

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 following 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 Tele-
 “graph 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 communi-
 “cation 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