

That the amount of saving in both cases might reach an enormous sum, say almost half-a-million in round numbers in either case, if the alternative were adopted of landing the cable at the nearest point from Timor, and carrying thence a land-line to about the same latitude as Moreton Bay.

3. This prospect appeared to me to require a pause in the proceedings, since assuredly it would be to the interest of Her Majesty's Government and of all the Colonies to direct an investigation to be made by competent persons. On public grounds alone, and in the urgency of the moment, I deemed it my duty to address the Duke.

4. It is reported that at the interview with Mr. Gisborne and the gentlemen who accompanied him, the Chancellor of the Exchequer hinted, that the payment of money for the cable in lieu of guaranteeing might be a preferable course. If so, and the Colonies adopt the same view, I am firmly persuaded, bearing in recollection the unfortunate results of the Red Sea cable, that such in effect would be the right course, and the most economical, for the contract could then be made direct with responsible manufacturers, upon the true and equitable footing, and save the absorption by any intermediate persons of so large a sum as £150 (more or less) per nautical mile in the price of the cable.

5. As the results of my further inquiry, I beg permission to enclose copies of a more complete letter from Mr. Passmore, the telegraph contractor, and of an additional letter from Mr. C. F. Varley, the engineer and electrician, whose authority as a man of great practical experience and of high scientific standing in the Electrical World is sufficiently notorious.

The character of both gentlemen for integrity and honor is of no slight moment in considering their evidence. Mr. Varley has under his charge the whole of the electric and international telegraphic system, comprising some 35,000 miles of land wire, 1,800 miles of sea cable wire, all working in perfect order with hundreds of thousands of messages. These copies I have had printed for transmission to the Colonies.

6. In connection with the feasibility of land wires across the Australasian Continent, and the truthfulness of the descriptions of Stuart, the South Australian explorer, and his well known companions, I may refer to the annexed extracts of private letters, by the mail just arrived, shewing the confidence of the South Australian colonists in both, and "they know not how to discover, but how to occupy," as their journals say.

The colonists of South Australia are losing no time in sending sheep and cattle upon Stuart's route, and even are agitating the propriety of sending a superintendent and staff to the Northern sea board for the maintenance of order.

7. Perhaps it might be suggested that the time is arrived, or nearly so, when all the Australasian Colonies should depute, say the chiefs of their respective telegraph systems, to form a congress and determine :—

- a. The best point on the Northern Coast for laying the cable.
- b. The most convenient point for all, to which the land line should be directed from the Coast, so as to enable each Colony to derive from this latter land line point, the communications for each Colony.
- c. The best mode of purchasing the cable, &c., &c., and maintenance &c.
- d. The division of costs, (including New Zealand, Tasmania, and Western Australia).

8. When this has all been settled, then the approbation and co-operation of Her Majesty's Imperial Government might be solicited.

Finally in all that I have stated, I hope not to be misunderstood (whatever my own convictions may be), as being desirous of excluding any schemes from due consideration, as I frankly confess, what indeed must be very evident, that I am a very incompetent person to offer any technical opinion, although it may be said in illustration that it is not necessary to be an astronomer to be able to see the moon.

All that I desire to submit, in opposition possibly to my fellow colonists before alluded to, is that before any hasty decision is taken on the subject, competent persons in the Colonies and at home, should well weigh and investigate it, and recommend the course that may be best and most economical for all interests, and to this purpose I have endeavoured to show cause.

I have, &c.,

G. S. WALTERS,
Agent-General for South Australia.

Sir F. Rogers, Bart.

MR. WALTERS TO SIR F. ROGERS, BART.

Office of Agent-General for South Australia,
5, Copthall Court, London, 26th March, 1863.

SIR,—

I was in hopes that after I had the honor of addressing you on the 19th instant for the consideration of his Grace the Duke of Newcastle, I should have had no further occasion to tresspass on your invaluable time.

The question of Telegraphic communication is, however, of such deep interest to all the Australasian Colonies, as well as to Her Majesty's Government, that with all my repugnance to place myself so repeatedly before you, I feel it a duty to enclose a copy of my letter addressed this day to the Government of South Australia.