon, and will construct land lines necessary to connect same, besides paying its proportion towards relieving South Australia of great cost of Darwin line, also contributing its quota for new cable, such being calculated either on basis of population or revenue. If a scheme of this nature will receive fair consideration, this Government will depute Mr. Fraser to represent it."

ROGER TUCKFIELD GOLDSWORTHY,
 Colonial Secretary.

The Conference adjourned until Wednesday next, 15th instant, at half-past ten a.m.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

15TH MAY 1878.

Present :

The Hon. GRAHAM BERRY, in the Chair ;

The Honorable J. F. BURNS,
 The Honorable C. S. MEIN,
 The Honorable Sir J. M. WILSON,

The Honorable J. P. BOUCAUT,
 C. TODD, Esq., C.M.G.,
 The Honorable H. CUTHBERT.

The Minutes of the last meeting were read and confirmed.

The PRESIDENT laid before the Conference a letter he had received that morning from the Government of New Zealand, embodying the views of that Government on certain points in connection with the project of laying down a duplicate cable. The letter was ordered to be read and entered on the Minutes of the day.

The following is the letter referred to :—

102.

NEW ZEALAND.

SIR,

Colonial Secretary's Office, Wellington, 1st May 1878.

I have the honor to inform you that, owing to the near approach of the Session of Parliament and the consequent number of important matters occupying the attention of Ministers, this Government exceedingly regret being unable to send a representative to the Cable Conference ; and they accordingly desire to take this opportunity of placing before the other Members of the Conference their views as to the proposed duplication.

It appears to this Government that the question resolves itself into the three following heads :—

Firstly.—As to the route the cable should follow.

Secondly.—As to the basis upon which the subsidy shall be distributed ; and

Thirdly.—As to what proportion of the subsidy the Imperial Government should be called upon to contribute.

2. As regards the route, we are of opinion that a survey of both routes, viz., that from Port Darwin to Singapore, touching at Banjoewangie, and that from North-West Cape to Singapore, also touching at Banjoewangie, should be made before the choice of either can be decided upon finally. The New Zealand Government will be willing to contribute their share towards such survey.

3. This Government have gone carefully into the question of subsidy proposed by the Eastern Extension Company for the duplication of the cable by either of the above routes, as also the proposal as to the sinking fund, and beg to express their views as follows : The Government think that the payment of the subsidy by the several colonies should be assessed on the money value of the telegrams passing

through the cable to and fro at Port Darwin, and not upon the basis of population. They also consider that the sinking fund should be vested in the hands of trustees appointed by the several colonies, and that the expenses of the renewal or repair of the duplicate cable should be paid out of such fund, the balance at the end of the twenty-two years to be distributed amongst the several contributing Governments according to their proportion of contribution; or it might, perhaps, be better to devote such balance towards forming the nucleus of a fund for procuring another cable. It also suggests itself to this Government that, in the event of the present cable being interrupted, either the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company should pay for the right of sending through the new cable, whilst the repairs were in progress, or that the subsidy on the duplicate cable should cease during such period of repairs.

4. This Government are of opinion, taking into consideration the importance that uninterrupted telegraphic communication must be to the mother country, that the Imperial authorities may be fairly asked to contribute a proportion of the subsidy and sinking fund.

I have the honor to be,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant,

The Chairman of the Conference on Duplication of
Electric Cable, Melbourne.

G. S. WHITMORE.

The Conference thereupon deliberated on the proposals contained in the above letter.

Mr. BURNS then moved the following resolution, pursuant to notice, as amended by permission of the Conference:—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, provision should be made as early as practicable for ensuring greater certainty of telegraphic communication between Great Britain and the Australian Colonies and New Zealand.

Discussion ensued.

Motion put and carried unanimously.

Mr. MEIN then moved the following resolutions, pursuant to notice:—

(1.) That in the interest of all the Australasian Colonies it is essential that there should be a complete system of telegraphic communication between British India and the Continent of Australia, unconnected with the existing lines of the Eastern Extension Company, and under the control of an independent company or proprietary.

(2.) That the second system of communication should be connected with the capitals of the several Australian Colonies by means of land lines entirely independent of the lines connecting Port Darwin with Adelaide.

(3.) That on the completion of the second system of telegraphic communication with British India there should be paid to the Eastern Extension Company, throughout the period during which a subsidy shall be paid to the proprietors of such second system, a subsidy equal to per centum of the original capital cost of the construction of such company's present lines of cable between Singapore and Batavia, and Banjoewangie and Port Darwin, if they shall throughout such period maintain in effective working order a separate line of telegraphic communication between Port Darwin and British India.

(4.) That all subsidies which may be required for the construction or maintenance of ocean cables between British India and Australia should be paid and borne by the several Australian Colonies in such proportions as may be mutually determined.

Discussion ensued.—Motion put and negatived; all the colonies voting against the resolutions excepting Queensland.

The Conference then proceeded to consider the following resolutions, of which notice had been given by Sir James Wilson:—

(1.) That the cables connecting New South Wales with New Zealand, Tasmania with Victoria, and Port Darwin with Singapore, shall be considered as ocean lines, forming one common system of telegraphic communication between the Australasian Colonies and Europe.

(2.) That the cost of the subsidies now paid, or to be paid, towards those cables be borne by the colonies benefiting by the same rateably in proportion to their respective populations.

(3.) That South Australia be exempt from contribution to the line between Port Darwin and Singapore, in consideration of her large outlay in erecting and maintaining the trans-continental line of telegraph.

(4.) That, in the first instance, the populations of the several colonies, as officially estimated on the 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each.

(5.) That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once in every five years.

(6.) That New Zealand be invited to concur in the foregoing resolutions.

(7.) That in case New Zealand declines to adopt the principle laid down in Resolution No. 1, the other Australasian Colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognize the New Zealand cable as an ocean line under the meaning of that resolution to the extent of the contribution now paid towards its maintenance by New South Wales, viz., £2,500.

(8.) That in consideration of the advantage afforded to the Australasian Colonies by the maintenance by Queensland of a duplicate land line of telegraph terminating at Normantown, the colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognize any cable that may be laid across the Gulf of Carpentaria, of say 360 miles in length, between Normantown and Roper's River, as an ocean line within the meaning of Resolution 1.

(9.) That in any arrangement entered into with the Eastern Telegraph Extension Company for subsidizing a duplicate cable provision should be made for the maintenance by such company during the subsistence of the contract of both the old and the new lines in full working order.

(10.) That the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria be empowered to enter into an agreement and contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for a second cable from Singapore direct to Banjoewangie, avoiding the Java land lines, and thence direct to Port Darwin, for an annual subsidy of not exceeding £32,400, for a period of years.

Sir JAMES WILSON, after some discussion, with the permission of the Conference, postponed all the above resolutions standing in his name until after the consideration of his resolution No. 10.

Sir JAMES WILSON then moved the following resolution, No. 10, as amended by permission of the Conference :—

That the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria be empowered to enter into an agreement and contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for a second cable from Singapore direct to Banjoewangie, avoiding the Java land lines, and thence direct to Port Darwin, for an annual subsidy of not exceeding £82,400.

Discussion ensued.—Motion put and carried ; Queensland not voting.

Mr. BURNS thereupon moved, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—

That such subsidy shall be payable for a period of not more than twenty years, and that in consideration thereof the said company—

(1.) Shall, throughout the whole of the period during which such subsidy shall be payable, maintain in full working order such second cable, and also its present lines of cable between Singapore and Batavia, and Banjoewangie and Port Darwin.

Discussion ensued.—Motion carried without dissent.

(2.) Shall, before such subsidy shall become payable, lay a second cable between Singapore and Penang, and thereafter shall maintain the same, and its present lines of cable between Singapore and Penang, Penang and Madras, Madras and Rangoon, in full working order.

Motion carried without dissent.

(3.) That the rate per word to be charged by the said company for messages between Port Darwin and Madras, and Port Darwin and Rangoon shall not exceed—for all messages of the Governments of the colonies contributing to the subsidy and press messages to or for such colonies, shillings; for other messages, shillings.

After discussion, the further consideration of this motion was, by leave, postponed.

Sir JAMES WILSON then moved the resolutions standing in his name, 1 to 9, as above.

Discussion ensued, and further consideration of the resolutions was postponed until next day.

Mr. MEIN, with the permission of the Conference, postponed to a future day the consideration of the following resolution, of which he had given notice :—

That the representatives of each colony shall undertake to recommend to the Government and to the Parliament of the colony which they represent the adoption of measures to carry out all the resolutions to which they may have given their assent.

Sir JAMES WILSON moved the following resolution, pursuant to notice :—

That it shall be competent for any member of the Conference to submit for discussion any question of intercolonial interest other than that of telegraphic communication with Europe.

Carried unanimously.

Mr. MEIN, Sir JAMES WILSON, Mr. BURNS, and Mr. CUTHBERT gave notice of motions for the following day.

The Conference adjourned at half-past three o'clock until eleven o'clock the following day.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

16TH MAY 1878.

Present :

The Hon. GRAHAM BERRY, in the Chair ;

The Honorable J. F. BURNS,
The Honorable C. S. MEIN,
The Honorable Sir J. M. WILSON,

The Honorable J. P. BOUCAUT,
C. TODD, Esq., C.M.G.,
The Honorable H. CUTHBERT.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Discussions ensued on the following resolutions of Sir JAMES WILSON, the consideration whereof had been postponed on the last day's sitting :—

- (1.) That the cables connecting New South Wales with New Zealand, Tasmania with Victoria, and Port Darwin with Singapore, shall be considered as ocean lines, forming one common system of telegraphic communication between the Australasian colonies and Europe.
- (2.) That the cost of the subsidies now paid, or to be paid, towards those cables be borne by the colonies benefiting by the same rateably in proportion to their respective populations.
- (3.) That South Australia be exempt from contribution to the line between Port Darwin and Singapore, in consideration of her large outlay in erecting and maintaining the trans-continental line of telegraph.
- (4.) That, in the first instance, the populations of the several colonies, as officially estimated on the 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each.
- (5.) That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once in every five years.
- (6.) That New Zealand be invited to concur in the foregoing resolutions.
- (7.) That in case New Zealand declines to adopt the principle laid down in Resolution No. 1, the other Australasian Colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognize the New Zealand cable as an ocean line under the meaning of that resolution to the extent of the contribution now paid towards its maintenance by New South Wales, viz., £2,500.

(8.) That in consideration of the advantage afforded to the Australasian Colonies by the maintenance by Queensland of a duplicate land line of telegraph terminating at Normantown, the colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognize any cable that may be laid across the Gulf of Carpentaria, of say 360 miles in length, between Normantown and Roper's River, as an ocean line within the meaning of Resolution 1.

(9.) That in any arrangement entered into with the Eastern Telegraph Extension Company for subsidizing a duplicate cable provision should be made for the maintenance by such company during the subsistence of the contract of both the old and the new lines in full working order.

Sir JAMES WILSON, with the leave of the Conference, withdrew the resolutions 8 and 9.

The Conference then divided on the remainder of Sir James Wilson's resolutions, Nos. 1 to 7, with the following result :—

For.	Against.
Queensland, Tasmania.	New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria.

Mr. BURNS, with the permission of the Conference, withdrew the contingent motion of which he had given notice, and proposed the following amended resolution in lieu thereof :—

That the Eastern Extension Company should, without any additional subsidy, other than already agreed to for the duplication of the line from Singapore to Port Darwin, reduce their charges for Governmental messages between England and Port Darwin to the extent of 50 per cent., and their charges for press messages to the extent of 75 per cent. on the present rates.

Discussion ensued.

Carried without dissent.

Mr. CUTHBERT moved the following resolution, of which he had given notice :—

That such subsidy shall cease whenever the profits of the company are sufficient to pay a dividend of £10 per cent. on the capital invested.

Discussion ensued.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. CUTHBERT then moved—

That provision be made in the contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for the purchase, by the combined colonies, of the duplicate cable, on equitable terms, at any time during the currency of the subsidy.

Discussed ensued.

Carried without dissent.

Mr. CUTHBERT then moved—

That in calculating the amount of subsidy to be paid to the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, the actual cost of the duplicate cable shall be the basis.

Carried without dissent.

Mr. MEIN then moved the following resolutions, of which he had given notice :—

That the Queensland lines of telegraph terminating at Kimberley, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, be connected with the terminus of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company's cables at Port Darwin by means of a cable from Kimberley to the mouth of the Roper River, and thence by a land line to Port Darwin.

That the land line from the Roper River be constructed and maintained at the cost of South Australia, and that so long as such line shall be maintained in full working order the other colonies shall pay to South Australia an annual sum equal to six pounds per centum of the original capital amount expended by that colony in the construction of such line.

That the cable between Kimberley and the Roper River be constructed at the joint cost of the different Australasian Colonies, except South Australia, such colonies to contribute thereto in amounts proportionate to their population as officially estimated on the 31st day of December 1877; and that the income derivable from such cable be set apart as a reserve fund for the renewal thereof.

That the rate payable to South Australia for international messages transmitted across the present trans-continental line be reduced to 1s. per word.

That the rate to be charged by South Australia for international messages between Port Darwin and the Roper River be 4d. per word.

That the rate to be charged for international messages by the cable between the Roper River and Kimberley be 6d. per word.

That the rate to be charged by Queensland for international messages across her lines of telegraph shall not exceed 2d. per word.

That in all instances the senders of international messages shall be at liberty to elect the route by which such messages shall be forwarded; and, in the event of no election being made at the time of the delivery of messages for transmission, messages to and from New Zealand, New South Wales, and Queensland shall be transmitted by way of the Queensland lines, and the new route to be established between Kimberley and Port Darwin, and all other messages shall be transmitted by way of the present trans-continental line of South Australia.

Sir JAMES WILSON seconded the resolutions.

Discussion ensued, and the Conference divided, with the following result :—

For.	Against.
Queensland, Tasmania,	New South Wales, South Australia, Victoria,

Sir JAMES WILSON, with the permission of the Conference, withdrew the following motions standing in his name :—

- (8a.) That in consideration of the advantage afforded to the Australasian Colonies by the maintenance by Queensland of a duplicate land line of telegraph [*terminating at Normantown*] the colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognize an extension of the Queensland line from Normantown to a point on the trans-continental line (say Daly Waters, 368 miles south of Port Darwin), which would practically constitute a duplication of the land telegraph, as forming part of the common system of telegraphic communication between Australasia and Europe, within the meaning of Resolution 1.
- (8b.) That so soon as such connecting line shall have been erected by Queensland, the colonies represented at this Conference shall contribute to the maintenance of the same to the extent of an annual subsidy of say 6 per cent. on a capital outlay of say not exceeding £50,000.
- (9a.) That, on the completion of the duplicate cable, the charge for transmission on the South Australian trans-continental line be reduced to 1s. per word; and should any further reduction be hereafter deemed necessary, the loss to South Australia shall be borne by the other Australasian Colonies rateably in proportion to population.
- (9b.) That the charges for transmission from England to Port Darwin, and from Port Darwin to England, shall be 5s. per word for Government messages, and 2s. 6d. per word for Press messages.

Colonel Glover was recalled, and gave further evidence.

Mr. CUTHBERT then moved, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—

That the cost of the subsidy be paid by the different Australasian Colonies rateably in proportion to their respective populations.

That, in the first instance, the populations of the several colonies, as officially estimated on 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each.

That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once every five years.

Discussion ensued.—Motions put and carried, Queensland not voting.

The Conference then proceeded to the consideration of the following subjects, to which Mr. Burns had given notice that he should call its attention :—

(1.) The early termination of the agreement arrived at in the year 1873 between the Imperial Government and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand in reference to the Ocean Mail Services.

(2.) The Berne Postal Convention.

(3.) The prohibition against the importation of English and other stock.

After some discussion of the question of the early termination of the Ocean Mail contract, its further consideration was postponed.

Mr. BURNS then moved, seconded by Mr. TODD—

That the adoption of the amended treaty agreed to by the Berne Postal Convention be recommended for the favorable consideration of the Governments of Australia and New Zealand.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. BURNS then brought under notice of the Conference the question of removing the prohibition on the importation of stock into the Australasian Colonies. After discussion, the further consideration of the question was postponed.

The Conference then proceeded to the consideration of the following motion, of which Sir James Wilson had given notice, viz. :—

That it is desirable to make provision by legislation that probate of wills taken out in one colony may be registered in the Registry of Wills Office in any other colony, in cases of testators dying in one colony leaving personal property in other colonies; and that additional facilities should be afforded to suitors for enforcing judgments recovered in the Supreme Court of one colony against the property of judgment debtors in other colonies.

With the consent of the Conference the motion was divided into two portions; when

Sir JAMES WILSON moved, seconded by Mr. BOUCAUT—

That it is desirable to make provision by legislation that probate of wills taken out in one colony may be registered in the Registry of Wills Office in any other colony, in cases of testators dying in one colony leaving personal property in other colonies.

Discussion ensued.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. MEIN then moved, seconded by Mr. BOUCAUT—

That the Government of Tasmania be requested to prepare a Bill dealing with the question raised by the foregoing resolution, and submit the same for the approval of the Governments of the several Australasian Colonies with a view to united legislation on the subject.

Motion carried unanimously.

Sir JAMES WILSON then moved, seconded by Mr. MEIN—

That additional facilities should be afforded to suitors for enforcing judgments recovered in the Supreme Court of one colony against the property of judgment debtors in other colonies.

Discussion ensued.

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. MEIN then moved, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—

That the representatives of the different colonies undertake, in the event of the law advisers of their Governments approving of the same, to endeavour to procure the passing in their respective Legislatures of a Bill dealing with the question raised by the foregoing resolution, similar to that submitted by Tasmania, and appended to the proceedings of the Conference. (*See Appendix 6.*)

Motion carried unanimously.

Mr. BOUCAUT then moved the following resolution :—

That it is desirable that the Governments of the Continental colonies should, at as early a period as possible, interchange views as to the intended routes of their principal railway lines, so as to enable junctions of the various systems to be arranged for at the most suitable points.

Motion carried unanimously.

Sir JAMES WILSON then moved the following motion :—

That in the opinion of this Conference the necessity of the joint defence of the Australian Colonies should be recognized and acted upon promptly by their respective Governments and Legislatures, in view of the present unsettled state of Europe, and having regard to future contingencies.

Motion carried unanimously.

The Conference then adjourned until Saturday the 18th instant, at ten o'clock.

GRAHAM BERRY.

18TH MAY 1878.

Present :

The Hon. GRAHAM BERRY, in the Chair ;

The Honorable J. F. BURNS,

The Honorable C. S. MEIN,

The Honorable Sir J. M. WILSON,

The Honorable J. P. BOUCAUT,

C. TODD, Esq., C.M.G.

The Minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Sir JAMES WILSON stated that he desired to place on record his reasons for dissenting from the conclusions arrived at by the Conference in disregarding the claims of New Zealand and Tasmania, and handed in a memorandum embodying his views to be appended to the Report.

After a short adjournment Mr. BERRY moved, seconded by Mr. BURNS—

That whilst the Conference has not made any provision for the duplication, at the present time, of the Continental Line of Telegraph from Port Darwin, the Representatives of the different colonies expressly reserve for confederate action a future decision on this important point, and empower the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria, before entering into and making any contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for constructing the second cable between Port Darwin and Singapore, to receive an engagement from South Australia to co-operate with the other Australian Colonies in constructing and maintaining a new line of telegraph from Port Darwin, to be connected with the telegraph system of Queensland ; provided that, in the event of such line being decided upon, South Australia shall not be called upon to contribute thereto.

Discussion ensued.—Motion carried, South Australia not voting.

Mr. BURNS intimated that it was not the intention of the Government of New South Wales to renew the prohibition against the importation of English and other stock, which would expire on the 30th June ; and that it had been his intention to move a resolution on the subject, but as he had learned, from the discussions which had taken place, that the delegates were not prepared to deal with the question, he should leave it for the consideration of the colonies concerned, without inviting the Conference to express any opinion on the course proposed to be taken by the New South Wales Government.

Mr. BURNS then moved, seconded by Mr. MEIN—

That the Agents-General be requested, in view of the early termination of the Postal Treaty of 1873 between the Imperial Government and the Colonies, to elicit from the Secretary of State for the Colonies the intentions of the Imperial Government in reference to the Suez, Pacific, and Torres Straits Mail Services.

Motion put and carried unanimously.

The Report of the proceeding of the Conference was then considered, and agreed to.

It was then moved by Mr. MEIN, seconded by Sir JAMES WILSON—

That the thanks of the Conference be given to the Honorable Graham Berry for the services rendered by him as the President of the Conference, and that the President be requested to convey the thanks of the Conference to Mr. Ware for the efficient manner in which he had performed his duties as Secretary to the Conference.

Motion put and carried unanimously.

The Conference then adjourned *sine die*.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

FRIDAY, 10TH MAY 1878.

NOTICES OF MOTION :—

Mr. BURNS : To move, That in the opinion of this Conference provision should be made as early as practicable for ensuring greater certainty of telegraphic communication between Great Britain and the Australian Colonies and New Zealand, by the duplication where necessary of the existing lines.

Mr. MEIN : To move—

- (1.) That in the interest of all the Australasian Colonies it is essential that there should be a complete system of telegraphic communication between British India and the Continent of Australia, unconnected with the existing lines of the Eastern Extension Company, and under the control of an independent company or proprietary.
- (2.) That the second system of communication should be connected with the capitals of the several Australian Colonies by means of land lines entirely independent of the lines connecting Port Darwin with Adelaide.
- (3.) That on the completion of the second system of telegraphic communication with British India there should be paid to the Eastern Extension Company, throughout the period during which a subsidy shall be paid to the proprietors of such second system, a subsidy equal to per centum of the original capital cost of the construction of such company's present lines of cable between Singapore and Batavia, and Banjoewangie and Port Darwin, if they shall throughout such period maintain in effective working order a separate line of telegraphic communication between Port Darwin and British India.
- (4.) That all subsidies which may be required for the construction or maintenance of ocean cables between British India and Australia should be paid and borne by the several Australian Colonies in such proportions as may be mutually determined.

Sir JAMES WILSON : To move :—

- (1.) That the cables connecting New South Wales with New Zealand, Tasmania with Victoria, and Port Darwin with Singapore, shall be considered as ocean lines, forming one common system of telegraphic communication between the Australasian Colonies and Europe.
- (2.) That the cost of the subsidies now paid, or to be paid, towards those cables be borne by the colonies benefiting by the same rateably in proportion to their respective populations.
- (3.) That South Australia be exempt from contribution to the line between Port Darwin and Singapore, in consideration of her large outlay in erecting and maintaining the trans-continental line of telegraph.
- (4.) That, in the first instance, the population of the several colonies, as officially estimated on the 31st December 1876, shall be the basis of the proportionate allotment of cost to each.
- (5.) That such contributions shall be re-adjusted on the basis of the populations of the several colonies as shown by the next general census, and thereafter once in every five years.
- (6.) That New Zealand be invited to concur in the foregoing resolutions.
- (7.) That in case New Zealand declines to adopt the principle laid down in Resolution No. 1, the other Australasian Colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognise the New Zealand cable as an ocean line under the meaning of that resolution to the extent of the contribution now paid towards its maintenance by New South Wales, viz., £2,500.
- (8.) That in consideration of the advantage afforded to the Australasian Colonies by the maintenance by Queensland of a duplicate land line of telegraph terminating at Normantown, the colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognise any cable that may be laid across the Gulf of Carpentaria, of say 360 miles in length, between Normantown and Roper's River, as an ocean line within the meaning of Resolution 1.
- (9.) That in any arrangement entered into with the Eastern Telegraph Extension Company for subsidizing a duplicate cable provision should be made for the maintenance by such company during the subsistence of the contract of both the old and the new lines in full working order.
- (10.) That the Governments of New South Wales and Victoria be empowered to enter into an agreement and contract with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for a second cable from Singapore direct to Banjoewangie, avoiding the Java land-lines, and thence direct to Port Darwin, for an annual subsidy of not exceeding £32,400 for a period of years.

Mr. MEIN : To move, That the representatives of each colony shall undertake to recommend to the Government and to the Parliament of the colony which they represent the adoption of measures to carry out all the resolutions to which they may have given their assent.

Sir J. M. WILSON : To move, That it shall be competent for any member of the Conference to submit for discussion any question of intercolonial interest other than that of telegraphic communication with Europe.

CONTINGENT NOTICES OF MOTION :—

Mr. BURNS : To call the attention of the Conference, at its next sitting, or as soon thereafter as may be convenient, to the following subjects :—

- (1.) The early termination of the agreement arrived at in the year 1873 between the Imperial Government and the Governments of Australia and New Zealand in reference to the Ocean Mail Services.
- (2.) The Berne Postal Convention.
- (3.) The prohibition against the importation of English and other stock.

Sir J. M. WILSON : To move, That it is desirable to make provision by legislation that probate of wills taken out in one colony may be registered in the Registry of Wills Office in any other colony in cases of testators dying in one colony leaving personal property in other colonies ; and that additional facilities should be afforded to suitors for enforcing judgments recovered in the Supreme Court of one colony against the property of judgment debtors in other colonies.

Contingent on the passing of the above resolution, To move, that the following draft Bill, with memoranda annexed, be printed as an Appendix to the Report of the Conference :—

A BILL

To render Judgments, which have been obtained in the Supreme Court of any of the other Australian Colonies, effectual in [*Tasmania*].

BE it enacted, &c. :—

1. The word “judgment” shall include any judgment, decree, rule or order at law or in equity of the Supreme Court of any of the Australian Colonies, other than [*Tasmania*], for the payment of money. Interpretation.

2. Where judgment shall hereafter be obtained in the Supreme Court of any Australian Colony other than [*Tasmania*], the registrar of the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*] shall on the production to him of a certificate of such judgment in the form or to the effect in the Schedule purporting to be signed by the proper officer of the Court where such judgment has been obtained, register such certificate in a register to be kept in the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*], and to be called “*The Register for Australian Judgments*.” Certificate of judgment obtained in another colony may be registered in [*Tasmania*].

3. The certificate shall from the date of such registration be of the same force and effect, and all proceedings may be had and taken on such certificate, as if the judgment of which it is a certificate had been a judgment originally obtained on the date of such registration in the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*], and all the reasonable costs and charges attendant upon obtaining and registering such certificate shall be recovered in like manner as if the same were part of the original judgment. On registration, certificate to have effect of judgment in [*Tasmania*].

4. No certificate of any such judgment shall be registered as aforesaid more than twelve months after the date of such judgment, unless application shall have been first made to and leave obtained from the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*]. Certificate to be registered within twelve months after judgment.

5. The Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*] shall have and exercise the same control and jurisdiction over any judgment and over any certificate of such judgment registered under this Act as it now has and exercises over any of its own judgments, but in so far only as relates to execution under this Act. Court to have control over certificate so registered.

6. It shall not be necessary for any person resident in any of the other Australian Colonies in any proceeding had and taken on such certificate to find security for costs in respect of such residence, unless, on special grounds, a Judge or the Court shall otherwise order. No security for costs where person registering certificate resides out of [*Tasmania*].

7. In any action brought on any judgment which might be registered under this Act the party bringing such action shall not recover or be entitled to any costs or expenses of suit, unless the Supreme Court or a Judge thereof shall otherwise order. No costs in action on judgments.

8. The Judges of the Supreme Court may make rules and orders to regulate the practice to be observed in the execution of this Act or in any matter relating thereto, including the scale of fees to be charged. Judges to make rules.

9. In citing this Act it shall be sufficient to use the expression “*The Intercolonial Judgments Act* 1878.” Short title.

SCHEDULE.

I, _____, certify that [*insert name of person entitled to judgment, with his title, trade, or profession, and usual or last known place of abode*] on the _____ day of _____ 18____, obtained judgment [*or as the case may be*] before the Supreme Court of [*insert name of Australian Colony*] for payment of the sum of _____ on account of [*here state shortly the nature of claim and amount of costs*].

Memorandum 1—Probate of Wills :—

In the case of a testator dying in one colony leaving personal property in other colonies, his will must now be proved, or letters of administration (with the will, or with an exemplification of it annexed) must be taken out in each of the colonies.

Where letters of administration are taken out, the executor usually appoints an attorney to take them out, and he has to find sureties for the administration bond.

This all causes expense and delay.

It is proposed, when probate has been taken out by an executor in any one colony, that such executor may cause an exemplification of such probate to be registered in the Registry of Wills Office in any other colony, and that the registering of such exemplification shall be of the same force and effect as if probate had been granted in such last-mentioned colony. An office copy of such exemplification shall have the same effect as evidence as the probate itself would have had if it had been granted in such colony.

For the purposes of collecting revenue, no exemplification shall be registered till such accounts have been prepared and affidavits made as may be required for the purpose of ascertaining and collecting probate or other duty.

Memorandum 2.—Enforcement of Judgments recovered in the Supreme Court of one colony against the property of the judgment debtor in other colonies:—

This can now be effected upon registering the judgment in an adjoining colony, and *summoning the judgment debtor before the Supreme Court of such colony to show cause why execution should not issue against the debtor; and the Court can thereupon order execution to issue against him.*

It is proposed that the necessity for summoning the debtor should be done away; he may be absent from the colony or keeping out of the way; and the court of this colony at any rate has no power to serve such a summons out of its own jurisdiction. Summoning the debtor also entails expense and delay.

Between England, Ireland, and Scotland, a certificate of judgment obtained in any one of the three countries is filed in any other, and execution issues at once, without further proceedings, just as if such judgment had been obtained in the country in which the certificate is filed.

It is proposed to place these colonies in a similar position as to the judgments of their respective Supreme Courts as England, Ireland, and Scotland stand in with reference to the issuing of execution on the judgments of their superior courts.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

THURSDAY, 16TH MAY.

- Mr. BURNS: To move (*contingent on Sir James Wilson's sub-motion No. 3 being carried*)—
That in the event of an agreement being arrived at with the Eastern Extension Company for the duplication of the cable from Singapore to Port Darwin, the South Australian Government should increase the number of their stations on their Port Darwin line, and also reduce their charge for International messages passing over their lines to a maximum rate of one shilling per word.
- Mr. BURNS: To move, That the rate per word to be charged by the said company for messages between Port Darwin and Madras and Port Darwin and Rangoon shall not exceed:—For all messages of the Governments of the colonies contributing to the subsidy and press messages to or for such colonies
shillings ; for other messages shillings.
- Mr. CUTHBERT: To move, That such subsidy shall cease whenever the profits of the company are sufficient to pay a dividend of £10 per cent. on the capital invested.
- Mr. MEIN: To move—
That the Queensland lines of telegraph terminating at Kimberley, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, be connected with the terminus of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company's cables at Port Darwin by means of a cable from Kimberley to the mouth of the Roper River, and thence by a land line to Port Darwin.
That the land line from the Roper River be constructed and maintained at the cost of South Australia, and that so long as such line shall be maintained in full working order the other colonies shall pay to South Australia an annual sum equal to six pounds per centum of the original capital amount expended by that colony in the construction of such line.
That the cable between Kimberley and the Roper River be constructed at the joint cost of the different Australasian Colonies, except South Australia, such colonies to contribute thereto in amounts proportionate to their population as officially estimated on the 31st day of December 1877; and that the income derivable from such cable be set apart as a reserve fund for the renewal thereof.
That the rate payable to South Australia for international messages transmitted across the present trans-continental line be reduced to 1s. per word.
That the rate to be charged by South Australia for international messages between Port Darwin and the Roper River be 4d. per word.
That the rate to be charged for international messages by the cable between the Roper River and Kimberley be 6d. per word.
That the rate to be charged by Queensland for international messages across their lines of telegraph shall not exceed 2d. per word.
That in all instances the senders of international messages shall be at liberty to elect the route by which such messages shall be forwarded; and that, in the event of no election being made at the time of the delivery of messages for transmission, messages to and from New Zealand, New South Wales, and Queensland shall be transmitted by way of the Queensland lines, the new route to be established between Kimberley and Port Darwin, and all other messages shall be transmitted by way of the present trans-continental line of South Australia.
- Sir JAMES WILSON: To move—
(8a.) That in consideration of the advantage afforded to the Australasian Colonies by the maintenance by Queensland of a duplicate land line of telegraph [*terminating at Normantown*] the colonies represented at this Conference consent to recognise an extension of the Queensland line from Normantown to a point on the trans-continental line (say Daly Waters, 368 miles south of Port Darwin), which would practically constitute a duplication of the land telegraph, as forming part of the common system of telegraphic communication between Australasia and Europe, within the meaning of Resolution 1.
(8b.) That so soon as such connecting line shall have been erected by Queensland the colonies represented at this Conference shall contribute to the maintenance of the same to the extent of an annual subsidy of say 6 per cent. on a capital outlay of say not exceeding £
(9a.) That, on the completion of the duplicate cable, the charge for transmission on the South Australian trans-continental line be reduced to 1s. per word; and should any further reduction be hereafter deemed necessary the loss to South Australia shall be borne by the other Australasian Colonies rateably in proportion to population.
(9b.) That the charges for transmission from England to Port Darwin, and from Port Darwin to England, shall be 5s. per word for Government messages, and 2s. 6d. per word for Press messages.

GRAHAM BERRY,
President.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE.

FRIDAY, 10TH MAY 1878.

Members present:

The Hon. G. BERRY, M.L.A., in the Chair;

The Hon. H. Cuthbert, M.L.C.,

The Hon. J. F. Burns,

The Hon. Sir James M. Wilson,

The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,

The Hon. C. S. Mein,

C. Todd, Esq., C.M.G.

Colonel Glover examined.

Colonel Glover,
10th May 1878.

1. *By the Chairman.*—We thought it desirable to ask you to come in at this early stage of the Conference, and we desire to know if you have any proposal that you are authorized to make that would be binding upon your directors; have they commissioned you to make a distinct and definite offer to these colonies?—When I first came out, I was sent out on the basis of your former Conference—to see if you could come to an agreement as to what you wanted done, and upon that we would have made an offer; but, since then, I find that, in December, the chairman had made an offer of a certain sum of money, which, on my referring home, was confirmed; therefore, the company is content to take that sum of money for the duplication, provided it goes to Darwin.

2. That is from Singapore to Banjoewangie?—That is from Singapore to Banjoewangie, and Banjoewangie to Port Darwin, for which the company will take £32,400 per annum. The company did not know whether you wanted the duplication carried out in that way or some other, and therefore did not formulate any proposal till it knew the desire of the colonies.

3. Have you any written instructions?—I have a telegram, which has just come out.

4. The Conference would like to know what position you stand in?—I can show you a letter, authorizing me to come out on behalf of the company.

5. Let me put it in another way: You are, I suppose, only in a position to give information, and, on transmitting, the approval of the directors?—I am; I am in a position to make this offer, provided you adopt this line to Darwin; but if you come to an agreement that you do not think this line desirable—that you want any other line—then I should have to get instructions. Those I can have only by telegraph. I was simply instructed upon your first Conference, in which you expressed a desire for duplication. There were three different proposals in that; and so the company requested me to come and communicate with the colonies, and find out what they made up their minds to do, and upon that to make an offer; since then Mr. Todd has communicated to the different colonies the views of the company, and stated that the chairman had offered £32,400. Mr. Mein first spoke to me about it. I referred at once, and got an answer that the chairman was willing to accept that sum.

6. *By Mr. Mein.*—That is, you have authority to accept Mr. Morgan's proposal?—Yes; and to listen to any other proposals, and to refer and get an offer as soon as we know what is wanted.

7. *By the Chairman.*—I would like to ask whether, apart altogether from the colonies and from the question of duplication, are the directors satisfied?—This comes from the chairman.

8. But are they satisfied with the state of the cable and of the state of the intermittent service we have had hitherto?—I do not think we should have sought to duplicate the cable of our own accord.

9. It must have been a great loss to you?—I think not, nothing but what we can bear; we look upon it as part and parcel of telegraphy, we have come across rather a bad sea between Singapore and Batavia; but I think every time there is a break or interruption it is put down to this particular cable. There are many cables between this and England, and all the interruptions are not always due to the line between Singapore and Darwin.

10. *By Mr. Mein.*—But the interruptions are upon your own lines between India and Australia?—Not always of necessity; we had once a long interruption, you remember, between Penang and Madras. The interruption occurred in the monsoon; it happened unfortunately to occur the very day the monsoon burst. The ship went out, and was lying six months waiting for an opportunity to repair the cable; and had the whole British navy been there it could not have been repaired sooner than it was. In consequence of that we laid a second cable to Penang, out of the influence, as we hope, of the monsoon; but none of the lines are in such a state that we are likely to have another interruption of that sort. The lines are in shallow water; we can pick them up at any moment, and it is very much like the repair of a land line. We are perfectly confident that as soon as your line is broken we can repair it in a day or two of the ship getting there. On the other line we were not at all so, and on that account we put up the duplicate.

11. *By the Chairman.*—I asked you whether the company were themselves satisfied with the existing service or whether they thought a duplicate line was necessary, and I think your answer was in effect that they were tolerably well satisfied?—Yes.

12. And that in fact the large number of stoppages of which we complain do not occur upon the line here, but upon some of the other lines connecting us with Europe?—Yes.

13. Now I wish to ask you this question: All these stoppages or breakages that you are now referring to as not being in our waters would not of course be affected in any way by this duplication?—No.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1878.

14. Have you any information as to where the breakages really have taken place during that period? —I have not, I am sorry to say; but I mean that the breakages are not of necessity upon the lines of the company—they may occur in your own colonies.

15. Upon the land line?—And even on your own land line.

16. I mean upon the overland line?—Yes.

17. We always hear when that is the case?—Yes; but when I have been here lately I always hear the cable immediately referred to.

18. *By the Chairman (to Mr. Todd).*—How many of these breakages would be upon the overland line?

Mr. Todd.—Between Singapore and Port Darwin?

19. *The Chairman.*—Yes?

Mr. Todd.—The first interruption was between the 22nd June and the 20th October; that was between Port Darwin and Banjoewangie.

The Witness.—That was, I think, before the overland line was in operation.

20. *The Chairman.*—Yes?—So that you could not have had any communication whether the cable was in operation or not.

21. Yes, but the first interruption?

Mr. Todd.—After the land line was completed, was between March 31st and April the 2nd. That was between Batavia and Singapore—that is only a few days. The second interruption: between Batavia and Singapore there were several interruptions in 1874—three interruptions—one from May 20th to May 31st; August 13th to August 23rd virtually.

22. *By the Chairman.*—Do those interruptions all come within that duplication?

Mr. Todd.—Yes, between Batavia and Singapore. The next interruption: September the 12th to September 16th, between Batavia and Singapore; November the 5th to the 8th, upon the same section—that is four interruptions.

23. *Mr. Mein.*—You have omitted one, according to the printed return—an interruption from December 10th to the 24th.

Mr. Todd.—Yes, I did; I beg your pardon.

24. *The Chairman.*—There are four in 1874, and two in 1875—that is six.

Mr. Todd.—There were four in 1874; and in 1875 there were only two; in 1876 there were two interruptions; 1877, there were three interruptions; and in 1878 one interruption, on this particular line

25. *By Mr. Mein.*—Would not you call the land line an interruption, within the part proposed to be duplicated?

The Chairman.—Not as it relates to Colonel Glover.

Mr. Mein.—It was an interruption upon the Java land line.

Mr. Todd.—I was not speaking of that.

The Chairman.—The duplication would not affect that.

26. *Mr. Mein.*—If we throw Java out of consideration, we do not have two lines, we have only one?

The Witness.—I do not understand you; one line goes to one end of Java, and the other to the other, so that in the duplication you would not have to consider Java at all.

27. *By the Chairman.*—Apart from what has taken place in the colonies, and from what we are considering now, are you in a position to tell us the opinion of the directors as to the necessity for a duplication, or whether there is any other mode by which the present cable could be made more secure; is there any prospect of this being in better working order for the future?—I should like to make a remark. The principal cause of the interruption is an insect which we have found, and that has not been discovered in cables in any other part of the world. It bores into the cable; it does not interrupt it, a telegraphist will understand my meaning: it does not break the cable in two, but it taps it; it is like boring a few holes into a water-pipe—one hole allows the water to run, but if you bore a number of holes, there is, after a time, such a leakage that you can scarcely get any water at all. This insect bores into the line, and makes the signal, after a time, indistinct; then we send out the ship. We can pick up the cable perfectly readily, the only inconvenience is the delay of a few days. I think the finding of this insect here is due to the warm seas. If we duplicate the cable, we shall put a covering of metal over the gutta-percha that will prevent the insect from boring. All these things are experimental and tentative. Had we known of this insect in the first instance, we should have done this, and you would not, I believe, have had these interruptions—which lie principally between Batavia and Singapore.

28. *By Mr. Todd.*—I believe, Colonel Glover, that in any new cable laid down in those seas it is the intention to sheathe the gutta-percha core with metal?—Yes.

29. Am I right when I say it is to be sheathed with two layers, a right hand and a left hand spiral sheathing?—I cannot tell you that exactly, because when I left England experiments were being made, and the form of the cable has been determined since I left.

30. It is to be closed up against these boring insects?—It is intended to be so; but I cannot say that it will be so, for the cable now is made out of iron wires twisted all round the cable, and how the insect can get in where you cannot get a pin in is a thing we cannot explain to you. But it does get in, and now we are going to put a tape as it were of metal on the gutta-percha on the inside, and then the wire outside as usual, which we believe will entirely prevent the animal getting in.

31. I see between Batavia and Singapore since 1871 the longest interruption was fourteen days; the others varied from three to eleven days; is that because the cable lies in shallow seas?—The shortness of the interruptions, and the facility of repairs is entirely due to the shallow seas, and that is why we advocate this line, that we have no doubt of being able to make repairs; but the first interruption that Mr. Todd mentioned occurred before the land line was completed; that interruption lasted some months; the ship went out and lost the whole of her gear, and new gear and a certain number of electricians and scientific men had to be sent out from England to make the repairs, because it was in deep water. Again, an interruption upon the Madras and Penang section, from which you suffered for six months, was on account of deep water, with the monsoon blowing. At present there are two out of the four or five of the Atlantic cables lying unrepaired and broken in deep water; they cannot get at them.

Last year they sent out an expedition at the cost of £100,000, and failed; they are going to send another one, and may fail again. To dangle a hook at the end of a rope three miles long to catch an object about the size of your umbrella may help you to understand the difficulty of repairing in deep water; then, when you have grappled this thing, you have to lift it three miles. It is covered with seaweed and shells, and the iron wire upon which it depends to give it its strength is deteriorated by time, and you have a difficulty of getting it up. These difficulties arise in deep sea cables, and they are so great that our experience now leads us to avoid them as much as we possibly can.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1878.

32. The long interruption in 1876 between Port Darwin and Java was from April the 24th to August the 7th. Can you explain the cause of that?—The absence of the repairing ship; she was upon the very repair that I mentioned. It was considered useless putting Australia in connection with Singapore, if you could not get on to Madras and so to England; and as the Madras and Penang section was the principal section of the whole company's system, we kept the ship there waiting for an opportunity to repair it; we could have put you through any day, but there was no object in doing so if you could not get further than Singapore.

33. Except that a message in that case could have gone by Singapore *via* China?—That would have doubled the expense; if it had been desired, we could have done it; we acted for the best in our judgment for the general public.

34. Then, practically, in any break between Singapore and Batavia or Banjoewangie and Java there would be very little delay in picking up the cable and repairing it?—Only a few days going there and back, and three or four days repairing. I think you need never be more than a week. Of course you cannot say what may happen from different causes, but I should say not.

35. *By Mr. Mein.*—You might find these insects operating in the shallow waters of the warm seas?—We have found them only in one sea principally, that is, between Singapore and Batavia; we have found them in others, but not in numbers.

36. Do not electricians find the insulation more perfect in deep water and the liability to break less frequent?—It is impossible for any man living to tell you the liability to break.

37. You have no experience?—There are valleys and mountains at the bottom of the sea the same as on shore. Suppose we had a sea over the Australian continent, and I dropped a plumb line every hundred miles in order to get the contour, I might drop a line at one side of your Blue Mountains and the next line might come at the other side, and I might entirely avoid the Blue Mountains and be in ignorance about them, simply because my plumb line did drop upon that particular spot.

38. You are going away from the question?—It is the inequalities of the bottom that cause the difficulties we have to contend with; for when the line lies upon a ridge that you do not see, it lies till the iron wire loses its strength, and the cable accumulates animal and vegetable growth upon it, and becomes much heavier, and then suddenly parts. Last December a similar case occurred near Banjoewangie, opposite Lumbok Straits; the cable parted, hanging over a depth of 200 or 300 fathoms and going down to 1,200 or 1,300. We had much difficulty in recovering it. It had lain there for seven years and given us no anxiety till it suddenly parted; if that had parted in 2,000 or 3,000 fathoms of water, I leave you to imagine where would you have been; it would have been very likely like the American cables that are now silent. Cables in deep water may last; and if they last they last; if they do not, the difficulty of the repair may be such as to amount almost to an abandonment of the cable, or certainly to a very lengthened and protracted interruption, which does not occur in the other case. We therefore prefer 500 or 600 fathoms, where we can get at the cable, if we can get such a position, but we cannot always do so.

39. You find no difficulty in the transmission of messages after they once reach British India; you have different routes to reach Europe?—There are two, one through Russia and Persia; and the other down the Red Sea, all through British possessions. The Indo-European Company goes through Russia and Persia, and it was interrupted during the present war for, I think, a month or two, when Russia was operating in the Caucasus, and the traffic had to come entirely by the Eastern Company, which had a duplicate line the whole way down the Red Sea and across to India.

40. You made some reference to stoppages outside the colonial lines, and I interjected at the time that the stoppages occurred upon your own lines between Singapore and India; you have a line between Singapore and Madras; but if your lines had been perfected to India, those stoppages would not have affected the messages to and from this colony?—Stoppages occur sometimes on the Indo-European and Eastern lines.

41. But then you can fall back upon the Eastern Company?—Yes, we can. The Eastern Company also has been interrupted; but then we fall back upon the Indo-European line.

42. I suppose that is what has been suggested here, that as to the desirability of having two cables, that you can fall back upon either?—Yes, but you are now fortified by duplication; you were not at the time I talk of. The new duplicate that you have between Rangoon and Penang is doing away with those continued interruptions.

43. *By Mr. Todd.*—Is there any intention to duplicate the cable between Penang and Singapore?—I believe so.

44. *By Mr. Burns.*—Part of the proposition of your company is that, if the offer is accepted, to duplicate the cable; the company will duplicate between Penang and Singapore at their own cost?—I cannot make an offer to that effect. When we made that offer we wanted larger terms. Any question you put to me I can get an answer to in specific terms in a day or two; but at the time I left England we had asked for a reserve fund, and we were prepared to do this. No doubt we shall have to do it, it will come in time, as we have done between Rangoon and Singapore.

45. *By Mr. Mein.*—Any duplication of lines beyond Singapore towards India would not be solely for the benefit of the Australian colonies?—Certainly not.

46. It would facilitate your work upon the lines to China?—Just so.

47. *By Mr. Burns.*—Have you considered the different proposals made at the Conference of the colonies for duplication in respect to distance and cost?—Yes; I have a book in the other room from which I could tell you the cost of most of the duplications.

48. Your calculations of the cost are recognised by the company as the basis upon which they rest their proposals for duplication?—Yes.

Colonel Glover
continued,
10th May 1878.

49. Have you any estimate of the cost of the line from North-West Cape to Singapore?—I have in a book; I could get it in a moment; it is very much the same as the other; I think they are within £30,000 or £40,000 of one another. Between North-West Cape and Singapore, and between Darwin and Singapore, there is a very trifling difference.

50. Do you know that the sea of Western Australia from North-West Cape is a sea such as the other?—I will get the information from the other room—[*the witness withdrew for that purpose and immediately returned.*] By Singapore to Banjoewangie and Banjoewangie to North-West Cape would cost about £500,000.

51. I ask you have you any information as to the sea between Banjoewangie and North-West Cape?—I have. I suppose you are content to take Admiral Richards, the Hydrographer of the Admiralty, as a considerable authority; and Sir James Anderson. I telegraphed to them both, and Sir James Anderson says:—"All experience confirms that cables at moderate depth can be maintained; and cables at such depths as in Western Australia route have only been recovered when quite new, and with very large steamers; all other attempts have failed so far; and although not yet despaired of, the expense must always be serious and success most uncertain." Admiral Richards says:—"The depths of the route from North-West Cape to Java are unknown, and no doubt very great, repairs if possible would certainly be very difficult and costly. On present route, cable easily repaired, and new patent cable is specially designed to resist teredo." I tried to get the best information to lay before you, and tell you the actual authorities.

52. In connection with the proposal of the company for the Port Darwin and Banjoewangie line, were you not aware that they also stated, as part of the condition of the proposal, their intention to make a line between Penang and Singapore at their own cost?—We asked a definite sum of money. I believe we shall do it; but I would not like to give a direct answer without reference home; in fact, I did refer home just now before I came, thinking the question might be asked.

53. *By Mr. Todd.*—That was when you asked for the renewal fund?—Yes; we do not ask for a renewal fund now; and as that is not in the question, I should not like to bind the company till I ask the question. I quite acknowledge that the offer had been made.

54. *By Mr. Burns.*—Do you know the distance between Normantown and Port Darwin, or between Thursday Island?—Thursday Island I have not; I have Normantown to Port Darwin—963 knots; I have it here; that is the cable, which includes what we call slack; 900 is the actual distance. I give you the length of a cable.

55. Nine hundred and sixty-three knots?—Yes, so I understand it.

56. Have you any knowledge of the sea?—I have not. I look upon it as much the same as to Port Darwin for about 400 miles; the last 400 miles to Darwin goes over a flat ridge of 40 or 50 fathoms, and then dips into deep water—[*explaining upon the chart.*]

57. What would be the terms for laying that line?—I have no instructions for that. Do you mean from Normantown to Port Darwin?

58. Yes, 963 knots. Is not your cost £450 a mile?—It depends. In many cases we have to make a stronger cable on account of the sea, and I cannot quite answer; I have not got it here.

59. *By Mr. Mein.*—Have you got an estimate of the cost from Cape York to Port Darwin?—No. I think I have from Cape York to Singapore.

60. Give us that?—What I have here is about £950,000, *via* Macassar; Cape York to Banjoewangie, and Banjoewangie to Singapore, £870,000; say £880,000. Of course this is subject to modification; it is a mere estimate.

61. *By Mr. Burns.*—We do not desire to bind you down by hard and fast lines?—Quite so.

62. Have you formed any decided opinion as to the best mode of securing the lines from interruption. If you bring a line from Port Darwin, a duplication to there, how would you provide for a duplication?—That must rest with yourselves. If I could draw out a scheme that I could get all the colonies to go into unanimously, I would suggest, as the wisest and best plan for the general benefit, to connect to the Queensland line.

63. From the company's standpoint, how would you best do it, with regard to the working and cost of construction in the first instance—the most economical line of duplication from Port Darwin—have you thought out that question; what is your opinion?—I have not thought of that being done by the company.

64. At the expense of the colonies?—I thought that would be done by yourselves, as a part of internal communication. The company having tapped the continent of Australia, we suppose the different colonies would come as it were to that point of departure, and take their lines from it, if they wished.

65. You just now suggested the Roper as a point?—I mean that if you ask my advice professionally for yourselves, I should say I would take from Darwin to the Roper, or across to Normantown, or it can go round the Gulf of Carpentaria, just as your local experience suggests.

66. What is the sea between Port Darwin and the Roper?—Nothing particular; we thought it a quiet sea without much difficulty; but that is only conjecture; you would know better yourselves than I should. Everyone I have spoken to thinks it a practicable thing, therefore I suppose it is practicable.

67. Did you speak to gentlemen professionally connected with telegraphy?—I have discussed it with several people in the colony—Mr. Todd, Mr. Cracknell, and I discussed it in Queensland with the other Mr. Cracknell, and nobody suggested any difficulty.

68. *By Mr. Todd.*—Are you speaking of a land line or a cable?—Either; but the first idea from the the Roper to Normantown was a cable.

69. You are aware that the land line does not touch the Roper?—Your line does not.

70. *By Mr. Mein.*—Your suggestion is to connect the mouth of the Roper with the land line, and the mouth of the Roper with Kimberley by a cable?—Yes.

71. During your examination by Mr. Berry you made some reference to the company being sometimes by the public thoughtlessly charged with breaks which really occur upon the colonial lines?—Yes.

72. Has not your company found some difficulty in transmitting messages owing to the frequent breaks of the colonial lines when your cable was in working order; have you not found difficulty in transmitting messages from the other colonies on account of the breakages of the land line?—That is one of the unfortunate things that happen; we do not break at the same time.

73. Those difficulties would be met by a duplicate land line from the point of juncture with Australia to the different cables?—Yes.

74. And you think that there would thereby be duplication of communication with England, and that want would be thereby supplied?—You are going somewhat outside of my domain; but if you ask me, I would say yes, certainly.

75. Looking at it from a commercial point of view, would not your company be very glad to have that duplication?—No doubt, but does not care very much about whether you do it or not; if you make a dozen lines, then we shall be more sure of messages; but neither in the colony nor in any habitable place upon the globe can you put up a land line or a sea line, and say it is never to break—break it will.

76. *By Mr. Burns.*—Speaking of the interruptions, I want to put to you some questions upon the breakages upon the land lines. Are you aware of the number of times the line broke between Port Darwin and Adelaide?—I cannot answer you, except from the printed return handed to me by the South Australian authorities.

77. Suppose we were to agree to the offer made by the chairman of your company with regard to this duplication, and attach to that the condition that your company should duplicate the line between Penang and Rangoon?—Between Singapore and Penang?

78. Between Singapore and Penang. Do not you think we should then have up to the point of Port Darwin every reasonable prospect of non-interruptions to the communication between the colonies and England?—Most certainly, and I do not know how you could get a better one either; because, if you go to a separate line in deep water, as I have tried to explain to you, you may have an entire interruption; whereas at the worst, it is not likely that the two cables would be both interrupted together. Even if they were, it would be a mere matter of a day or two to put it in repair. But I do not think that would occur; it would be certain—that is as certain as human foresight could make it.

79. Speaking of the business received by the cable and the comparative business contributed by the different colonies, is it within your knowledge that a large portion of the telegrams received by the press by cable are received, in the first instance, in Melbourne, and then are sent from there to the different colonies?—I cannot quite tell you that; I really do not know.

80. You have not inquired into that?—No; but perhaps some of the company's agents may be able to tell you. It is worthy of notice, however, that that might be done just as well at Adelaide.

Mr. Todd.—They come both ways. A number of messages come addressed to Reuter, at Adelaide, and are repeated; and others come addressed to the *Argus*, and go to the other colonies.

81. *By Mr. Burns.*—Do you think it is probable, if the colonies agree to the duplication we have been speaking of, that the company would be in a position to reduce the charges?—If you give us the sum of money that we have asked you, you give us into one hand what we shall have exactly to pay out of the other to the people from whom we borrow the money, and not one farthing of the money will benefit the company. How we are, on that account, to reduce the charges, I fail to see. I will ask the question willingly; but if you ask my individual opinion, I tell you the simple facts.

82. With regard to your company as a commercial speculation, have you been in a position to pay a reasonable dividend to your shareholders?—We have paid 5 per cent.; but the dividend is not paid so much from the Australian lines as from the other lines.

83. I understand the dividend you pay is 5 per cent.?—Five per cent.

84. *By the Chairman.*—What is the capital of your company upon which 5 per cent. is paid?—About £2,000,000. We had a reserve fund of £127,000, which was a general reserve fund over the whole of our company's operations; but it was spent in laying the duplicate cable between Penang and Rangoon, for the general benefit of the company.

85. *By Mr. Mein.*—With regard to the telegraph—what does your company pay for the transmission of its messages from India to London per word?—Now you ask me a question I really have not the papers to answer from; but I am content to take Mr. Todd's information as printed here.

86. Three shillings and fourpence halfpenny?—Yes; but it varies from time to time according to the convention. But we may take Mr. Todd's statement as correct for the present for all practical purposes.

87. The distance from India to London is about two-thirds the distance from London to Port Darwin, is it not?—I must explain. The telegraph company from India to England bases its calculations upon the traffic it gets in India, and it keeps up the whole of its establishment for the sake of that traffic. If this company comes in and gives them further traffic, they do not increase their staff or their expenses; but all our work is pure gain; therefore they can afford to work for us at a cheaper rate than they can afford to work simply from India; and the only way we have been enabled to give you a tariff that is in any way reasonable is that as each new company has joined the combination, so it has for the company in advance reduced its tariff less than the tariff to its own terminus.

88. *By the Chairman.*—Do you know the difference between what you pay and what they charge in India?—No, I cannot tell you now; it was all fixed long long ago, their charge to India has varied, whereas our charge has generally been a fixed one.

89. *By Mr. Todd.*—You pay about 1s. 2d. a word less I think?—Somewhere about that perhaps.

90. *By Mr. Mein.*—The point I want an explanation upon is the extraordinary difference in price between Port Darwin and India and between India and London?—That is accounted for in this way. There is a large traffic to India, whereas as we come further and further away we have to rely more and more upon the traffic of the place we go to. Had we anything additional, we could reduce the charges. We have to live upon our own traffic alone.

91. The inference is that the more work given the cheaper is the rate of traffic?—It is so within a certain limit.

92. Is not that applicable to us?—It is an extraordinary thing, but I think you will find that within a hundred messages a year the traffic has been exactly the same. The whole five years we have been in existence, the traffic has been ridiculously even, showing no great development whatever.

93. *By Mr. Todd.*—You can scarcely compare one year with another on account of the interruptions?—There was only the one interruption in that particular year. I have it down somewhere. It has been a most even traffic; but I can answer you better by the table I produce. It was the same when the Atlantic cable was first open; you could not send less than a message of twenty words, and you had to pay £20 for it. Their daily average was £750. This year they reduced to a tariff of one shilling a word, and the traffic is 1,254 messages against 29, but they only made £824 against £757.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1878.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1878.

94. *By the Chairman.*—They came down too low?—They came down too low, and we have no reason to suppose that we are not at the happy medium now.

95. *By Mr. Mein.*—We have not made the experiment?—We find that if we once come down it is a very difficult thing to go up again; we cannot alter.

96. The difference is so decided; it costs us twice as much to send from Adelaide to India as it costs from India to London?—If you look at this paper—you can send from London to Melbourne at the rate of less than 1d. per word per 100 miles; if you send on the Brazilian Company from London to Pernambuco or Rio Janeiro, it is 2½d. per word a 100 miles; from New York a little more than 1d. per word a 100 miles; from New York to Panama it is 4½d. per word for 100 miles; and we are under 1d. If you look at that, we are as cheap as anything that can be.

97. That is based upon a calculation from London to the termini here?—Yes.

98. What would be the calculation from the termini here to India?—I explain why you cannot expect me to charge the same rate from here to India as from India to London.

99. *By Mr. Burns.*—Are you prepared to make any reduction upon the current rate of charges?—I see no reason for doing so; but if the Governments subsidize us to the amount of our loss, we are agreeable to do so; that is the general question.

100. Supposing we enter into one of the contracts we have been discussing, do you think your directors would be prepared to make a general reduction in general telegraphic charges to the colonies?—I think not upon general telegraphic messages; but I think very likely a reduction might be made upon press messages for the public.

101. And Government?—I have not asked that; but I will ask the question.

102. You draw a distinction between telegraphic messages which you think are for the whole community and private messages?—Yes.

103. You spoke about your loss; how do you estimate the loss by reduction of charges—upon what basis do you estimate it?—If you pay me so much a word, I get the present income upon the present traffic; if you pay me so much less a word, I estimate the present traffic at so much less a word, and there is a loss upon it.

104. Would not you get an increase of business upon a reduction of charges?—I do not think the reduction would be large enough—it would always cost £5 or £6, and a person considers almost as much whether he will spend £5 or £6 as if he spent £10—he would only send a message when he was going to get a profit.

105. Would you submit a proposal to the company, and tell us what reductions the company would make in prospect of subsidies, and to what amount?—I should like to know what tariff the Conference wishes to have adopted.

106. Different proposals have been made to the company as to reduction of charges, both a word rate and other rates?—The word rate was not in existence at the time the reduction of charge first originated. The word rate entirely originated in the spontaneous action of the telegraphic companies; and I believe our company and the Eastern Company were the first originators of it; even upon the continent of Europe you cannot get a word rate, nor even in England. You have a ten-word rate, and it is only because the directors consulted the wishes of the public that they introduced those reductions; this liberality I think you will find arose from the public companies finding out the convenience of the public, and trying to meet it.

107. Have you considered what would be the probable effect upon the amount of business you would receive from the reductions, and have you considered what subsidies would be required to recoup you for those reductions?—I think a reduction of a penny a word may be considered equal to about £1,000 a year.

108. Any reduction is a very serious matter to the company?—A very serious matter.

109. *By the Chairman.*—I would ask you are you able to supplement the offer contained in the communication to South Australia by any statement within your own knowledge as to any concessions that the directors are prepared to make?—No; but I am quite prepared to undertake to this effect, that if the Conference would make to me any suggestions that they wish to get an answer, I shall be delighted to transmit them and get an answer for them.

110. You have no power to do anything?—I have no power but to make an offer for £32,400 a year.

111. Any modifications you will transmit?—Yes.

112. *By Mr. Burns.*—By transmission of offers I understand you to mean that you have the use of the wire and can get rapid decisions from your board in London to any offer we may make?—Yes.

113. *By Sir James Wilson.*—What period of time would the company expect a subsidy to be paid for if a contract were entered into for a duplicate cable?—I should have to transmit that home.

114. Would it be ten years or five years, or what?—That I shall have to ask.

115. *By the Chairman.*—Or whether it could be made to cease when the business reached a certain amount?—Yes.

116. *By Sir James Wilson.*—Can you suggest a shorter practical route than the one between Singapore and Port Darwin?—No; one of our principal reasons for suggesting the route that we do is its shortness and its cheapness.

117. *By Mr. Burns.*—Do you think one steamer would be sufficient between Port Darwin and Banjoe-wangie to keep two lines in repair?—Certainly, because I suppose the two lines would not be in disrepair at the same time; besides, they are upon the same line, and therefore she could go from one to the other.

118. The annual cost of the steamer would be, I have seen it stated, £10,000?—Yes, it would. You would have to insure and keep her in repair. We have now only one steamer altogether.

119. Do you see any difficulty in laying down a cable, in the matter of repairing the cables, any danger of grappling the wrong cable?—I do not think that. When a man can go now and tell, on a fault occurring, that that fault is at a certain mile of the cable, and the captain can navigate his ship up to that and pick it up in this moderately shallow water, I do not think when that degree of science is reached that there is any reason to fear that he would pick up the wrong cable.

120. *By Mr. Todd.*—They would not be laid close together?—They would be some miles apart. If you look at the chart, you will see the number of cables across the Atlantic. There is a pretty good bundle, and they do not pick up the wrong one.

121. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—How long has the present cable been laid down?—I think since 1871—seven years.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1873.

122. How long is a cable supposed to last?—That is a thing that it is utterly impossible from any experience to say, whether it may be a long time or a short time, but I have no doubt that, like human life, a cable is influenced by its surroundings. A cable might last in one set of seas a certain time, and under different circumstances, in other seas, a much shorter time; but to say how long our cable may last, or any cable, we have no experience—we have not worn them out yet.

123. Is it not supposed that the usual existence of a cable is from ten to twelve years?—Some people will tell you twenty, but I cannot tell you. I think it must depend upon its surroundings—in some seas they last longer, in some seas shorter—we have no experience to tell how long a cable will last.

124. Not even the cables between America and England?—They have broken at one spot, and some of them are irrecoverable, in deep water; but if they could be recovered and joined together again, they would be as good as ever.

125. Is the present cable sufficient for all the messages that have been transmitted—could it accomplish more work?—Certainly; if you speak of the Australian line, it certainly could.

126. Then the principal necessity for a duplicate line is to have more immediate communication?—More certainty of communication.

127. And for no other cause?—For no other cause that I am aware of.

128. In submitting this offer of £32,400 a year, the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company have intimated that they are willing, in consideration of an annual subsidy of £32,400, to lay a second cable from Singapore to Banjoewangie, and thence to Port Darwin?—Yes.

129. Was not it taken into consideration for how many years the subsidy was to be asked for?—I cannot say.

130. In answer to Sir James Wilson, you said that in your opinion the most direct and best route would be from Port Darwin, as I understood you?—The present route?

131. To Singapore?—Yes.

132. Looking at the map from Ceylon to North-West Cape, would there be any difficulty in the way of laying a cable along there?—Ceylon to North-West Cape?

133. Yes?—I think I have it here Galle to North-West Cape is a distance of 3,160—say 3,200 miles; it goes through the deepest of water, and would cost probably a million of money.

134. *By Mr. Burns.*—North-West Cape to Ceylon is 2,520 knots?—But you have to put a slack into that. When I give you distances, I do not give you straight distances, I give you the length of cable required; it is a deep sea you must remember.

135. *By Mr. Burns.*—Would not that be too long a section for a cable?—It is a tremendous section.

136. You would have to call at the Keeling Islands?—I doubt if there is a practicable landing there. I have no knowledge of them; but I believe it is almost a perpendicular wall of coral rock rising from a vast depth.

137. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—Can you form any idea of the expense of laying that line?—I say practically about a million of money, I think.

138. You do not know of any insuperable difficulty in the way of laying it?—I should very much prefer not to do it—very much prefer.

139. In consequence of not knowing anything about the water?—In consequence of knowing nothing about it, and the very great risk of the very deep sea, and the difficulty of repair with interruptions, and the maintenance and other difficulties of a large open ocean.

140. *By Mr. Burns.*—The long section would be an objection?—A long section of 3,000 miles would be, unless we could get an intermediate landing place. I cannot answer for the Keeling or Cocos Islands.

141. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—There is another line from Champion Bay?—The same remarks apply to that as North-West Cape. I have read you Sir James Anderson's and Admiral Richards's opinions.

142. *By Mr. Mein.*—Have you considered a line from Ceylon to the north-west corner of Sumatra and then down, touching at Java and Timor?—Yes; from Ceylon to Sumatra you would have the same difficulty that we have now across to Madras, and which we have tried to remedy by a duplicate line to Rangoon; you cross the Bay of Bengal, where the monsoon blows six months the one way and six months the other, and, if you break, you have great difficulty in repairing on account of the monsoons, we have made a duplicate as a precautionary line; then you come to Sumatra—I do not know whether they propose to work by cable or how—if by cable, it will be a very long one—the whole of the Sumatra coast is studded with islands; you must either go inside the islands or outside. If you go inside, I am afraid you would be among rock; if you are outside, it is a lee shore with the great Southern ocean beating against it. If you work with land lines through Sumatra—you complain now of the bad state of the Java land lines, but they are comparatively good in comparison with those in Sumatra, which is not nearly so civilized a country as Java—when you get to Java, you have the present objections to the Java line; then you go on from there very much the same way as the company's cable, but in the Cape York case you go to a much larger expense, on account of the greater length of cable required than in the Darwin route.

143. When you give the estimate of cost from Cape York to Singapore, what do you estimate per mile?—Much the same as the other.

144. The same cost per mile as your proposed duplicate line?—I think so—[referring to a book]. Singapore to Normantown, was it not?

145. No, that is longer than to Cape York?—To Macassar?

146. No, *via* Timor and Batavia. You said £880,000?—Cape York to Banjoewangie, 1,900 miles in one stretch.

147. You make it up to £880,000—how do you do that?—This is taken from what I got from our advisers—they gave me this. I see one part of the cable is at a larger price.

148. A considerably larger price?—No.

149. Have you the mileage that way?—The mileage from Cape York to Singapore is 2,900 miles, say 3,000 miles.

150. What is the mileage of your proposed duplicate route?—About 2,000 miles.

151. Two thousand how much?—2,875 from Cape York *via* Banjoewangie.

152. That is to Cape York. The proposed duplicate line is 2,150?—Yes.

Colonel Glover,
continued,
10th May 1878.

153. And in the estimated cost you gave in you put down the cost of the cable to Cape York at a much higher rate than the one to Port Darwin?—Yes.

154. Why did you do that?—It is a longer cable.

155. But you can select the same length if you like up to Copang?—I cannot tell you that. I merely went by what I got from our people. Cape York to Banjoewangie—they told me you must have a much heavier cable through that sea and also a greater length.

156. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—That is through Torres Straits, is it not?—Yes.

157. All full of coral?—Yes; full of coral reefs.

158. *By Mr. Mein.*—You got coral reefs in the other line?—No, we have not broken upon them. Upon the Banjoewangie line we have only broken three times.

159. *By the Chairman.*—Do you consider that the breakages and interruptions upon the line between Port Darwin and Singapore are excessive as compared with other breakages elsewhere?—The breakages are not. The interruptions we have had have been from insects. That is a special feature that has developed upon this system, and does not develop itself upon other systems.

160. That being so, the second cable would be liable to the same?—We hope in construction to prevent the animal from being able to penetrate it by sheathing it.

161. You are not very confident about it?—Yes, I hope so.

162. You made a remark that even its existence had been unknown before, and you did not know how it got done?—Yes, you will see from that cable—[*explaining the section of a cable to the Chairman*]
—that you cannot answer for a part of the cable getting a twist the wrong way.—[*The witness explained the proposed method of protecting the cable.*] I do not know what metal they are actually going to use. I suppose it will not be iron, but probably be a softer metal.

163. *By Sir James Wilson.*—Something that will not oxidize so much?—Yes; they have to solve the question themselves, and they have done it since I left home. Sir James Anderson said something about it in his message.

164. *By Mr. Todd.*—It would hardly do to put in a sheathing where electric action would take place?—I hope not. Admiral Richards says “New patent cable, especially designed to resist the teredo”—that is all I know about it. We are not likely, you may believe, to put down a cable in a position in which we think it likely to come to grief, because we are putting down our own money.

165. *By the Chairman.*—I presume it is contemplated to keep both cables repaired—you would not leave the old one?—Certainly we should not let the other go to the bad; what you talk about is a duplicate cable, and if we let the other one perish, you have not got a duplication.

The witness withdrew.

Edward Charles Cracknell, Esq., examined.

E. C. Cracknell,
Esq.,
10th May 1878.

166. *By the Chairman.*—We have just had Colonel Glover in the room with respect to the offer made by the Eastern Extension Company in respect to the duplication of the cable. Are you acquainted with the offer?—Yes.

167. Have you formed any opinion as to its advisability or comparison with other possible modes of communicating with Europe?—Yes; I think the offer of the Extension Company is, perhaps, the cheapest, except the line to North-West Cape, which has been recommended for consideration by me.

168. Then where?—Thence by land to Champion Bay, to the present lines in Western Australia, and then *viâ* Albany to Adelaide.

169. Have you considered the line in the route of the mail steamers from the North-West Cape to Ceylon?—Yes; that is a line that I cannot recommend.

170. What is the objection to it?—It is right across the trade winds. It would be impossible to send a repairing ship to make repairs if the cable broke at any time; in fact, the cable would have to be abandoned in the event of a break.

171. *By Mr. Burns.*—Would not that line be also open to the very serious objection of being too long a section for the cable?—Unless you can land at Keeling Islands; but I do not think you can.

172. Even if you can call there, would it not be too long a section for the cable?—It would not be too long, as that all depends upon the size and weight of the conducting wire.

173. What are your reasons for being in favor of the line from North-West Cape to Banjoewangie?—Chiefly on account of its economy.

174. *By Sir James Wilson.*—What part do you call the North-West Cape?—Exmouth Gulf.

175. *By Mr. Burns.*—You mean the line to be from Singapore to Banjoewangie, and Banjoewangie to North-West Cape?—Yes.

176. An estimate, I believe, has been made that that line could be constructed for about £400,000?—Yes.

177. *By the Chairman.*—What advantage is that over Port Darwin?—It is shorter.

178. Not very much shorter?—Not very much shorter, but the other advantage is that you get a duplicate land line by that means.

179. Do you think a duplicate land line essential?—I think so; it certainly would not be a perfect duplication without a duplicate land line.

180. *By Mr. Burns.*—One advantage would be a complete duplication of the cable by land over to Adelaide?—Yes.

181. Have you any knowledge of a reliable character with regard to the sea between North-West Cape and Banjoewangie?—No, I do not think any reliable soundings have been taken there; it would be necessary to take a set of soundings before the cable is laid; that is the only difficulty I see in the way; but I do not suppose the depth of water there is deeper than the Atlantic.

182. To which project does your opinion incline, the line from North-West Cape to Banjoewangie, or the proposal of the Eastern Extension Company?—I am not altogether wedded to the North-West line, except that it would be more economical.

183. It would be a thorough duplication then by land and by sea?—Yes, it would be; or if we could get a land line, or a portion of a land line, connecting with Port Darwin, *viâ* Queensland would answer as well.

184. *By the Chairman.*—Will you explain that a little more fully?—Yes, the only reason I recommend the North-West Cape route is because it is less expensive.

185. What do you mean by the portion of the land line?—The land line from Port Darwin to the Roper, for instance, and the cable across the Gulf of Carpentaria, that is the only way you can get a perfect duplication *viâ* Queensland. There are two ways of perfect duplication—one, across by the North-West Cape, and the other by Normantown.

186. *By Mr. Burns.*—You do not favor the idea of any duplication of the existing line from Port Darwin to Adelaide?—I think it would be too expensive.

187. *By Mr. Mein.*—A duplication from Port Darwin to Normantown would have this advantage over the duplication *viâ* the North-West Cape, that when only one cable is in operation you have two land lines to fall back upon?—So you would *viâ* North-West Cape.

188. No, when only one cable is in operation you have two land lines to fall back upon?—Yes; if the line is extended from the Roper to Normantown.

189. When you talk about the cheapness of the North-West Cape route you do not take into consideration the cost of messages over the long land line to Adelaide?—That must rest upon arrangements with Western Australia. I understand they are prepared to extend their line to Exmouth Gulf, without calling for contributions from the other colonies.

190. In addition to the cost of construction there is the cost of messages?—Any additional cost would be by the Normantown line, as it is necessary to have a cable 400 miles in length across the Gulf of Carpentaria, and a land line 200 miles in length to join the present Adelaide overland line.

191. You assume that the cost of a message over that route would be equal to, if not greater than, the cost of a message to North-West Cape?—Decidedly greater.

192. The cost of transmitting a message?—Yes, decidedly the cost of the additional length of cable would be greater.

193. What is the cost of a message now from North-West Cape to Adelaide?—A penny in each colony, from Champion Bay, which is the most northerly station in Western Australia.

194. Do not you think the liability to interruption from the North-West Cape overland to Adelaide would be greater than the interruption upon the line from Port Darwin to the Roper?—Yes, it would be; it is a coast line.

195. *By the Chairman.*—Is there anything you wish to add, or any information you could supply?—Nothing strikes me at present.

196. Looking to the cable between Port Darwin and Singapore, are you of opinion that the interruptions have been more frequent than in ordinary cables of similar length in other parts of the world?—They have certainly, but chiefly in consequence of an insect or worm which destroys the cable upon that particular section.

197. Are you acquainted with the proposal to prevent that in the new cable?—Yes, I saw some experiments being made in London, which I believe will have the desired effect.

198. Are you of opinion that they will be successful?—Quite; it is a metal sheathing over the gutta-percha between that and the protecting wires.

199. Do the interruptions by means of the insect on the existing cable increase in number as it gets older?—Yes, it is giving very much trouble—in fact, the last fault gave considerable trouble.

200. I presume there were partial interruptions that the public never knew of, bad working, and so on?—Yes, and delays to messages in consequence.

201. As a matter of fact, if a new cable defended against that insect were once laid, it would be cheaper to abandon the old cable altogether than repair it?—I think the company ought to be bound to keep both cables going if they get a subsidy.

202. Do you think, as a matter of fact, it would be kept going?—Yes; and I think they ought to be bound to lay another protected cable, if the present one cannot be kept in order.

203. Did you notice that in the proposal to the colonies to pay a subsidy of £32,400 there is no period of limitation?—The usual period in transactions of that kind is thirty years for cable subsidies.

204. Have there been any transactions of that kind in reference to cables?—Yes, nearly all the proposals submitted to these colonies have been for thirty years.

205. Has there not also been some proposal that the subsidy should decrease in proportion to the increase in the regular business?—No, the subsidy is generally paid during the time it is arranged for.

206. A fixed subsidy, not depending at all upon the increase of messages to the colony?—Yes.

207. Would not that be a fair principle?—I think it would, if it could be so arranged.

208. The object of the subsidy being merely to increase the earnings of the company; and if those earnings be increased there is no reason for it to continue?—There is another matter; a cable will only last a certain number of years.

209. How long?—The average life of a cable is about fifteen years; and there is another thing to be considered, that the company must provide a sinking fund to replace the cables, and whether it be wise to starve them so much so that they could not give you a proper cable when this is worn out, or whether some arrangement ought not to be made for a sinking fund to cover this. According to my calculations I think they are simply asking you the bare interest upon the money necessary to construct the line.

210. Which is equivalent to finding all the money that the cable is laid for?—It is, if the Governments raise the money, they might get it for considerably less, perhaps save several thousands a year.

211. *By Mr. Burns.*—Do you think the Governments ought to guarantee the line, so as to save the interest?—I think so, £12,000 or £14,000 a year could then be saved.

212. Supposing the Governments guaranteed the line, what would be the estimate of the reduction of the cost of the subsidy to the company?—Two per cent., about £12,000 or £14,000.

213. The reduction?—Yes.

214. *By Sir James Wilson.*—In making that estimate have you taken into consideration the maintenance of a steam-boat with all its appliances?—No, this is for the cable that is maintenance.

215. *By Mr. Burns.*—If we follow that plan the colonies would only have to pay about £20,000 a year for the cable?—Yes; that is if the Governments undertook it themselves; but I do not think they should take it independently of the company, because they have a staff and a ship, and they can work it a great deal cheaper than the Government can.

E. C. Cracknell,
Esq.,
continued,
10th May 1878.

E. C. Cracknell,
Esq.,
continued,
10th May 1878.

216. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—That assumes that the capital can be borrowed at four per cent., the guarantee being six.—Yes.

217. *By Mr. Mein.*—You say the average life of a cable is fifteen years, what are the circumstances that usually contribute to its death?—One reason, the destruction of the coating wires through oxidation, so that when the cable is lifted it will not support its own weight.

218. *By Sir James Wilson.*—I think you stated that you recommend that the company should lay the line, that the colony should not take the responsibility?—Yes, the company should lay the line, and take all the responsibility, but the colonies should assist them.

219. Subsidize them?—Subsidize them, and assist them in raising the money.

The witness withdrew.

Samuel W. McGowan Esq., examined.

S. W. McGowan,
Esq.,
10th May 1878.

220. *By the Chairman.*—You know the purpose for which we are here?—Yes.

221. The Conference has had the evidence of Colonel Glover, and Mr. Cracknell of New South Wales; and we wish you to tell us whether you have considered the question of duplication of the cable, and the various suggestions that have been made; we would like to hear anything you have to say bearing upon the subject for which the Conference has met?—I have very little to add to the report that I have already written upon the subject, which is in print.

222. Will you briefly summarize the conclusions you have arrived at?—Looking at the matter from an economical point of view, no doubt the cheapest way of obtaining what we require would be the provision of a duplicate cable between Port Darwin and Singapore, by way of Banjoewangie.

223. Following the same route as the present one?—Not exactly the same route.

224. Going on the other side of Java?—Following the same route nearly, as far as Banjoewangie, but following a new route from Banjoewangie to Singapore where there is now no cable. There have been, of course, several proposals for taking cables to the westward of the points I have named, but they are in many respects open to objection on account of the extreme depth of water in one direction, and the fact that many of the difficulties under which the present cable labors would still exist in a more westward direction, namely, the presence of coral; that has been one of the difficulties I believe, in the mechanical way. A proposal that did find some favor at one time was a line from Ceylon direct, by way of Keeling Island to Western Australia, but there have been many objections raised to that upon the grounds that the seas are not known; the depth of water is not known; and they have never been properly and accurately surveyed and, therefore, matters might arise of which at present we are totally unaware; so the proposition would be to a certain extent rather suggestive than absolute.

225. Are you practically acquainted with that sea?—No; I merely speak from what we have learnt from others.

226. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—That would be more expensive?—It would be more expensive, undoubtedly; but the proposal made some twelve months ago involved an expenditure at that time of £55,000 a year for thirty years; that would be much more expensive, of course, than the more easterly route.

227. Whose proposal was that?—That was a proposal by Siemens Brothers, through Mr. Coote.

228. *By the Chairman.*—Do you consider that the interruptions that we have had between Port Darwin and Singapore upon the cable exceed the average for the same length of line in other parts of the world?—At the present moment I do not know of any line that would afford a direct contrast as to the number of interruptions, but there can be no doubt that the interruptions that have occurred recently have been considerably in excess of what would have been the case if the cable had been laid so as to secure, as far as might be possible, absence of interruptions; the coral has a very severe effect upon the cable; I saw portions of cable covered with large masses of coral, and I was told that the difficulty of recovering the cable was mainly due to masses of coral upon it.

229. I see from the return published that there were only two interruptions in the year 1876, and two in the previous year 1875?—But the interruptions were of considerable duration; one was from April to October, or nearly that.

230. From April to August; that might be prevented by having greater facilities for repairing as far as the time is concerned?—Yes; the steamer was employed in another position at the same time, otherwise the repairs might have been effected much earlier.

231. Would not greater convenience for the repair of the existing cable be a more economic and equally successful mode rather than duplicating it?—That would be a question entirely governed by the duration of the present cable. The present cable is not by any means new now; it has been submerged over six years, and as a cable grows older the chances for repair—that is, the facilities for making repairs—become less than they would be with a new, or a comparatively new, cable. I think you found the first two or three years of the life of the present cable passed over with very few interruptions indeed, barring the first one.

232. How long do you consider the life of a cable?—It is a very difficult matter to say; of course there are cables that have lasted remarkably well. Some of the cables in the English Channel lasted particularly well; but the Atlantic cables have not been equally favored in that way. The cables of 1865 and 1866 are very remarkable for the number of interruptions upon them, and latterly for the absence of any repairs; they found it an impossibility to repair them. A heavy expenditure was incurred for attempted repairs during last year, but without result.

233. *By Mr. Burns.*—Is it within your knowledge that cable messages received from England come to a large extent to Melbourne, and also to Adelaide, and are there telegraphed very largely to other colonies; one message is made the basis of a large number of messages?—Yes; that is commonly done,—what is called the packing of messages—that is, the codification of messages where they are codified.

234. That is not what I mean —?—If messages are received at Adelaide by an agent and split up there—divided there—of course it is necessary to credit each of the colonies to which the messages are sent.

235. Is that matter within your own knowledge—does it take place?—Yes, no doubt it does take place; there are agents in Adelaide who receive messages and transmit them in that new way.

236. Are there not a great many press messages received in Melbourne and sent to newspapers in Sydney, and Tasmania, and New Zealand?—Yes; and messages are received in Singapore and split up, and the Australian portion of them sent from there; that is a very common practice.

237. *By the Chairman.*—I will put it in another way: the point that Mr. Burns wishes to arrive at is this, whether the return as to the number of messages and the number of words proceeding from the respective colonies is a clear indication of the business which that particular colony does through the cable—supposing a correct return of such a kind were given?—If a correct return were given, showing the messages transmitted from one colony through the cable and the return to that colony through the cable, from independent sources, it would be a correct measure; but it would not be a correct measure to say that messages received in this colony and re-transmitted were set forth.

238. We know very well that that would not be fair; but does it exist within your knowledge to any extent—are the returns that you would give as to the number of messages sent from Melbourne vitiated to any extent by the fact that while the messages start from Melbourne they are sent as it were and paid for by the residents of other colonies?—No; I do not think that to any serious extent it would be so.

239. *By Mr. Burns.*—Is it a fact that there are press agencies which receive telegrams from England and have agents in Melbourne who re-transmit from those telegrams, say from a single message, telegrams to all the other colonies, New South Wales, Tasmania, Queensland, and New Zealand?—Yes, there are agencies of that sort in Melbourne.

240. So that in that way the business of the Victorian colony by cable is made to appear larger than it really is?—If it were done to any great extent of course it would be so; but I question if it is done to an extent sufficiently large to magnify the number of messages sent, appreciably. It might, I dare say, be very easily ascertained by keeping a record of those re-transmitted messages, because it is very well known that the re-transmitted message comes from a local source.

241. Is it not a fact that you have a large business between this and other colonies by reason of cable messages received for the first time in Melbourne?—I should be sorry to say that that business is large, such a business is certainly done, but I should be sorry to say it is large.

242. *By the Chairman.*—If a message arrived in Melbourne for the *Argus*, for instance, concerning which there was an understanding between the *Argus* and the *Sydney Morning Herald* that they were to publish simultaneously, and they joined in the message, would no message be sent direct to both offices—would the message be repeated to both offices?—Repeated to both offices frequently.

243. Both colonies would get the credit of it?—Yes.

244. *By Mr. Burns.*—Both parties would not get the cable message?—No; the splitting the message would most likely occur at Adelaide—sent from Adelaide to Melbourne and to Sydney.

245. *By the Chairman.*—South Australia would get the advantage, and not Melbourne?—Just so.

246. *By Sir James Wilson.*—If the Associated Press sent a message would it be credited only to one colony, and the rest omitted per cable?—The colony in which it was received by the agent.

247. That is the case?—Yes.

248. So that the colony which sent it would be credited for the whole affair, though it had to be distributed amongst the others?—Yes, but only for a single transmission per cable.

249. *By Mr. Mein.*—You simply referred to duplication between Port Darwin and Singapore by cable; do you think the duplication to the colonies would be complete, independent of a second land line?—A second land line—do you mean from—

250. Say from Port Darwin. Do you consider that there is duplication with England by simply duplicating the cable from Singapore to Port Darwin?—The duplication would be very much less perfect than if we had a duplication by land as well. I have given much consideration to that; and I have thought for many years that it would be desirable to have duplication by land. That would be only done by connecting the extreme northern lines of Queensland with the present line to Port Darwin, at some convenient point in the interior; it would be a great advantage, and it could be conveniently done. If there were any interruption upon the overland line the colonies could send by Queensland; and if the line by Normantown, the connecting line, was broken, they could use the other line. That would be a duplication within Australia.

251. *By the Chairman.*—Is there sufficient traffic to justify duplication of that kind?—There is no traffic to justify duplication at all at present, if you come to that, because the present cable could do all the work in two hours a day.

252. *By Mr. Mein.*—So could the cable if it were not interrupted, but it is frequently interrupted?—A duplication by land would be a great advantage.

253. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—Would it be very expensive?—That would depend whether it was done by land or sea. The original proposition was to take the line by land to Normantown, the northernmost station in Queensland. That was very expensive then.

254. *By Mr. Mein.*—As a matter of fact was not the original proposal for telegraphic communication with England by way of Queensland?—I understood Captain Osborne to that effect.

255. Is it not a fact that the Queensland line to the north of the Norman River was constructed with an understanding to that effect?—I could not say that I am personally aware to that effect, but I believe from official returns and papers that I have read that the lines were constructed with a view to ultimately connect with the cable. I do not know that I would be justified in saying that they were constructed from anything that transpired on behalf of Captain Osborn. He undoubtedly proposed to construct a land line from Port Darwin to the nearest station in Queensland, and that would give color to what took place subsequently.

256. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—Could you prepare an estimate of what would be the cost of completing the line from Normantown to Port Darwin?—It would not require to go all the way to Port Darwin. It would go to the nearest point of the trunk line, the main overland line.

257. *By Mr. Burns.*—About 300 miles from Port Darwin?—Yes, speaking in round numbers. I do not think that the expense should exceed £60,000, with iron poles, to carry a line from Normantown to the nearest point of the main trunk line. That ought to about cover it. It ought to come near it. I do not think it would exceed that, from my recollection of the distance and the cost of erecting lines in Northern Queensland. The northern line there I do not think exceeded £55 a mile, using wooden poles.

S. W. McGowan,
Esq.,
continued,
10th May 1878.

That is the present line to Normantown, and I do not think you would find more difficulty in carrying the line from Normantown to a point upon the Roper River than there was found from Normantown across.

258. *By Sir James Wilson.*—To intersect the main line—the trans-continental line?—Yes, precisely.

259. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—You think that could be done for £55 a mile?—I estimate it at the cost of the northern lines of Queensland, if wooden poles are employed. Iron poles would be more expensive at first, but more economical eventually.

260. *By Mr. Mein.*—It would not be a complete duplication within Australia?—Nearly so, but there are very few interruptions upon the part from Point Darwin to the Roper. There the line would be only single.

261. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—May we lay down this proposition, that in proportion as the land the line is free from interruption and available for the transmission of messages so is the necessity for duplication diminished?—Yes, decidedly; for I say at present, as far as the amount of work is concerned, we do not require duplication at all. We have not sufficient work for one line.

262. *By Mr. Burns.*—It is only required for certainty of communication.—Yes.

263. *By the Chairman.*—Would that justify the outlay if this cable were as free from interruptions as in other parts of the world, and there were as great facilities for repairing it; though it is more frequently interrupted it would be better to bear the cost of repairs than to lay another one?—Yes; but you must bear in mind that, between Batavia and Singapore, the interruptions are very frequent indeed, and that cable is some years older than that between Banjoewangie and Port Darwin, and also the most serious drawback to the correctness of messages between Europe and Australia is owing to the imperfections of the working of the land line in Batavia, a want of knowledge of the language on the part of the operators and a want of certainty of the working of the land line independently of the cable; but that would be got rid of altogether by a cable between Banjoewangie and Singapore. In fact, I believe that if there be a new cable between Banjoewangie and Singapore the urgency of the duplication would be much reduced.

264. That is only about half?—Only about one-half. It must be remembered that between Banjoewangie and Batavia there are 480 miles of land line, and that land line is in tropical regions and worked under very great disadvantages.

265. It is proposed to avoid it altogether?—A cable between Banjoewangie and Singapore would completely avoid it, but they simply propose to maintain that cable by Batavia and Singapore as an alternative.

266. They propose to keep it in good working order?—Yes.

The witness withdrew.

W. J. Cracknell, Esq., examined.

W. J. Cracknell,
Esq.,
10th May 1878.

267. *By the Chairman.*—You know the purpose for which the Conference is now sitting?—Yes.

268. That of the duplication of the cable. We have already had the evidence of Colonel Glover and Mr. McGowan, and your brother. The Conference thought you might wish to make any statement that may have occurred to you in considering the subject that may be of some benefit to them, and give them information?—I think a duplicate cable is absolutely necessary at the present time; and, if possible, I think that a competing line would be better than duplicating the present cable in order to reduce the rates.

269. A new company altogether?—A new company altogether.

270. Apart from that, supposing that there are difficulties in the way of obtaining a competing cable, have you anything to say in regard to the proposition made by the present Eastern Extension Company, with a view of duplicating their cable. Are you aware of the proposal which Colonel Glover has been authorized to make?—No, I am not aware of it.

271. Contained in Mr. Morgan's letter from South Australia?—I do not know it.

272. The proposal is to lay a new cable from Port Darwin to Banjoewangie, and from Banjoewangie to Singapore, avoiding the land line to Batavia?—I am not in favor of a duplicate cable upon the present route, and in the hands of the same company.

273. Will you state why you hold that opinion?—The monopoly would still be the same monopoly as exists at present, and there would be little or no chance of the charges being reduced. These companies of course are formed for the purpose of making money.

274. Have you any information with regard to the business, or any extension of the business, which would justify a competing line?—I believe if the charges were reduced one-half, say, that the business would be considerably increased.

275. You mean one-half of the whole charge?—Yes.

276. Of course you are aware that a large proportion of the charge goes to other companies?—Yes; but through rates to be reduced one-half.

277. Apart from that have you anything to tell the Conference in respect to the land line, the part that connects the whole of the colonies with Port Darwin; do you consider that satisfactory?—As far as it goes I think the line works admirably, considering the distance it traverses through unsettled country.

278. You would not think of duplicating that?—Most decidedly I would.

279. You would?—Yes. The cable should be brought—

280. On the ground of competition?—No, not competition with South Australia; the second line would be available when the Port Darwin line was interrupted.

281. Do you think that a second line would be content with taking what the Port Darwin line could not carry?—That depends upon circumstances. This suggestion is made in the event of the Conference deciding upon laying a second cable by the present route, as the most suitable method of duplicating the Australian land line. I have no objection to see the line extended from Port Darwin to Normantown, at the expense of the southern colonies. In that event we would be satisfied to take the business that South Australia likes to give us when their line is interrupted. I think Queensland has done enough already in extending the line to Carpentaria.

282. Then I understand you to mean that you think a second land line necessary?—Absolutely necessary.

283. But you do not wish to deprive South Australia of the right she has established to make that line?—I have no wish to deprive South Australia of anything. I think she deserves great credit for what she has done.

W. J. Cracknell,
Esq.,
continued,
19th May 1878.

284. *By Mr. Mein.*—I assume you mean this: that you think it necessary, in addition to duplication of cable, that there should be a duplication of land lines?—Most decidedly.

285. And you think that that duplication might go by way of the Queensland line terminating at the Norman River?—That would be the best route.

286. And you make that suggestion upon the understanding that the connection between Normantown and Port Darwin should be made at the expense of the southern colonies?—Yes.

287. *By Sir James Wilson.*—You think there is sufficient business to support two distinct cable companies?—At the present time, no; but were the charges reduced, I believe the business would be considerably increased. I would even go further, and recommend the colonies, instead of subsidizing mail steamers, to subsidize ocean cables.

288. That is not the question at all?—One should be substituted for the other; instead of subsidizing mail steamers, subsidize cables heavily, and reduce the charges to a minimum.

289. Do you think there would be sufficient business arise by reducing the cable charges to one-half the existing rates to maintain those two distinct companies?—I think the business would be considerably increased.

290. Would it pay. Could the companies exist with a reduction of half the rates upon the cables if there were two distinct companies?—Not unless they were subsidized.

291. Each subsidized, of course?—Each.

292. Do you think it would be cheaper to subsidize one than to subsidize two distinct companies for the same purpose?—I think the most equitable way would be to subsidize the two companies. I think the present company deserves every encouragement.

293. Do you know what loss it would be to the present company—the cable company—if their charges were reduced to one-half?—I do not know their revenue at present.

294. *By Mr. Burns.*—Are you aware that it is said by the company that a penny a word would be a loss of £1,000 a year revenue to the company?—I have heard so.

295. Supposing a contract was made with this company, do you know would it be in their power to get the prices reduced right through—could they control the other lines?—They could only control their own lines.

296. Could any competing company reduce the charges right through?—They could reduce the charges between Australia and India.

297. You then say the business would increase considerably by the reduction of the charges. To what extent do you think the increase would go?—I could not say. It is impossible to answer that question.

298. I understand you to say that you are in favor of a line by way of Normantown at the expense of the southern colonies?—I am in favor of a line from Normantown *via* Macassar to Singapore and Bangkok, in Siam, which could be connected by a short land line with Moulmein, the extremity of the British Indian system.

299. How far are your land lines at the present time from Thursday Island?—About 350 miles.

300. Is any extension projected at the present time other than that required for cable purposes?—There was an amount placed upon the Queensland estimates last year to extend to Thursday Island.

301. Irrespective of whether the cable is made or not?—Yes.

302. *By Sir James Wilson.*—Your land line terminates at Normantown, on the Gulf of Carpentaria?—Yes, and at Cooktown, upon the east coast.

303. How far is Normantown from the nearest point of the trans-continental line by land?—I do not know exactly, but I think about 650 miles. It may be less.

304. If a connection between those two lines were made, would you recommend their being connected by land, or would you recommend a cable across the Gulf of Carpentaria to the Roper River?—I recommend a cable from Normantown to the Roper River.

305. Across the Gulf?—Across the Gulf.

306. How many miles do you think that is?—Four hundred miles.

307. Why do you recommend that?—There is a good bed for a cable, and the shores of Carpentaria are very low, and liable to be submerged during the rainy season to some hundreds of miles perhaps.

308. That is contemplating a land line?—Yes; and in the event of interruptions it would be very difficult to repair the land line.

309. Are there any ranges or rising ground upon which you could make that land line?—The high land is too far back from the coast. It is 100 miles back from Normantown.

310. Do you think the bed of the Gulf of Carpentaria is adapted for a cable?—Admirably adapted. It consists of mud and sand.

311. There is no coral reef?—No.

312. *By Mr. Mein.*—What is the distance from Cooktown to Cape York?—About 350 miles.

313. You gave as a reason why the southern colonies should contribute solely to the expense of connecting Normantown and Port Darwin that you thought Queensland had done already enough; what do you mean?—I think the southern colonies would reap the most benefit of the extension.

314. What do you mean by Queensland having done enough?—I think Queensland has spent enough upon her line to Carpentaria. It was originally intended for international purposes.

315. *By the Chairman.*—How long is that line?—From Cardwell to the Gulf shore 400 miles.

316. Does it accommodate any colonial interests?—It does local interests.

317. It does?—We should not have built a line at that time for other than international purposes.

318. *By Mr. Mein.*—It was not constructed with a view to local interests whatever?—Not at all; entirely for international purposes.

319. *By Mr. Burns.*—Does it now serve local purposes?—It does; but the section beyond Cardwell does not pay. We lose about £3,000 a year.

320. Do you lose more upon that section than others?—Yes.

321. *By the Chairman.*—Do you think a few competing lines would make them pay in the colony?—We are sending telegrams cheaper than any country in the world. We send 1,600 miles for a shilling for ten words. It is perfectly absurd.

W. J. Cracknell
Esq.,
continued,
10th May 1878.

322. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—At what date did you extend the line to Normantown?—[*The witness referred to papers.*] The extension was commenced some time in 1869, and it was completed on 3rd January, 1872.

323. And when to Cape York?—It is not at Cape York yet.

324. Have you gone up towards Cape York?—With the line?

325. Yes?—Yes; but not beyond Cooktown.

326. *By Mr. Mein.*—Looking at the return which was prepared in your office, can you inform the Conference what is the actual loss in working expenses alone that Queensland sustains through the line from Junction Creek to Normantown (300 miles), which you said was constructed for purely international purposes?—We are working that line at a loss of upwards of £3,000 a year.

327. You were asked when the line from Cooktown to Normantown was completed—will you when correcting your evidence put in the date when it was authorized?—I will. It was authorized in 1867.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned till to-morrow at half-past ten o'clock.

SATURDAY, 11TH MAY 1878.

Present:

The Hon. G. BERRY, in the Chair;

The Hon. H. Cuthbert,
The Hon. Sir J. M. Wilson,
The Hon. C. S. Mein,

The Hon. J. F. Burns,
The Hon. J. P. Boucaut,
C. Todd, Esq., C.M.G.

C. Todd, Esq., C.M.G., a member of the Conference, examined

C. Todd, Esq.,
11th May 1878.

328. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—You are the Superintendent of the telegraphs of South Australia?—I am.

329. And in that capacity have had a great deal of experience in telegraphy?—Yes.

330. And it was under your superintendence that the overland line from Adelaide to Port Darwin was carried out?—Yes.

331. And under your advice that the arrangement was made with the Eastern Telegraph Company and South Australia?—Yes; I pointed out that that was the shortest line to connect the southern colonies of Australia.

332. You have studied the subject closely in all its bearings, I believe?—I have; it has been a matter of study with me for the last nineteen or twenty years.

333. From a professional or political point of view?—Professional.

334. Then perhaps you will be kind enough, in answering my questions, to bear in mind the professional point of view. Will you give your opinion to the Conference as to which is the best route for the duplicature of the C cable?—Most certainly; I advocate that the duplicate cable should be laid in two sections from Singapore to Banjoewangie, so as to avoid the Dutch lines, with respect to which I do not wish to say anything against them, because I believe they are worked very well indeed, working as they do through the tropics, and being worked also by foreign operators; but great loss of time occurs occasionally, interruptions and also frequent mistakes through English messages being transmitted by foreign operators. I therefore recommend that the cable should be laid from Singapore to Banjoewangie. I also advocate that for another reason, and that is, I believe from enquiries that I have made, and from my own investigations, that the cable will find a better sea bottom than between Singapore and Batavia; and the second section should be from Banjoewangie to Port Darwin. I recommend this, because it will be the speediest means of communicating between the Australian colonies and Singapore. As a matter of fact, the land line between Adelaide and Port Darwin throughout the greater part of the year, at least nine months of the year, is under such favorable atmospheric circumstances that we can transmit messages with only one repetition between Adelaide and Port Darwin, a distance of nearly 2,000 miles. All we require, in fact, is one automatic translator at Alice Springs. As a matter of fact, therefore, there being no local traffic to impede messages upon that line, and with a cable from Port Darwin to Banjoewangie, and from Banjoewangie to Singapore, it would be quite possible for messages to reach Singapore within five or six minutes from the time of leaving Adelaide. Another reason why I am in favor of the line going to Port Darwin is, that we know—experience has now taught us—the nature of the sea bottom between Banjoewangie and Port Darwin—we know exactly now the nature of the sea bottom; and the few interruptions after all that we have had upon that line are not of such a character as to lead us to believe that interruptions will be more frequent in the future. Some of the dangers having been discovered, will be avoided. I do not know whether you wish me to go fully into the matter, because perhaps I am answering the questions rather fully.

335. No, we wish the information fully?—I wish to state, as briefly as I can, why I recommend the duplicate cable going to Port Darwin. I need not tell you that the greater the number of repetitions, the greater the probability of error; and, therefore, it is desirable that in your land line and in your cable you should have as few repetitions as possible. I have already pointed out, with regard to our land line, that we can transmit messages without any hand repeating from Adelaide to Port Darwin by means of an automatic translator at the Alice Springs, midway between the two places; and, having the two cables brought to Banjoewangie, there would be only one repetition between Port Darwin and Singapore; in every way, therefore, you lessen the liability to mistakes. Any other land line you may select will not only be much longer—in both cases it would be longer than to Port Darwin—for instance, if you take the North-West Cape, North-West Cape to Melbourne is over 3,000 miles, traversing the coast the whole distance; from North-West Cape through Adelaide is between 3,000 or 3,500 or 3,600 miles to Melbourne by telegraph line; but from Port Darwin to Melbourne is a distance of only 2,500 miles; therefore the distance is less by 1,000 miles; and there is no comparison, I must tell you, between the working of a coast line and a line through the dry interior of Australia. To make my meaning quite clear, and to show that I am correct in what I say, the distance between Adelaide and Melbourne is between 500 and 600 miles, and yet I suppose there are not more than fifty or sixty days in the year on which we transmit messages direct between the two capitals by the present coast line, and yet we can transmit through three hundred days in the year over the circuit of Port Darwin

without any difficulty. The same objection applies to a line going from the Gulf of Carpentaria and down the east coast; it is longer, and it is more exposed to interruptions; and the traffic, to a certain extent, is more impeded—I mean the international traffic is more impeded by local traffic. I advocate Colonel Glover's scheme for another reason—from an economical point of view—that it is the cheapest; and, looking at the small amount of traffic that we have, and taking a common sense view of the thing, I say that we do not require a second cable for the amount of business, that is to accommodate the business we do—it is simply to secure ourselves greater immunity from interruption. The amount of business we do in the whole year could be done by the cable in about ten days, working day and night. The cable could do the whole amount of business that it now does in ten days; and, therefore, I think it would be injudicious to pay £48,000 or £50,000 a year—and you would have to do that by any other scheme that has yet been submitted to us, except that of North-West Cape—when we can get it for about £30,000, or if the Government choose to advance the money, as was shown yesterday, for about £20,000 or £21,000 a year. The only line comparable in point of cheapness would be, of course, the line to the North-West Cape; but I would point out that several objections apply to that route which do not apply to the line to Port Darwin. If you look at the chart, you will see that all south of Java and the islands immediately to the eastward there is a volcanic gorge—a deep gorge—in fact, the sea dips very suddenly to a depth of 2,100 fathoms—[referring to the chart].

C. Todd, Esq.
continued,
11th May 1878.

336. What chart is that?—This is the Admiralty chart. We do not know anything of the bottom of the sea, and the cable would lie throughout its course within the influences of the north-west and south-east monsoons; therefore the cable from Java to the North-West Cape, or the still longer line that has been mentioned from Galle to North-West Cape, to which far greater objections apply, are, in my opinion, I would even say inadvisable as regards the line from Galle, but certainly open to great objections when you could lay your cable in a sea the bottom of which is known, and the whole of the dangers of which are known. Then, when you get to North-West Cape, Western Australia would, of course, have to erect six hundred miles of land line. Western Australia is the smallest of all the colonies. We could scarcely expect it. She might, perhaps, erect her land line, but she would never be in a position to do what South Australia has done to man the stations. You can see at a glance the number it would require—the number of stations and the number of operators, and the operators must be of a high class; and I am quite sure that Western Australia could not for a moment afford to do what South Australia has done.

337. *By Mr. Cuthbert.*—Where would she have to take it to?—From Northampton to North-West Cape.—[The witness explained his meaning on a map.]

338. *By Sir James Wilson.*—She has a cable to Northampton?—No, a land line; and the whole of that line runs along the coast. It is all very near the coast. South Australia has spared no expense; all her stations along the overland line are as strong as they possibly can be, and we are in a position, if an interruption occurs on each side of any station, to send out a party each way simultaneously, so that the communication may be restored with as little delay as possible.

339. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—You made a contrast between the sea cables and the North-West Cape and Port Darwin, but you have not yet made the contrast between Port Darwin and Normantown?—That may be looked upon more from an economical point of view than from a scientific. I mean to say this, that there are not such grave scientific objections to the cable going to Normantown, or such practical difficulties as there are going to the West Cape perhaps; but in an economical point of view you are doing this—you are paying for a much longer cable for a very small traffic than you actually require; it does not make you any more secure. I speak now as a practical electrician—you are not a whit more secure from interruptions, as far as the cable is concerned, by going to Normantown than to Port Darwin; and in the event of an interruption, the chances are that the interruption of the cable would be longer; every extra mile of cable that you have you have *pro rata* additional chances of interruption. There is one other point, too, that I may mention, and it answers a question which the Hon. Mr. Mein put yesterday with regard to the condition of the cable in deep seas and shallow seas. It is in the main a thermometrical question; one reason why a cable in deep seas works better than one in shallow tropical seas is the lower temperature. The lower the temperature, the greater is the dielectric resistance—in other words, the better the insulation; but against that, and it operates very strongly in influencing the decision of telegraph engineers, is the difficulty of picking up a cable, especially as it gets old and its outer casing of iron wires rusts away. There is great difficulty in taking the cable up and effecting repairs, as was hinted at yesterday. You have an instance of this with the Atlantic cables during the last two years—the 1865 and 1866 cables for two years, if not more, were entirely silent, and at one time all the cables between America and England were silent, with the exception of one.

340. *By Mr. Mein.*—But that objection does not apply to the Normantown cable?—I will come to that presently. You have in the Gulf of Carpentaria a shallow sea of a high temperature, where the insulation of your cable would be more affected, and no doubt it is in the shallow seas where you will find the teredo or the worm that affects the cable, in my opinion, more active.

341. But have not you got the same objection more forcibly applying to the cable between Port Darwin and Java?—Between Port Darwin and Java the worm has scarcely touched the cable.

342. In ordinary circumstances, have you not a higher temperature in a lower latitude than you have in a higher latitude?—It depends upon the region of the earth. The temperature would be very nearly uniform upon that portion of the earth we are now considering; from the equator to twelve degrees on either side the equator the temperature is very nearly uniform. But it is evident that the longer the cable lies in those warm seas, the more liable you are to interruption; and, therefore, as an electrician, I would have as little cable as I possibly could. You can always repair land lines; it is not so easy to repair a cable, but it is more easy to repair a cable in shallow than in deep water.

343. An inference might be drawn from your remarks, without explanation, that the waters of the Gulf of Carpentaria are more objectionable as waters for a cable to lie in than the waters between Port Darwin and Java?—It is this, that a greater length lies in a sea of high temperature.

344. Have you any knowledge of the waters in the Gulf of Carpentaria?—I have.

345. Any personal knowledge?—Yes. I have been there; it is a shallow sea.

346. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—And no current comparable to what there is up above?—No; no strong tidal currents I suppose. But I may tell you this though, that if you want to take a cable from Port Darwin to either Normantown or Cape York, you have to traverse seas of very strong tidal currents. The tidal currents are so strong between Melville Island and Adam Bay, that at the Vernon Island, which is simply a

C. Todd, Esq.,
continued,
11th May 1878.

coral island, the tide falls faster than the water can run off the island, so that the water comes bounding down the walls of the island after the tide has fallen two or three feet below. I have seen that myself; I have been through all those seas, and know the nature of the whole coast from the Roper River to Port Darwin. I have landed in many places and examined the coral reefs.

347. *By Sir James Wilson.*—Are you speaking of the Torres Straits now—will you draw a distinction between Torres Straits proper and the Gulf of Carpentaria?—I have not mentioned or referred to the Torres Straits at all.

348. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—What is the name of the place you spoke of?—Clarence Strait; it is the strait between Melville Island and Port Darwin.

349. *By Mr. Mein.*—You have been speaking upon the assumption that it is possible the cable might be constructed between Port Darwin and Normantown; you have been combating that route?—Yes.

350. The remarks you have made do not apply to a route from the south of Timor either to Normantown, in the Gulf of Carpentaria, or to Cape York, at the north of the Australian continent?—I say the chief objection to that route is, that you are laying a much longer cable than you require; it is paying eighteen pence or two shillings for what you could get done for a shilling.

351. Your only objection is from an economical point of view?—An economical point of view principally; but also, every additional mile you lay, not only have you increased your cost, but you have increased your liability to interruptions.

352. When you said economy, you had in view the capital outlay in the construction of the cable?—I had.

353. You did not take into consideration at all the cost of transmitting messages from the terminable point of Australia to the separate capitals of Australia?—I did.

354. You said nothing about it?—I did not, because you asked me a question that led me in another direction. I put it this way. I am rather anticipating, perhaps; but it comes to this, that if you lay your duplicate cable to either Cape York or Normantown, you increase the capital cost so much as to make an additional subsidy at the same rate of interest as is asked by Colonel Glover—£15,600 a year. Now, that means, taking the amount of business done by Victoria and New South Wales—that means that Victoria shall increase her subsidy £6,000 or £7,000, and New South Wales nearly as much. There is of course a set-off to this in the lower land rate for the transmission of messages through Queensland and New South Wales to Victoria, which would reduce the amount by £4,000 or £5,000. The increased capital cost I put down at £250,000 or £300,000, if I take Colonel Glover's estimate of the cost of the cable either to Normantown or Cape York, which agrees with the offer of Mr. Gisborne some years since. You will have to pay therefore nearly £300,000 more for a cable to go either to Normantown or Cape York than you would have for a cable to Port Darwin, and that means about £15,000 or £18,000 a year more subsidy; but I am content to put it at £15,000; therefore Victoria would not have to pay any more at all events in paying the higher rate *via* Port Darwin, and in that case the payment is made by persons who actually use the telegraph.

355. I believe we may say in round numbers that the international words per annum are about 250,000?—Yes.

356. And that Victoria sends at least one-half?—Nearly. She sends about 0·41; a little more than four-tenths. I have a late statement here—[*referring to a paper*]. Last year there were 12,479 messages, of which Victoria sent 4,514.

357. Words is the best. Have you got the number of words?—The number of words unfortunately are not given in this return. I can telegraph for them and get them.

358. You say 0·41?—I spoke from a previous calculation, but that is very nearly borne out; but this return would not in fact come to four-tenths of the whole traffic; this would only come to 0·38 nearly.

359. South Australia charges 1s. 3d. to Victoria for all messages that go over her lines?—She does.

360. Assuming that the ordinary intercolonial rate was charged on messages from Normantown to Victoria, she would have only to pay 2d. a word?—But you are charging more; you charge more now. New South Wales charges 3d. a word upon every international telegram.

361. But I assume that if intercolonial rates are charged?—Of course, if you reduce, South Australia might do the same.

362. I ask you, upon a certain assumption, whether a certain charge would be made; assuming that the intercolonial rates were charged upon messages from Normantown to Victoria, only twopence per word would be charged?—Exactly.

363. Now, can you make a comparison showing the different amounts that Victoria would have to pay for international messages going by different routes?—I could prepare such a statement; but I should take the existing rates, not assuming any reduction of rates upon either side; I should take existing rates.

364. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—But could you prepare a return assuming the rates suggested by Mr. Mein?—Yes, of course I could.

365. But you explain that you would like to contrast it with the other also?—Yes.

366. But still you will do what Mr. Mein asks?—Yes, quite so.

367. Now I would just like you accurately to explain to the delegates the steps that the South Australian Government has been taking in regard to poling and insulators and other amendments of our overland line since its opening?—In answering that question, I will first inform the Conference that I speak from practical knowledge of the state of the line as first erected and as it stands now, having personally ridden over nearly the whole of the line. There are very few miles that I have not seen. We have planted iron poles either consecutively or alternately with wooden poles from near Southport to south of the Alice Springs—a distance of over 800 miles—and funds have been provided by the Legislature for continuing the iron poles wherever they may be necessary to within a short distance of Port Augusta, or, to speak more accurately, to Beltna, from which point the line to Port Augusta will be shifted to the railway now in course of construction—a distance of 200 miles, in round numbers—that is, a total distance poled with iron poles, either consecutively or alternatively with wooden poles, of nearly 1,600 miles. That will free us from one source of interruption, bush fires; and as to the iron poles, I may anticipate a question a little that probably may be put to me, which is whether, in going from wooden to iron poles, I have not jumped from the frying-pan into the fire—it is not so. This last season we have had some few interruptions from lightning, which destroys the insulators, but the whole

number of interruptions, with the exception of the last season, upon the Port Darwin line, are really less, per mile, than in any other line that I know of, either in Victoria or South Australia. It must be borne in mind that not a single interruption occurs upon the Port Darwin line that is not made known throughout the length and breadth of Australia—it is made known to the press. Interruptions occurring upon other lines are not known—there is no notice in the papers about them. But the danger from lightning breaking the insulators I have recently got over, by a new kind of insulator. The danger arose in this way: In thunder storms, the lightning seeks an entrance to the earth down the iron pole, and breaks the insulator in order to make its way to earth. Another danger is that where natives, and I am sorry to say, perhaps more frequently, whites (you have the same difficulty in the other colonies), are very fond of making marks of the insulators, and throwing stones at them, and breaking them. I have got out a new form of insulator, of which some are now being made in England. They have been submitted to the best electricians in England, and are pronounced to be the best means of obviating the danger to which I have referred that have yet been devised. I have brought a drawing of the insulator, which, with your permission, I will lay upon the table—[*producing the same*]. The porcelain of the insulator, which is the non-conducting material, is protected by an iron shield, that protects it from stones; but the iron pin which enters the porcelain and holds the insulator upon the top of the pole brings a serrated piece of iron inside the porcelain to within about the eighth of an inch of the outer iron shield; so that lightning coming along the line, instead of smashing my porcelain dielectric, is discharged from the iron shield to those points quietly to the earth, and does me no mischief. Thus I get over the two difficulties—one from lightning, and the other from mischievous persons throwing stones—that I feel confident will remove a great many of the interruptions, or rather lessen the number of interruptions considerably which have arisen from the causes I have explained. You must remember, when we speak of the Port Darwin line, that it is a line 2,000 miles long, and you hear of every interruption; and if you turn to the return which will be put in, you will see that in a period of five years the interruptions varied from fifteen and a half days in 1875 to thirty-four days in 1877; and in counting those days we count very frequently a day more, because we count the whole day if an interruption occurs some time to-day; this day has been counted in the way this return has been made out; and if you compare that with any lines within the settled districts, you will find that the comparison is very greatly in favor of the Port Darwin line. For instance, I have taken 1874, and I find upon over 1,000 miles of that line there was not a single interruption during the whole of the year, and, as the country becomes more settled, we shall have less interruptions from the natives. We have now made a practice, I may tell you, of giving the natives fragments of insulators and wire, so that there is not the same inducement for them to injure the line. Again, in 1875, I find there was a distance of 500 miles without a single interruption, and many other sections of the same length had only one interruption throughout the whole of the year; that is, splitting up the line into sections, there are far fewer interruptions upon sections of the same length than there are between Adelaide and Mount Gambier or Mount Gambier and Melbourne, or Melbourne and Sydney.

368. *By Sir James Wilson.*—With the view of affording speedy repairs, is it desirable to have your stations upon the trans-continental line at shorter distances than you have them at present?—That, of course, being a matter involving expenditure, would be a question for the Government to consider. Whenever the other colonies express a wish for the Government of South Australia to do this I have no doubt the Government will give it their best consideration.

369. *By Mr. Mein.*—What is the average distance of your repairing stations at present?—I have not totted them up, but in the Northern Territory length they are very close—you see there are distances there of from twenty-nine miles to eighty miles; that is where we expect the line will be most frequently interrupted; but our greatest distance is 247 miles. Upon that section, however, during five years, I have had only three interruptions. Upon that section of the line to which you might say some objection applies from its great length, as a matter of fact, we have had only three interruptions. It is about the most favored section of the whole lot; there is plenty of water, and there are no natives; what few natives there are are friendly—are all friendly. South of Macdonnell Ranges the natives are friendly—they assist us rather than do any harm to the line, and there are no mischievous white fellows to do the line damage. If, therefore, I was asked whether it was necessary to put an intermediate station there, I should say, from past experience, extending over five or six years, that there is no occasion for it, because the line is in such a position that it is not likely to be damaged.

370. *By Mr. Burns.*—You are aware that New South Wales have extended their inland lines to Wilcannia, and there is an office established there?—Yes.

371. Supposing it proposed to connect by way of Wilcannia with the South Australian line, what would be the distance, and where would it connect?—We should probably take it from near Beltana. I have a map here—[*producing the same*]. I considered that question some time ago; it came before me, and I recommended that the line in that case should go from Beltana.

372. Beltana is only 130 miles from Port Augusta?—Yes; I should say either from Port Augusta or Beltana.

373. Have you estimated the distance?—The distance I think would be about 200 miles. I do not think much more.

374. Either from Beltana or Port Augusta?—Yes; with such a line as that, Sydney would be able to speak with Macdonnell Ranges direct.

375. And that line would not be much of a saving; it would give a connection to New South Wales with your overland line, but it only saves about 100 and odd miles?—It would not save much.

376. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—It might save coming down to Adelaide—200 miles—so that it would save about 400 miles?—It would give direct communication. With your permission, I would add that we are making provision so as to throw out of our intercolonial circuit with Sydney all local stations, so that the traffic between Adelaide and Sydney may not be impeded by any local traffic whatever.

377. *By Mr. Burns.*—If you made that line from Port Augusta or Beltana to Wilcannia, would it render Sydney entirely independent of the Victorian lines?—Sydney is independent of Victoria now; we never send any messages through Victoria, except in the event of interruption between Adelaide and Deniliquin.

378. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—Mr. Burns's question is, that though Sydney is independent of Victoria, still the proposed line would render her more independent?—Yes. One point I may mention, in reply to Mr. Boucaut's question, as to what steps we are taking to make the Port Darwin line more secure, and that is, that we are extending our lines from Adelaide northwards along a route to the east and parallel

C. Todd, Esq.,
continued,
11th May 1878.

C. Todd, Esq.,
continued,
11th May 1878.

to the present Port Darwin line, which will be, no doubt, extended within a very short time as far north as Beltana, a distance of 350 miles north of Adelaide; thus duplicating the Port Darwin line on independent routes for a distance of 350 miles north of Adelaide.

379. *By Mr. Burns.*—Have you had many interruptions upon that section hitherto?—No, very few indeed; but our lines are more liable to interruption, as a matter of fact, in settled districts than in the interior; but upon that section I can tell you the whole number—we have had four in five years.

380. So that that duplication will be of very little practicable benefit as far as extra security is concerned?—Why?

381. If you have only four interruptions, you have very little to complain of?—I am very glad to hear you say so.—[*The witness handed in a return, vide Appendix No. 4.*]

382. *By Mr. Mein.*—In the earlier part of your evidence, you stated that one of the advantages of your overland route was that any other land line would be longer?—I did.

383. You were, of course, speaking from an Adelaide point of view then?—I am endeavoring to give you the exact facts, not from any particular standpoint.

384. We are speaking in the interests of all the colonies. Would it be shorter from Port Darwin by your route to Sydney than from Normantown to Sydney?—Nearly the same distance from Port Darwin to Sydney either *viâ* Normantown or *viâ* Adelaide.

385. How do you arrive at that—what are the comparative lengths?—It is 3,000 miles from Port Darwin to Sydney, and I think you will find it is very nearly the same—I have not measured the distance, but I think you will find it is very nearly 3,000 miles from Port Darwin *viâ* Normantown to Sydney.

386. You see the latitude of Normantown is eighteen degrees?—You cannot take latitude.

387. Assuming that you take two sides of a triangle?—I am taking it this way: you go from Normantown to Cardwell.

388. No, we do not?—Then you have put up additional lines. I remember measuring it some years ago. I took the telegraph distances given by your superintendent, and I went from Normantown to Cardwell and down the coast. What lines you have put up since I am not speaking of; you may have shortened the distance since.

389. You have mentioned about the South Australian line going over the dry interior of the continent. I believe it has flooded seasons, has it not?—The flooded seasons of the interior are of very short duration—the flooded seasons of the Northern Territory extend over about three months; but there is this difference: coming down as we do due south, we are very soon beyond the influence of the heaviest portions of the monsoons, and very soon out of the flooded country; that is the advantage of running north and south. It is a distance of 300 or 400 miles from Port Darwin when we come to the region where we have very little rain to trouble us, and very little flooded country.

390. You also mentioned that the overland route from Adelaide to Port Darwin was undertaken by your Government at your suggestion?—Yes; I advocated it as long ago as 1858; and you will see a despatch from Sir Richard Macdonnell to the Secretary of State, dated August 1859, in the Parliamentary papers of South Australia for 1861, in which I advocated a line being taken right across the continent; and from 1858 to the time it was erected I was continually bringing the matter before my Government.

391. Upon what grounds did you make the suggestion?—As the best line that the Australian colonies could carry out.

392. As a matter of fact, is not that the letter—[*handing a paper to the witness*—]to your Government upon which your Government carried out that line?—Yes.

393. As a matter of fact, is not the letter from you dated the 18th April 1870 in the South Australian Parliamentary Proceedings, No. 24?—That is the letter upon which the Government of the day took action.—[*Vide Appendix No. 5.*]

394. If you will look at that letter, you will find, I think, that you recommended the Government to undertake this work upon these grounds:—"In view of the importance of telegraphic communication with your Northern Territory, and the desirability of opening the overland right through"?—That is one of the collateral advantages.

395. "Two. That such telegraph would do much to open up the Northern Territory"?—Yes; quite so. I was quite right in putting in all the collateral advantages.

396. And do you know within your own knowledge that the work was undertaken on international grounds or not?—I can hardly say what might have been the views of the Government. I should say, mixed. My own view was that, while we were serving the other colonies and ourselves in providing means for connecting Australia with Europe, we were at the same time, of course, forwarding our own interests by developing the resources of our territory.

397. And you knew at that time, did you not, that Queensland had entered into negotiations with the Telegraph Company for the purpose of constructing a cable terminating at Normanton?—I did not. I may say that Commander Noal Osborne, who was with me a great deal during his short stay in Adelaide, made no mention to me, as far as my memory serves me—and I am speaking from memory—of any engagement with the Queensland lines for meeting her lines. But he gave me to understand that the project of their company was this; to lay a cable to Port Darwin. He came to South Australia to seek permission to land a cable at Port Darwin, and to carry a land line from Port Darwin to Queensland; but not that he or his company were in any way bound to Queensland; that was only to form part of their project; and I pointed out, as I conceived it to be my duty to do, that it would be much better to carry out the idea that I had so long promulgated and advocated, of bringing the line directly through the interior.

398. *By Sir James Wilson.*—When was your line commenced, and when was it afterwards opened—on what dates precisely?—Our line was commenced at the end of August or beginning of September 1870 at the Port Darwin end, and at the beginning of October at the Port Augusta end; the central sections, of course, could not be begun so soon; and the line was completed in August 1872. It was not quite two years in course of construction.

399. *By Mr. Mein.*—You found it a much more costly work than was originally estimated?—That was entirely due to the break down of the contractors for the Northern Territory; our difficulties in the Northern Territory arose out of that. But I will say this: that the line from Port Augusta for 1,200 or 1,300 miles north—we made Port Augusta the base of operations for the southern end, and for 1,200 miles north—that portion of the line cost very little more than the original estimate. But you cannot add the cost of re-poling; it is absurd to add that to the cost of the line, for that has to be done upon every line.

400. What do you estimate the capital cost is?—That has been mixed up with the repairs and re-poling. I said to the Government that upon every timber line you will have to rewire the poles every ten years. That is an expense in all the colonies which is much the same, I dare say; and as this line will be a main line, and timber is really scarce in the interior, I advised that we should re-pole the line with iron poles. And being a distance of 2,000 miles, and wishing to avail myself of the best seasons—that is the wet seasons, when there is plenty of water upon the ground for carter—I advised the Government to extend the re-poling over several years. It is absurd to add that to the original cost of erecting the line.

401. What would you estimate as being the actual fair capital cost of the line?—The capital cost of that line possibly is a little over £300,000; but two-thirds of that line did not cost more than £110,000. I am speaking now approximately.

402. Do you know what income you have derived from the international work over that line?—A year?

403. Yes?—About £11,000 to £13,000; last year I think was £13,000; some years less, I think it went down to £9,000 one year.

404. And for colonial work over the line?—The present receipt for colonial line is about £3,000.

405. That is upon the line that is used purely for trans-continental purposes?—Yes. The total revenue of the line is from £16,000 to £17,000 a year.

406. What do you spend in salaries?—Salaries and maintenance cost us about £22,000 a year; we keep nearly ten men at every station.

407. By maintenance you do not include the poles and material?—No; we have to ration all our people, and it costs us a great deal for cartage to the interior; we pay £50 to £55 a ton, for instance, to the Macdonnell Ranges; and if you add to that the interest on the cost of the line, which was nearly £500,000, it leaves a loss of about £25,000 a year to South Australia.

408. *By Mr. Burns.*—That includes interest upon the capital first invested?—Yes.

409. If you had the line to construct now, it would not cost near so much as it cost originally?—No.

410. *By Mr. Mein.*—Your original estimate was £120,000?—About that; we obtained a loan for about £120,000. I may say my idea was that the line would cost about £140,000, availing ourselves of what timber we could get in the first instance.

411. So that the overland line has been more costly than the cable?—No.

412. Five hundred thousand pounds?—No, that includes the maintenance of the line for the past eight years and the entire re-poling, and the prospective expenditure for the next four or five years. I have still £50,000 or £60,000 for re-poling in hand.

413. Practically, there is very little difference between the original cost; the line has cost you £500,000; you hardly spend more than that in the construction of 2,000 miles of cable?—In addition to that you must keep up the repairing ship.

414. We are talking about capital expended, and your cost of maintenance is how much?—£22,000; the cable would cost quite as much.

415. What is the estimate they put down for maintenance of cables?—£10,000 a year for a repairing ship.

416. *By Mr. Burns.*—What would the cable cost?—A cable of 2,000 miles would cost between £500,000 and £600,000. Our land line will be good for fifty years when we have finished the iron poles.

417. That is the same length as the line from Port Darwin to Adelaide?—It depends very much upon the sea you lay it in; taking Colonel Glover, it would be about £550,000 or £560,000.

418. For what sum do you estimate you could now construct a duplicate line from Port Augusta to Port Darwin?—It depends upon whether I used wooden poles or iron poles.

419. Suppose iron poles?—If I used iron poles, I should begin now under different circumstances—I know the road.

420. Taking all that into account?—I can only give it roughly—with iron poles I suppose it would cost about £220,000 or £230,000.

421. Suppose you connected it at Beltana and utilize the line from Beltana to Port Augusta?—You mean to put up an entirely fresh line, not using the same poles?

422. A new line from Beltana to Port Darwin?—That would cost—I should not like to put it down under £180,000 or £200,000, with iron poles, because of the cost of cartage.

423. What is the necessity for keeping so many as ten men at each station?—We do so to put the station in a position to send out men on either side.

424. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—In fact, international objects?—International objects.

425. *By Mr. Burns.*—What is the average distance between the stations?—I have not put them together to average them, but I mentioned that the shortest section was 29 miles, and the longest section 232 miles; and with regard to that section—which is a long one—I always feel it right in speaking of it to say that it is the best protected section upon the line, it is from Charlotte Waters to Macdonnell Ranges.

426. For the greater part of the distance you have only a single wire?—Single wire all the way. The wire very seldom breaks. If you look at the cause of interruptions, there have not been half a dozen times when the wire broke.

427. *By Mr. Mein.*—If you broke one, you would certainly break the other; the same cause that injures one wire would injure two?—Quite so.

428. Have your anticipations with regard to the benefits accruing to the colony itself from the construction of this line been secured; you thought it would facilitate the colony?—Yes, I think it has done a great deal to open up the interior of Australia.

429. Have you recouped yourselves to the extent you anticipated by the sale of land in the Northern Territory?—That is a question more for the Treasurer to answer than myself. I do not know.

430. *By Mr. Burns.*—What is the value of the local traffic upon the line?—About £3,000 a year.

431. *By Mr. Boucaut.*—Do I understand you that Captain Osborn had fixed upon Port Darwin as the most convenient landing point upon the continent, even when it was contemplated that the line should go through Queensland?—Yes; that showed that they preferred a cable to Port Darwin to carrying it into the Gulf of Carpentaria.

The witness withdrew.

Adjourned to Wednesday next at half-past ten o'clock.

APPENDICES.

No. 1.

Telegram from C. Lemon, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraph Department, New Zealand, to C. Todd, Esq., C.M.G., Adelaide.

"New Zealand, 8th May 1878.

"Commissioner has seen your telegram; desires me to say Government find it impossible to attend Conference. Letter on board *Arawata* explaining their views on proposed duplication.

(Signed) "C. LEMON."

No. 2.

The Chief Secretary, South Australia to the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

Chief Secretary's Office,
Adelaide, 24th January 1878.

SIR,

At the Cable Conference held in Sydney in January and February of last year, the Government of South Australia was invited to open negotiations for the duplication of sub-marine cables to connect this colony with Singapore. In compliance with this resolution, negotiations were opened with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, and resulted in the following proposal, which is now submitted for the favorable consideration of your Government.

The Eastern Extension Telegraph Company have intimated that they are willing, in consideration of an annual subsidy of £32,400, to lay a second cable from Singapore direct to Banjoewangie, avoiding the Java land lines, and thence direct to Port Darwin.

The amount of capital required for this work, which would comprise 2,157 miles of cable of the best type, is estimated at £540,000. This sum the company would raise at six per cent., which would be equivalent to the subsidy asked for. In addition to this, it is understood that, in the event of their offer being accepted, the company will be prepared to duplicate the cable between Penang and Singapore, a distance of 387 miles, and at a cost to themselves of nearly £100,000, for which they ask no subsidy.

As the company have recently, at a cost of about £180,000 from their own resources, provided a cable connecting Rangoon and Penang, should the proposal now submitted be carried out, there will be provided duplicate lines of communication between Australia and Europe, besides the alternative routes west of India and *viâ* China and Siberia.

The recent interruptions between Port Darwin and Singapore have most conclusively shown the necessity of having duplicate cables; and, as the proposition now submitted is in every respect reasonable, this Government would strongly urge that the terms offered should be accepted, the subsidy being apportioned amongst the several colonies on the basis of population, as agreed to at the Cable Conference; South Australia being exempt from contributing in consideration of the large outlay which she has incurred in erecting, and is still incurring in maintaining, the overland telegraph, which latter expense cannot be set down at less than £26,000 a year.

In the previous offer of the company laid before the Conference they asked for a subsidy of £48,600, viz., £32,400 for duplication, calculated at 6 per cent. on capital cost, and £16,200 for a renewal fund. Their present terms are therefore much more favorable; and in fact it would be utterly impossible for any outside company to do the work cheaper and as efficiently.

With regard to the suggested duplication *viâ* Banjoewangie and Champion Bay, Mr. Todd, our Superintendent of Telegraphs, points out that it would involve about 350 miles more cable than if taken direct to Port Darwin, besides the cost of an extensive establishment at Champion Bay.

There would also be nearly 400 miles of additional land line to traverse, or over 2,330 miles from Champion Bay to Adelaide. It would be for the most part along the coast, and would consequently be more exposed to interruptions than a line inland. The route along which the cable to Champion Bay would be laid is right in the track of the south-east trades and north-west monsoons, during the prevalence of which it would be very difficult, or next to impossible, to effect any repairs. The sea bottom is also unknown, whereas between Singapore and Port Darwin the nature of the ground is now well known to the company's officers from several years' experience of the present cables; and it has been ascertained that the dangers to which these are exposed can to a great extent be avoided.

The only argument that can be urged in favor of a different route is the obtaining of a duplicate land line; but, with respect to this, experience has proved, not only that the present land line to Port Darwin is fully equal to all the demands made upon it, but that it is not liable to an interruption of more than two or three days. The Port Darwin line, passing as it does through the dry interior, is in circumstances exceptionally favorable for rapid transmission over long circuits, whilst the almost entire absence of local traffic must always give it an immense advantage over any other land line of equal length. I need hardly say that this Government fully realize the responsibility resting upon them to maintain the trans-continental line in the utmost state of efficiency; and I would add that Mr. Todd has designed a peculiar form of insulator adapted for iron poles, which he believes will prove an effectual safeguard against breakages by lightning and other causes which now give trouble where iron poles are used. A large number of these insulators will be ordered by the next out-going mail.

With regard to reduction of rates, the company intimate that they are prepared to reduce their tariff in consideration of an equivalent subsidy, with respect to which Mr. Knevitt, the company's agent here, has shown that, calculated on the past year's traffic, a reduction of one penny a word is equivalent to a loss of £1,000 per annum, or, in other words, that a reduction from 9s. 5d. a word (the company's present rate between Port Darwin and Europe, exclusive of Australian and New Zealand rates) to 7s. a word means a loss to the company of £29,000 a year; and it should be borne in mind that where the cost of a message under the reduced rate would still be considerable, no very great increase of business can be looked for as resulting from the proposed reduction.

This Government therefore consider that this is a question the consideration of which may be postponed till the more urgent matter of the duplication of cable is completed.

In view of the great importance to the whole of the colonies of securing a second cable, I would respectfully ask your early consideration of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company's proposal, so that the question may be finally dealt with without further delay.

The Honorable the Chief Secretary, Victoria.

I have, &c.,
(Sd.) WILLIAM MORGAN.

No. 3.

REPORT OF A VISIT BY THE AGENTS-GENERAL FOR VICTORIA AND NEW ZEALAND TO MR. THORNTON, C.B., SECRETARY OF THE PUBLIC WORKS, RAILWAY, AND TELEGRAPH DEPARTMENT OF THE INDIA OFFICE, AND JOINT MEMORANDUM ON THE QUESTION OF BEST MODE OF DUPLICATING EXISTING LINE.

We visited Mr. Thornton, by appointment, having previously sent to him an introductory letter from the Colonial Office. We found him exceedingly willing to give us all the information which his office could afford. He explained to us that, under an Act of the Council of India, the Indian Government issued licenses to telegraph companies, subject to certain specified conditions. He further informed us that India was a party to the International Telegraph Convention, and bound by its regulations, with the practical application of which Colonel Champain was more particularly acquainted. At this stage, Colonel Champain, R.E., the officer in charge of the Government Indo-European Telegraph Department, joined us by Mr. Thornton's request conveyed to Colonel Champain during the interview. We pointed out the increased rate per word which, since the last Convention, the Eastern and Indo-European Company appeared to have received for the transmission of messages between India and Europe. In reply, we were told that this increase was sanctioned by, and settled at, the Convention. Generally, the position was thus explained to us. The Indian Government concur with the Convention in the opinion that it is not desirable to encourage rivalry in prices between competing companies, as it may lead to the competition being abolished and to the establishment of a monopoly. They think it preferable to stipulate for what they consider fair charges. As Australia was not represented at, and therefore no party to, the Convention, their rules do not apply beyond India; but, as between India and Europe, there are two companies, the Eastern and the Indo-European, and both of these are bound by the Convention rules. The Companies have also to comply with the conditions imposed by the Government. There seems to be no doubt that, even were the two companies to be willing to compete for Australian messages, the Indian department would not consent to their doing so by the reduction of their rates, unless both companies reduced equally. In short, the Government of India seems to adopt altogether the Convention policy of discouraging competition; but at the same time evinces a disposition to repress undue charges. There does not appear, however, to us, to be any adequate machinery by which undue rates can be altogether prevented. The companies virtually fix their own rates, and, when they agree, there does not seem to be much, if any, difficulty in the way of such rates being established. Possibly the Convention may take evidence as to traffic, income, business, and expenses, but we did not learn by what process of inquiry they were guided when fixing the rates. It is very probable that these triennial Conventions facilitate in some fashion international negotiations affecting the conditions of transmitting messages; but, in regard to finally fixing the rates, we doubt whether the Convention is the most suitable body to perform such a function. It may be that it prevents, or discourages from coming into play, a certain amount of competition which otherwise might lead to the conclusion that in the long run low cable rates would pay better than high ones. We were told by both Mr. Thornton and Colonel Champain that there would be no obstacle or objection whatever to the Australian and New Zealand Governments being represented at future Conventions; and we strongly recommend that they should be so represented, as it is obvious that any unrepresented interest on such an occasion is to some extent at the mercy of those to whom the actual making of the regulations is entrusted.

1st June 1877.

ARCHD. MICHIE,
JULIUS VOGEL.

Memorandum by the Agents-General of Victoria and New Zealand.

Following the interview which we jointly had with Mr. Thornton and Colonel Champain, at the Indian Office, and the report of the same which we prepared, and had the honor to transmit to our respective Governments, we have carefully considered and discussed the whole question of telegraphic communication with Australia and New Zealand; and we think it desirable to place upon record the conclusions at which we have arrived.

It is impossible to exaggerate the importance commercially, politically, and socially of maintaining telegraphic communication between Europe and Australasia (in which term we include New Zealand and Tasmania). Apart from the innumerable advantages which facilities for immediate communication afford not only to the colonies, but to all persons having any dealings with them, the rapidity of the progress of these communities will in a great measure be affected by the extent to which such facilities are promoted

and maintained. It is, of course, evident that Australasia depends greatly for its future progress upon the flow of population from without, as also upon the increase of the number of those who, in one shape or another, introduce capital to, or open business relations with it. Unless the colonies are to be left to depend for the increase of their population and resources on the natural increase of the present small population, and on the labors alone of the present settlers and their descendants, they must look forward to emigration from more numerous peopled countries. The use of the telegraph has become so popular that it is now regarded as almost a necessary adjunct to our daily life; and nothing would more retard the introduction of fresh population and capital to the Australasian colonies than the feeling that those who became connected with these distant countries might find themselves outside the range of telegraphic communication.

It is true that a line of telegraph already exists, but in respect to that part of the route over which there is only a single line of communication there is the danger at any moment of interruption. Whilst such danger exists there is an indisposition to resort to the telegraph to anything like the extent to which it might be depended on, whilst in so far as it is used the loss in case of interrupted communication to those who are in the habit of employing it is most disastrous. The uses and ramifications of the telegraph are so wide-spread and deep-rooted that a suspension of communication becomes a calamity, not merely to individuals but to the State.

A complete duplicate system from end to end can alone, in our opinion, give to Australasia that reasonable security her interests and well-being demand.

The employment of the telegraph is evidently largely affected by the tariff, which to the extent to which the use of a line is placed beyond the reach of all who do not belong to the more affluent classes is equivalent to obstruction to the use of the telegraph. The arguments in favor of the telegraph are arguments in favor of its being placed within the reach of the mass of those who would benefit by it. We do not, as will be seen, urge that those, be they few or many, who do not directly derive benefit from the telegraph should be largely or permanently taxed to save expense to those who immediately employ it; but we consider that the matter is so important that the State may reasonably be expected to do all that can be done to aid those who require the service of the telegraph in procuring that service on the most favorable terms, consistent with the inevitable impediments which may stand in the way.

We incline to think also that the interests at stake, being as they are so large, and so certain to become larger from year to year, ought not to be left in private hands. Much, if not all, that can be said in favor of the Governments working the lines of telegraph within the colonies seems to us to be applicable to the desirability of their working the exterior lines which form the means of communication between the colonies and Europe.

It is impossible to read the report we wrote on our interview with Mr. Thornton and Colonel Thompson, and also to remember all the circumstances of cable communication with Australasia, not to be alive to the fact that the interests of the colonies have been prejudiced already by reason of their having no control over exterior cable lines.

At the late Conference held in Sydney nothing definite was decided as to the mode of duplication, but the representatives unanimously voted in favor of such duplication where necessary, and also considered that any necessary subsidy consequent thereon should be defrayed by the colonies assenting thereto, in proportion to their respective populations. The following is the text of the two resolutions:—

“1. That it is desirable to extend and improve the means of telegraphic communication between Australia and Europe, by the duplication, where necessary, of the cables or lines connecting the same.

“2. That any subsidy on ocean cables to connect Australia with Europe shall be borne by the several Australian colonies assenting thereto, in proportion to population.”

The Conference also decided in favor of a subsidy of £20,000 as the proposed consideration for the future reduction of the tariff to six shillings a word. The resolution to this effect was supported by the representatives of the colonies of New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria. The representatives of New Zealand, Tasmania, and Western Australia refrained from voting. The text of the resolution was as follows:—

“6. That the Governments of South Australia and New South Wales be empowered to make arrangements with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company for a reduction of message tariff to six shillings per word, at a subsidy not exceeding £20,000 per annum, terminable at one year's notice; and that such subsidy be borne by the respective colonies, in proportion to population, any colony to be at liberty to withdraw on like notice.”

From these resolutions it is clear that the Conference contemplated, and its representatives more or less approved, a subsidy for a duplication, as well as of £20,000 for a reduction of the tariff; and we think we may assume that if both these objects, viz., a duplication and reduction, can be procured for a payment of about £20,000 for a limited term that such a result is much more favorable than the Conference expected, and is one to which the members assembled thereat would in all probability have given unanimous and cordial approval.

It is well to observe that the reduction to six shillings meant a reduction to that price, exclusive of the cost of transmission through the Australian Continent.

From what we have already said it will have been understood that the object to which we attach most importance in this communication is, that the Governments should take charge of telegraph cable communication.

Few will dissent from the principle who have observed how admirably the telegraph has been managed by the various Governments of the colonies. They may be said to have set the example, since followed in Great Britain, of cheap telegraph communication under Government control. So popular has this plan become that, notwithstanding the opposition in this country to anything savoring of protection, little objection is made to the telegraph being carried on at an apparent loss, which of course means that the taxpayers who are not immediately benefited by the telegraph are made to contribute to the cost for the benefit of those who directly use it.

Australasia in relation to the cables is somewhat in the position that Great Britain occupied in relation to the land lines when she determined to acquire them. Only in the one case there were numerous interests to deal with, whilst in the case of the cables the Governments would substantially have to deal with one company only.

Whatever we have said in favor of Government, and against private control of the cables, it is of course not designed to reflect on the company to whose praiseworthy energy and enterprise Australasia owes it that she has possessed, and still possesses, telegraph communication with the outer world.

The Eastern Extension Company deserves well of the colonies, and its claims cannot be overlooked. It would probably be deemed illiberal in Governments, and would prove very discouraging to future private enterprise, if, with money borrowed as low as they can now borrow, the Governments were to go into opposition to the Company without giving it the opportunity of disposing of its interests on reasonably favorable terms to itself. The same consideration should be given to the company as that which the government of a city would give to existing water and gas works after it had determined that the city should in future take the charge of supplying the inhabitants with gas and water.

Before erecting fresh works all reasonable efforts should be made to acquire existing ones. We think, therefore, the Governments should fairly recompense the company by buying its lines, in preference to constructing others on their own account.

The company has a good duplicate system between Penang and India, and, it is to be presumed, contemplate duplicating the line between Singapore and Penang, since in Mr. Pender's memo., dated October 3rd, 1876, he says :—"This company, however, already possesses one line between Singapore and India, and has entered into a contract for a second, which will be laid down by the end of the present year."

When the Australasian lines reach Singapore they fall into the system that serves for China. We think it would be desirable to arrange for the use without purchase of the lines from Singapore to India, always presuming, of course, that the duplication between Singapore and Penang is completed. Commercially and economically, it would appear to us to be a mistake to lay down fresh lines when sufficiently good ones are available. Two lines from Singapore to India would be sufficient for all purposes; and, therefore, both the Governments and the company must benefit by a suitable arrangement. We would suggest that in the event of the company selling its line between Singapore and Port Darwin to the Governments, that that arrangement should be accompanied by one for the use of the lines between Singapore and India, for a lump yearly payment, commencing with the present estimated revenue of the section and increasing each year by five per cent. for such time as may be agreed on. Thus the Governments will be able to fix their own tariff to India whilst still using the company's lines between Singapore and India. The arrangement must, however, be made in such a manner as to meet the contingency of the British and Indian Governments acquiring the lines between India and Singapore, a result which we believe will not be unlikely to follow the course we propose the Australasian Governments shall take.

We observe from a paragraph in the *Argus* that Mr. W. J. Cracknell, the Superintendent of Telegraphs in Queensland, has made a recommendation to the Government to arrange for the construction of a line to Singapore in connection with one from Singapore to Bangkok. This, though somewhat briefly stated, is probably a renewal of the plan arranged between the Governments of New South Wales, New Zealand, and Queensland and Mr. Audley Coote, in 1873. The project was to carry a land line up the Malay Peninsula to Tevoi, on the Tenassarim frontier; the Indian Government to extend their lines from Moulmein to Tevoi. The King of Siam was to give a concession for carrying the line up the Peninsula, and the projectors were in return to run a branch line to Bangkok in Siam. When Sir Daniel Cooper, Mr. Daintree, and Sir Julius Vogel commenced negotiating with Messrs. Siemens Brothers to carry out the arrangement made by their agent, Mr. Coote, considerable attention was given to the proposed route to connect Singapore with India, as on it depended the success of a thorough scheme of telegraph. We have good authority for saying that Sir D. Cooper, Mr. Daintree, and Sir Julius Vogel found reason to doubt the success of the project. They were informed it was very questionable if the independent Chiefs in the Peninsula would respect the King of Siam's concession; besides, the vegetation along the route was so rankly luxurious that to keep the line open would involve considerable expense. So doubtful were they of the proposal that, in one of their letters to Messrs. Siemens Brothers, they wrote :—"With respect to the landing on the Malay Peninsula, between Penang and Singapore, we must inform you that we shall stipulate, in case that line does not work satisfactorily, that we be at liberty to call upon you to lay a cable instead."

From this it may be inferred that the Colonial representatives doubted the success of the line even so far as Penang, whilst beyond that, it is to be presumed, they thought a cable absolutely requisite. We make these remarks to show that we have duly considered Mr. Cracknell's proposal. It may be added, however, that the plan we are now suggesting is so much more favorable to Queensland as well as to the other colonies, that Mr. Cracknell, of whose ability we are well aware, is not, we think, at all likely to dispute it.

To resume, we have not come to the conclusions we have indicated without satisfying ourselves that the Governments would not be likely to suffer by them. Obviously, it would be imprudent to too narrowly discuss the purchasing price, but it is no secret that the company has expended about £600,000 on what is called its Australian Section, i.e., the line between Singapore and Port Darwin; that the New Zealand line has cost about £290,000, and the Tasmanian about £70,000; amounting in all to about £960,000.

Before further dealing with these figures, it is necessary to consider the mode of duplication. It is, as we have said, essential that there should be a complete duplication of the line between Australasia and Europe. Tasmania and New Zealand should also be secured against accident to their present single line of communication. This might be cheaply effected by laying a line between the two colonies themselves, which, in effect, would give to each an alternative means of communication with the main Australasian system. The line between Sydney and Nelson cost £290,000, including the purchase of a steamer. A line to connect Tasmania and New Zealand would cost about £200,000.

From England to Singapore, with the exception of the Penang section, to which we have already referred, there are two lines the whole way—at some parts there are more than two lines. Between Singapore and Australia there is but one line. We regret to have to touch on the subject of the route of the duplication of the line between Australia and Singapore, since it is one of great difficulty, but our remarks would be incomplete if we failed to do so. At the Conference, whilst the expediency of duplication was admitted, no decision whatever was come to concerning it. In our opinion, no duplication would be satisfactory that did not give an alternative line throughout, which, of course, includes an alternative to

the use of the line between Adelaide and Port Darwin. Bearing this necessity in mind, the following are the routes from which selection would probably have to be made :—

1. New Zealand to San Francisco, by way of Honolulu.
2. Western Australia to Galle.
3. Western Australia (North-West Cape) to Singapore, by way of Java.
4. Normanton to Port Darwin, partly by water partly by land, and from Port Darwin to Singapore, by cable throughout, touching at Java.
5. Normanton or Cape York to Singapore, by cable throughout, touching at Java, but not at Port Darwin.

Enquiries which have recently been made by Sir Julius Vogel point to the first route being almost impracticable on account of the great depth of the water which would have to be passed through. If such a line were laid, it is unlikely it ever could be repaired, as the depth of water is greater than that from which a cable has ever yet been raised. The depth at one point between San Francisco and Honolulu is 3,250 fathoms, and at a point between Honolulu and Fiji, 3,448 fathoms. The deepest line yet laid is supposed to be 2,760 fathoms, between Brest and St. Pierre, whilst the depth from which a cable has been picked up is between 2,400 and 2,500 fathoms. At some time or other a cable will probably be constructed from the United States to Japan, but it would have to go far north to avoid the depth of water of a direct or more southerly route. The project of carrying a line from San Francisco to Honolulu, and thence to radiate to Japan and China and to Australia, does not appear to be feasible. Number two route would be outside of the company's system altogether. Having already said that we think the company should be liberally dealt with, we consider that if the Governments buy the present line, it would be better policy to make the duplicate line touch at Java, for the business with that place is supposed to be considerable. Besides the Galle line would involve the maintenance of a separate steamer. Another objection to the Western Australia route is, that the land line may not easily be maintained, and, at any rate, the use of it will not be so cheap as that for which the Queensland Government would be willing to give the use of its line. The last objection only can be urged to the third route. It would be cheaper than any other, but it would not satisfy Queensland, and we doubt if the land line could be made as safe and trustworthy apart from the tariff to be charged on it as the Queensland land line. As to routes 4 and 5, we have already said we think the route through Queensland by far the most secure, whilst it is probable that unless the Queensland route were adopted that colony would stand aloof. The adoption of the Queensland route would mean the reduction of the tariff through Australia. The Queensland Government charge for messages to Normanton only 1d. or 2d. a word, whilst the South Australian Government receive out of 10s. 8d. (the through charge to Adelaide) the large proportion of 1s. 5d. a word. We do not say the charge is unreasonable (considering the expense and risk South Australia is subject to), but clearly it is altogether inconsistent with cheap telegraphy.

Routes four and five are the two ways by which communication can be made with Queensland. One by connection with Port Darwin, partly by cable and partly by land line, with a second cable from Port Darwin to Singapore, avoiding only the Java land line; the other by cable from Normanton or Cape York to Java, and thence to Singapore. The cost of route 4 would be about £650,000, whilst that of route 5, from Normanton, has been variously estimated at from £750,000 to £1,000,000. We are not aware what would be the saving of cable cost and the additional expense of land line of making the starting point from Cape York instead of from Normanton. We have made route 5 to start either from Normanton or Cape York; if the latter be found preferable, it might be adopted.

Paying, as the Governments would, in cash, they should we think be able to get route 5 carried out for £700,000. As to whether route 5 would be more desirable than route 4, we prefer not expressing an opinion. We think one or the other of these routes the best, and the choice between them should be carefully considered. We are of opinion, however, that, if the more costly route is chosen, Queensland should pay the difference between it and the less expensive one. As we have said, the Queensland Government now charge 1d. or 2d. a word to Normanton; but, when it was contemplated by the Queensland Government to join New South Wales and New Zealand in subsidizing a company to construct a line from Normanton to Singapore, that Government proposed that the charge should be seven shillings for twenty words, or a little over 4d. a word; but then Queensland was to become liable for a considerable subsidy. Under the arrangement we propose, Queensland's contribution will be so much less that she can well afford to relinquish the fractional charge in excess of 4d. a word, which she formerly proposed.

We are of opinion that an annual sum by way of subsidy should be paid to the South Australian Government for reducing the rate to that which it is agreed shall be charged through Queensland. With an annual subsidy of £10,000, South Australia should see its way to adopt a tariff of 4d. a word. It could be arranged either to divide all through land receipts between the two colonies of South Australia and Queensland, or else that each should keep its own, and that New Zealand, New South Wales, and Queensland should use the Queensland route; the other colonies, the South Australian route, when both lines were open; and of course all use either route open in case of disaster to the other.

The expenditure under our proposal may be approximately estimated as follows :—

Port Darwin to Singapore	...	...	...	...	£600,000
Sydney to New Zealand	...	...	...	...	290,000
The existing Tasmanian line	...	...	...	...	70,000
The line proposed from Tasmania to New Zealand	...	...	...	...	200,000
The line proposed from Normanton to Singapore	...	...	...	...	650,000
					<hr/>
					£1,810,000
					<hr/>
Four per cent. on which would be	...	...	...	...	£72,400
Add subsidy to South Australia	...	...	...	...	10,000
					<hr/>
Say £82,400 annually.					£82,400

We have naturally avoided including the profit, consideration, or goodwill which should be paid to the company. It should be satisfied with from 10 to 15 per cent. Its shares are now at about 25 per cent. discount, and such a sale should be a good transaction for it coupled with an arrangement for the use of the Singapore to India section, by which the company would enjoy upon such lines as it retains a virtual monopoly of the Australasian business. Between what we propose and the position of the company if the Governments elected to carry a line from Western Australia to Galle, there can be no two opinions as to the interests of the company. We have already said Queensland should pay anything that is required over £650,000 for the connection between Normanton and Singapore. The amount will be ample if the route is by Port Darwin. If a cable the whole way is preferred Queensland should not hesitate to pay the difference. The arrangement would almost certainly be better for her than anything which has hitherto been proposed, whilst we think that it does substantial justice to South Australia. It must be borne in mind that a reduction of the present almost prohibitive rate of transmission through Australia is a cardinal feature of our proposal.

It is easily to be seen that the Governments have an advantage over the present and any other company, for, whilst the company has to pay six per cent. for its money, the Governments can get it for less than four per cent. It was the knowledge of this, together with the reflection that communication must be kept up, and further expenditure incurred, that led us, before going into the figures, to conclude that the Governments could with benefit buy out the company. We have taken six per cent. as the borrowing rate of the company, although probably its shareholders look for a larger return on their share capital.

We have now to consider the question of expenditure. In December 1874 Mr. Todd, the able Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs of South Australia, who probably has the largest acquaintance with the subject of cable communication with Australia, wrote:—"I have no reliable information as to the amount of traffic with Java, apart from Australia. I believe, however, I am not far wrong in assuming that it is sufficiently large to cover the whole of the working expenses of the British Australian section by the cables between Singapore and Batavia, and between Banjoewangie and Port Darwin, leaving the whole of the receipts from Australian business to be carried to profit."

These Java receipts are not known to us, and we can only conclude that they must at any rate largely defray the expenses of working the line. The Governments would be able to reduce existing expenditure by doing away with one steamer, and using their own officers for many purposes. We think that on the five lines—viz., the two to Singapore, the New Zealand line, the Tasmanian line, and the New Zealand and Tasmanian line—the total expenses should not be more than £12,000 in excess of the receipts from the Java traffic. Adding this amount to the interest and to the payment of £10,000 to South Australia, we have an amount of £994,000. The rent of the Singapore and Indian section may also be added. The equivalent will appear on the other side under the head of revenue. We propose that the rent should commence with the present estimated revenue, and the items of rent and the revenue from this section might be left out on each side. It will, however, be more satisfactory to insert them. In order to make the matter clear it will be as well to explain how the 10s. 8d., which is the charge from London to Adelaide, is divided:—

	s.	d.
The Company transmitting to India receives	3	0 $\frac{3}{4}$
The Indian Government	0	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
The Java Government	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Eastern Extension Company, India to Singapore	1	7
Ditto, Singapore to Darwin	4	0
South Australia	1	5

Making in all 10s. 8d. a word.

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Of the amount receivable by South Australia, 1d. probably is considered as the special carriage to Adelaide, for the same payment enables a message to be taken to Melbourne; in which case it is to be presumed the South Australian Government receive 1s. 4d. and the Victorian Government 1d. The company (*vide* Colonel Glover's letter to the Agents-General of March 9th, 1877) accept Mr. Todd's estimate of 235,000 words as representing the annual traffic of the Australian line. It is probably within the mark; at any rate, there must be an improvement going on. This would make the revenue of the Singapore and India section, at 1s. 7d. a word, £18,600; and of the Singapore Australian section, at 4s. a word, £47,000. In neither case is the Java business, other than with Australia, included. The rent, therefore, of the Singapore and Indian section would be £18,600, with an addition of so much of the traffic between Java and Singapore as extends beyond the latter place. The revenue between Java and Singapore would belong to the Governments.

We have already incidentally mentioned that the reduction to 6s. a word, which it was proposed to secure did not include the cost of transmission through the Australasian Continent. Any one who studies Mr. Todd's figures and those of the company will satisfy himself of the point. Indeed a reduction from 10s. 8d. to 6s., if it all came off the company's receipts, would leave of its 5s. 7d. a word only 11d. a word for the whole distance from Port Darwin to Madras. The £20,000 was meant to secure a word rate of 6s. to Port Darwin only, which, added to the rate to Adelaide of 1s. 5d., would have made together 7s. 5d. a word. It is important to remember this, for as we propose to include the £20,000 subsidy, our plan must involve a reduction on the tariff similar to that which that subsidy was designed to secure. As we assume that the revenue will not be less than at present, it is necessary for the correctness of our calculations that any reductions that are made should not result in a loss to the revenue. It will of course be open to the Governments, when they own the lines, to consider the question of further reductions. There are many people who believe that considerable reductions may be made without loss of revenue. At any rate we contend no loss of revenue worth consideration will result to the cables from the moderate reductions we propose. The reduction from 9s. 3d. to Port Darwin to 6s., which it was proposed to secure by the subsidy, amounts to 3s. 3d. a word. Of this amount 1s. 1d. will be covered by the reduction we propose on the rate of transmission through Australia. There is thus left 2s. 2d., which we confidently contend may be taken off the 5s. 7d. (the present rate over the two sections from Port Darwin to Singapore and Singapore to India), without diminishing the gross revenue. That is to say, we are of opinion that the total reduction of 3s. 3d. a word between Australia and England will induce a sufficient increase

of business to fully compensate the reduction of 2s. 2d. on the sections between Port Darwin and India. As to the reduction in the cost of transmission between Adelaide and Port Darwin, that is partly dealt with by subsidy, partly by presumed increase of business. In addition, we think 6d. a word (which is equal to a reduction of 3d. a word, the rate now being 7s. 6d. for ten words) may be the rate established between Australia and New Zealand, without any danger of diminishing the revenue on that line.

The total revenue remains to be considered. It is as follows:—

India to Singapore	...	...	...	...	...	£18,600
Singapore to Port Darwin	...	...	...	...	...	47,000
Sydney to New Zealand	...	...	...	...	...	14,000
Subsidy paid by New South Wales and New Zealand Governments	...	...	...	...	...	7,500
Australia to Tasmania, about	...	...	...	...	...	5,000
Proposed Tasmania and New Zealand line, about	...	...	...	...	...	3,500
The proposed subsidy	...	...	...	...	...	20,000
						<hr/> £115,600 <hr/>

In reference to the subsidy on the New Zealand line, it has only eight years to run, but it cannot be questioned that by that time all need for it will have vanished.

The amount set down for the proposed New Zealand and Tasmanian line is moderate. The expenditure of £94,400 with the rent of the Singapore to India section of £18,600, amounts to £113,000. Deducting this from the revenue, there is a small balance left of £2,600. But the expenditure does not include interest on whatever sum it may be decided to pay the company in excess of the value of the lines purchased. Our calculation merely takes the cost of the lines without an allowance for goodwill. Whatever that allowance may be fixed at, its annual cost will not much exceed the margin between revenue and expenditure we have just referred to. Should there be an excess it will merely mean that the £20,000 subsidy is slightly exceeded. In a question of this kind three or four thousand pounds a year, apportioned amongst all the colonies, is not of much moment. Besides, if the £20,000 subsidy is slightly increased it is to be borne in mind that the amount will be reducible by increase of business; and surely it is better to pay a little more for a year or two, with a prospect of substantial reduction, than to stand committed to a continuous annual payment of £20,000. We must indeed express the opinion that the estimates of revenue are much within what the revenue will really amount to when two complete lines will give to those disposed to use the telegraph largely increased confidence in the safety of doing so.

The question of reserve, sinking, or reconstruction fund, is one that requires consideration. It very much less affects the Governments than the company, because the Governments are in a better position to meet contingencies than is a private company. In our opinion the second or duplicate line is the equivalent of a reserved fund, and no other seems to be necessary. The duplicate line is not wanted so much for work as for an insurance against accident. All that the Governments should do is to maintain the two lines, the expenditure on which must necessarily be variable. The steamer, and the maintenance and repairs she will from time to time be called upon to effect, we include in the ordinary expenditure. The cost of any extraordinary reparation we consider will be fully covered by the increase of revenue to which we have referred. That increase may during some years reduce the rate of subsidy included in our calculations, or even afford a profit in excess of it; in other years, on the other hand, it may be all absorbed by repairs required.

As to the disposal of surpluses or deficiencies, these might either be divided in proportion to the populations of the several colonies or in proportion to the several takings by each colony. The work should be divided into staff, or general and local. By this plan the total cost of management would be much reduced, as the ordinary Government officers could perform the local work. The cost of the general or staff work could be apportioned amongst the colonies in the same way as it was decided to divide the receipts—i.e., either in proportion to population or the respective receipts.

It would be superfluous to dilate on the advantages of having the telegraph in Government hands, because this is not likely to be unappreciated by the colonies, which have so long had reason to be satisfied with the Government control and management of the land lines. We may, however, observe that the plan which we now propose will, we think, be followed by larger results than might at present be commonly anticipated.

The Governments at the Conference at Sydney in 1873 seemed unanimously to approve of the proposal that the entire line between England and Australia should be acquired jointly by the British, Indian, and Australasian Governments. Our proposal, by which the last mentioned Governments would secure part of the lines may work better than a tripartite arrangement. There is probably a better prospect of the English and Indian Governments following the example of the Colonial Governments if it be found to work well, than of procuring their co-operation at first in a triple partnership. If, as we expect, increased revenue and largely augmented facilities arise from the step we now propose its results will powerfully influence the British and Indian Governments.

As we intend to send a copy of this memorandum to our respective Governments we may be permitted to observe that accident rather than design has led to this movement being confined to ourselves. We have had frequent opportunities of discussing it, and we have found that our opinions in the main harmonise. We thought it better not to treat it as an Agent-General's question, to discuss which, courtesy might have required of us that we should request the counsels and co-operation of the London representatives of other colonies. The question does not indeed come before us as Agents-General, excepting as they may feel themselves called upon to represent to their respective Governments the impressions which they from time to time receive. In thus expressing these opinions, we cannot in any way commit our Governments, or embarrass their action for themselves.

The Agents-General of South Australia and Queensland would, however, probably feel that the questions into which we have entered relating to their colonies, are of a nature they would not enter into without consultation with their Governments. On the whole, therefore, we have thought it better to confine ourselves to placing on record merely the results of our own discussions and calculations, to which we have now the honor to invite your consideration.

London, 1st August 1877.

ARCHD. MICHIE,
JULIUS VOGEL.

No. 4.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA.

INTERRUPTIONS ON ANGLO-AUSTRALIAN TELEGRAPH, 1872-78.

Port Darwin Line Interruptions from its Completion in 1872 to 29th March 1878.

When Interrupted.	Length of Interruption.	Situation and Cause.
1872.		
August 27 ...	3 days	Between Peake and Charlotte Waters.
November 18 ...	3 "	
Total ...	6 days	
1873.		
January 28 ...	3 days	Between Beltana and Stranways Springs.
March 6 ...	4 "	Between Peake and Charlotte Waters.
April 8 ...	2 "	Between Katherine and Yam Creek.
May 28 ...	2 "	Between Alice Springs and Barrow's Creek.
August 24 ...	2 "	Between Daly Waters and Katherine.
September 16 ...	2 "	Between Tennant's Creek and Powell's Creek.
December 4 ...	3 "	Between Daly Waters and Katherine.
Total ...	18 days	
1874.		
January 17 ...	3 days	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters.
March 23 ...	2 "	Between Daly Waters and Katherine.
March 25 ...	2 "	Between Port Augusta and Beltana.
May 21 ...	2 "	
July 4 ...	3 "	Between Daly Waters and Katherine.
August 14 ...	2 "	
September 25 ...	2 "	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Springs.
October 9 ...	4 "	Between Yam Creek and Southport.
Total ...	20 days	
1875.		
January 30 ...	2 days	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Springs. Insulator off, and line touching iron pole.
March 18 ...	3 "	Between Daly Waters and Katherine. Natives cut wire.
May 29 ...	2 "	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Insulator off, and line touching iron pole.
June 10 ...	2 "	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Insulator broken by natives; line on iron bracket.
August 15 ...	2 "	Between Yam Creek and Southport. Insulator broken; line on iron pole.
September 3 ...	2 "	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Insulator broken by natives; line on iron bracket.
October 18 ...	2½ "	Between Peake and Charlotte Waters. Line touching lightning-rod.
December 10 ...	2 "	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Springs. Insulator off; line touching lightning-rod.
Total ...	15½ days	
1876.		
February 26 ...	2 days	Between Tennant's Creek and Powell's Creek. Insulator off; line touching iron pole.
March 5 ...	2 "	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Insulator off; line touching iron pole.
April 26 ...	3 "	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Insulator off.
May 8 ...	6 "	Between Port Augusta and Beltana. Line broken at Moralina Creek.
May 29 ...	2 "	Between Barrow's and Tennant's Creeks. Teams ran over wire and cut it.
September 11 ...	4 "	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs, also Port Augusta and Beltana. Insulators off, line touching iron pole.
November 10 ...	3 "	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Insulators off, line touching iron poles.
November 29 ...	1 "	Between Yam Creek and Southport. Insulator off, line touching iron pole.
December 27 ...	2 "	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Natives broke insulators, line touching iron poles.
Total ...	25 days	

When Interrupted.	Length of Interruption.		Situation and Cause.	
1877.				
January 11	...	1 day	...	Between Peake and Charlotte Waters. Insulator off, line touching iron pole.
March 19	...	3 „	...	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Insulator off, line touching iron pole.
June 11	...	2 „	...	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Piece of wire twisted round line-wire and pole.
June 11	...	1 „	...	Between Port Augusta and Beltana. Line broken half mile south of Depôt Creek.
August 4	...	2 „	...	Between Daly Waters and Katherine. Line broken midway between stations.
September 21	...	1 „	...	Between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Broken thirty miles north of Beltana.
October 9	...	1 „	...	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Springs. Natives burning grass, burnt some poles down.
October 14	...	3 „	...	Between Alice Springs and Barrow's Creek. Bush fires.
November 6	...	3 „	...	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Natives breaking two insulators at North Newcastle.
November 10	...	2 „	...	Between Barrow's and Tennant's Creeks. Lightning breaking insulators and line on iron poles.
November 14	...	1 „	...	Between Katherine and Yam Creek. Lightning breaking insulators and line on iron poles.
November 30	...	2 „	...	Between Tennant's and Powell's Creeks. Lightning broke insulators and line on iron poles.
December 4	...	2 „	...	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Lightning broke insulators and line on iron poles.
December 8	...	3 „	...	Between Yam Creek and Southport. Lightning broke five insulators and line touching iron poles.
December 13	...	1 „	...	Between Alice Springs and Barrow's Creek. Natives cut out a shackle.
December 15	...	3 „	...	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Lightning knocked down several poles, line on ground.
December 25	...	3 „	...	Between Powell's Creek and Daly Waters. Lightning broke two insulators; line touching iron poles. Also between Beltana and Strangways Springs. Line chafed through iusulator; touched iron pole.
Total	...	34 days		
1878.				
January 1	...	1 day	...	Between Katherine and Yam Creek. Large tree falling across line at crossing of river.
January 14	...	5 „	...	Between Daly Waters and Katherine. Bush fire and heavy storm, blown tree across line. This wet season has been exceptionally bad for cyclones and terrific thunderstorms.
February 9	...	1 „	...	Between Barrow's and Tennant's Creeks. Lightning broke insulators, line touching iron poles.
March 15	...	5 „	...	Between Port Augusta and Beltana. Heavy floods at Willochra washed number of poles down, and line on ground covered with drift.
March 23	...	2½ „	...	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Srrings. Seven poles burnt, sixty miles south of Alice Springs, and line on ground.
March 25	...	2 „	...	Between Peake and Charlotte Waters. Exceptionally heavy floods.
March 29	...	1 „	...	Between Charlotte Waters and Alice Springs. Line broken.
Total	...	17½ days		

Cable Interruptions.

When Interrupted.	When Restored.	Where between.
1872.		
June 22 ...	October 20 ...	Port Darwin and Banjoewangie.
1873.		
February 21 ...	February 24 ...	Land line between Boezki and Banjoewangie.
March 31 ...	April 2 ...	Batavia and Singapore.
May 12 ...	May 26 ...	Penang and Madras.
July 13 ...	July 13 ...	Land line 30 miles from Banjoewangie.
November 20 ...	November 23 ...	Singapore and Penang.
1874.		
May 20 ...	May 31 ...	Batavia and Singapore.
August 13 ...	August 15 ...	
August 16 ...	August 23 ...	
December 10 ...	December 29 ...	

Floating Station was established 16 miles from Batavia with daily steam communication to Singapore on the 18th December.

When Interrupted.	When Restored.	Where between.
1875.		
September 2 ...	September 16 }	Batavia and Singapore.
November 5 ...	November 8 }	
November 15 ...	December 24	Penang and Madras.

1876.		
March 28 ...	August 24 ...	Penang and Madras.
April 24 ..	August 7 ...	Port Darwin and Java.
October 22 ...	November 30	Batavia and Singapore.

1877.		
February 26 ...	March 2 ...	Batavia and Singapore.
July 15 ...	July 17 ...	Singapore and Penang.
September 26 ...	October 13 ...	Batavia and Singapore.
October 19 ...	October 31 ...	Singapore and Penang.
November 8 ...	December 15	Port Darwin and Banjoewangie.

1878.		
January 22 ...	February 3 ...	Batavia and Singapore.
March 11 ...	March 13 ...	Land line between Sitoenda and Sourabaya.

C. TODD,

Postmaster-General and Superintendent of Telegraphs.

General Post Office, Adelaide, March 29th, 1878.

No. 5.

F. 248/70.

SIR,

Electric Telegraph Department,
Adelaide, 18th April 1870.

Having had several interviews with Commander Noel Osborn, R.N., at which the objects of his mission were discussed, I have now the honor to submit the following remarks and suggestions for the early consideration of the Government, it being desirable that some decision should be arrived at before the next outgoing mail.

Commander Osborn represents the Telegraph Construction and Maintenance Company, who have entered into contracts for the construction of the line projected by the British-Australian Telegraph Company, a copy of whose prospectus was lately received from the Agent-General, and is herewith appended.

Every offer hitherto has involved the payment of large subsidies; but, so far as appears, the proposition now submitted requires no such responsibility, but relies wholly on the traffic for payment. We have a scheme well considered and supported by an experienced and powerful company, capable of carrying out the work to a successful completion. All that is asked of us are the necessary facilities for bringing the cable to our shores, land for stations, and that we should assist by defining a track for the land section.

It is no unimportant consideration that the cable to be laid will actually form a portion of an integral through line practically under one management; free, therefore, from the complications and delays incidental to divided control and foreign operators.

Such are the altered and favorable conditions under which the scheme is now placed before us. I would therefore, in view of the importance of telegraphic communication with our Northern Territory, and the desirability of opening up an overland route, strongly advise that every effort should be made before Commander Osborn leaves us to secure the landing of the cable at Port Darwin; for although that place is named in the prospectus, I understand that it is by no means certain that it will be actually taken there unless South Australia take some steps to secure it.

English capitalists have, very naturally, great reluctance to encounter unknown obstacles and dangers—even though the dangers may be more imaginary than real—in erecting and maintaining a land line through an unsettled country. They feel, and correctly too, that the local governments are in a far better position for carrying out this part of the work; and it would consequently require very little argument on the part of Queensland to induce the company to abandon all idea of a land line and carry their cable instead direct to the shores of Carpentaria, thus excluding our Northern Territory from all participation in the advantages to be derived from telegraphic communication. And I would here respectfully remind you, that New South Wales and Queensland mutually agreed to subsidize Mr. Frazer's scheme to the extent of £17,500 per annum unaided.

Commander Osborn informs me that, if the land line between Port Darwin and Burketown is finally decided on, it will take Stuart's track as far as the Roper River, where it meets Gregory's, which will then be followed to Burketown, connecting there with the Queensland system.

The question for South Australia to consider (and fortunately it is a question in which the other colonies as well as the company are all equally interested), is, whether we shall be content to depend on so great a length of single line necessarily exposed to frequent interruption, or whether it will not be for

our own interests to carry a line across the continent, either direct to Port Darwin or to some point on the company's line. If we went direct to Port Darwin the company would, no doubt, abandon their land section and terminate there.

It is some eleven or twelve years since I first drew the attention of the Government to the practicability of erecting a land line from Port Augusta to the Northern coast, and every addition to our knowledge of the interior since acquired has confirmed the views I then advanced.

We have then two plans to consider: First, to undertake the responsibility of a line right through, from Port Augusta to Port Darwin, to be completed simultaneously, or as nearly so as possible, with the landing of the cable, *i.e.*, by the end of 1871—the company pledging themselves to terminate the cable there; or, second, to let the company construct their proposed land line to Burketown, but reserve the right to connect with them at some intermediate point, either on the Roper or Nicholson.

The distances are as follows:—From Port Augusta to Port Darwin 1,550 or, say, 1,600 miles; to the Roper, say 1,400; to the Nicholson, say 1,100.

The first plan, if Stuart's track were followed, would secure the whole of the traffic to South Australia, but there would be the disadvantage of depending on a single line, which would be obviated by going to the Nicholson, or by letting Queensland connect with us, at either the Nicholson or Roper, according to the route taken.

If the second plan is adopted, we shall have to arrive at some arrangement as to the division of traffic—what messages shall go *viâ* South Australia, and what *viâ* Queensland.

The simplest, and perhaps the most equitable, arrangement would be a fixed tariff common to both routes, and an equal division of receipts between South Australia and Queensland.

A careful consideration of the whole question induces me to recommend that the Government should undertake to introduce a measure, immediately after the new Parliament meets, for providing, by means of a loan, for the construction, at once, of a line of telegraph from Port Augusta to Port Darwin—Commander Osborn guaranteeing, on the part of the company, to terminate the cable there. This, I understand, Commander Osborn would be quite willing to do, or at least to recommend to the British-Australian Company, with whom he would communicate, to save time, by the Indo-European telegraph next mail.

To remove all cause for jealousy, as well as to provide an alternative line, Queensland should be invited to connect with us at some convenient point; and this, in my opinion, would be far better than a central station at Cooper's Creek with radiating lines to each capital, as has been suggested, but which I have shown to involve a useless expenditure of money.

The company would, no doubt, readily fall in with this plan, as their connection with two independent routes would make them secure from interruption, an advantage of equal importance to the colonies.

With regard to cost, it will much depend on timber being found along the route. Much of the country is, I believe, destitute of serviceable trees, and transport will therefore form a serious item. I propose, however, to use only fifteen or twenty poles to the mile, and, in some places, stone cairns, and by this means keep the expenditure down. It would not be safe to estimate the cost at less than £80 per mile, or, say, £120,000, which is the sum I would recommend should be provided by loan.

We might recoup ourselves for a portion—say one-fourth or one-third—by the sale of land in the Northern Territory, which the telegraph would do so much to open up.

Next, as regards maintenance: having two lines to depend upon, it would not be necessary to have stations so close together. Stations at the Blinman and Yudanamutana Mines on the projected line of railway of 200 miles would be supported by local traffic. As far as pastoral stations extend, we should not require an extensive staff, as we could easily arrange with the settlers to assist in keeping the line in order, *i.e.*, to repair casualties. Three or four stations with four men at each would be sufficient to bridge over the interior to the Nicholson or Roper. The annual maintenance would probably not exceed £8,000.

Revenue.—The company reckon sixty-five messages each way per diem for 330 working days. My estimate in previous reports was only twenty-five each way, or fifty per diem, and this moderate calculation, at 10s. a message, would yield £8,250, or a little more than the cost of maintenance, leaving the interest on first outlay unprovided for. That is all our existing lines do; they barely pay their working expenses; but no one doubts that they indirectly more than repay the colony by the facilities they afford to the commerce of the country. It should be borne in mind that the business will yearly increase with the growth of the colonies; and further, that the line will promote more than anything else the development of the North. There can be no doubt of its being remunerative in a few years.

We might effect an actual saving on the completion of the line by discontinuing the branch mail service to King George's Sound, which, with direct telegraphic communication with England, would no longer be so necessary. If the second plan is adopted, and we connect with the company's line at the Nicholson, £100,000 will be sufficient, but we should in that case have to divide receipts with Queensland. In the one case we have the control of a main line through, with a branch to Queensland; in the other we have simply a branch line connecting with the main to Queensland.

Should the Government concur in the views I have expressed, I would suggest that immediate steps should be taken for obtaining from the Surveyor-General a report as to the best route, which his extensive knowledge of the country will enable him to furnish. He has, I think, a party of surveyors well advanced on the eastern boundary, who might perhaps be made useful as a flying expedition, with a view to discover the route offering the greatest facilities. As the cable will be laid by the end of 1871, we have no time to lose; whatever is done must be done quickly.

In conclusion I would observe that it is next to impossible for more favorable terms to be offered to us; and, if we fail to accept them, we must be prepared to leave to Queensland the exclusive honor of having, through her own unaided enterprise and energy, afforded to the Australian colonies the immense advantages of telegraphic communication with the whole civilized world. Our geographical position and our intelligence alike prohibit this.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES TODD,
Superintendent of Telegraphs.

The Hon. the Treasurer.

No 6.

A BILL

To render Judgments, which have been obtained in the Supreme Court of any of the other Australian Colonies, effectual in [*Tasmania*].

BE it enacted, &c. :—

Interpretation.

1. The word “judgment” shall include any judgment, decree, rule or order at law or in equity of the Supreme Court of any of the Australian Colonies, other than [*Tasmania*], for the payment of money.

Certificate of judgment obtained in another colony may be registered in [*Tasmania*].

2. Where judgment shall hereafter be obtained in the Supreme Court of any Australian Colony other than [*Tasmania*], the registrar of the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*] shall on the production to him of a certificate of such judgment in the form or to the effect in the Schedule purporting to be signed by the proper officer of the Court where such judgment has been obtained, register such certificate in a register to be kept in the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*], and to be called “*The Register for Australian Judgments*.”

On registration, certificate to have effect of judgment in [*Tasmania*].

3. The certificate shall from the date of such registration be of the same force and effect, and all proceedings may be had and taken on such certificate, as if the judgment of which it is a certificate had been a judgment originally obtained on the date of such registration in the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*], and all the reasonable costs and charges attendant upon obtaining and registering such certificate shall be recovered in like manner as if the same were part of the original judgment.

Certificate to be registered within twelve months after judgment.

4. No certificate of any such judgment shall be registered as aforesaid more than twelve months after the date of such judgment, unless application shall have been first made to and leave obtained from the Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*].

Court to have control over certificate so registered.

5. The Supreme Court of [*Tasmania*] shall have and exercise the same control and jurisdiction over any judgment and over any certificate of such judgment registered under this Act as it now has and exercises over any of its own judgments, but in so far only as relates to execution under this Act.

No security for costs where person registering certificate resides out of [*Tasmania*].

6. It shall not be necessary for any person resident in any of the other Australian Colonies in any proceeding had and taken on such certificate to find security for costs in respect of such residence, unless, on special grounds, a Judge or the Court shall otherwise order.

No costs in action on judgments.

7. In any action brought on any judgment which might be registered under this Act the party bringing such action shall not recover or be entitled to any costs or expenses of suit, unless the Supreme Court or a Judge thereof shall otherwise order.

Judges to make rules.

8. The Judges of the Supreme Court may make rules and orders to regulate the practice to be observed in the execution of this Act or in any matter relating thereto, including the scale of fees to be charged.

Short title.

9. In citing this Act it shall be sufficient to use the expression “*The Intercolonial Judgments Act 1878*.”

SCHEDULE.

I, _____, certify that [*insert name of person entitled to judgment, with his title, trade, or profession, and usual or last known place of abode*] on the _____ day of _____ 18____, obtained judgment [*or as the case may be*] before the Supreme Court of [*insert name of Australian Colony*] for payment of the sum of _____ on account of [*here state shortly the nature of claim and amount of costs*].