

Queensland relative to the offer of the Eastern Extension and China Telegraph Company at the Berlin Conference to assist duplication by laying a cable from the Roper River to Normanton at its own expense, &c., which the Victorian, South Australian, and New South Wales representatives at the Conference recommended for acceptance, provided Queensland, Tasmania, and, if possible, New Zealand joined in the subsidy to the Port Darwin cable.

The Executive Council of Queensland considered these matters on the 10th September, 1885, and decided to reply that it was considered undesirable to acquiesce in any of the proposals now made.

On the 27th January, 1886, Mr. Pender wired an offer to reduce the cable charges by 2s. 3d. per word, making, with South Australia's reduction, 2s. 6d. per word, provided the non-contracting colonies joined in the subsidy and in extending it for six and a quarter years, at the same time repeating the company's offer to lay the Roper River-Normanton cable at a cost of £70,000, to connect Queensland and South Australia under a traffic arrangement with the two colonies. He subsequently, on the 4th of February, 1886, informed the Agents-General that his company would unconditionally reduce the cable rates by 1s. 4d. per word from the 1st July, 1886, and make a further reduction of 1s. 4d. per word conditionally upon the extension of the term of the subsidy, and upon the non-contributing colonies joining in it.

On the 2nd March, 1886, Queensland replied as follows to the proposal: "This Government does not think the proposed reduction in rates by any means adequate, having regard to the length of time for which the subsidy is asked. But, apart from the question of rates, this Government is not disposed to join in any subsidy which will tend to have the effect of discouraging the establishment of another independent line of telegraphic communication between Australia and Europe."

On the 22nd June, 1886, the chairman of the cable company offered, as the proposal to extend the subsidy, &c., had been declined, to lower the rates to any figure the colonies might fix, down to limit of out-payment, if the colonies would guarantee the average receipts over the cables for the previous three years. On the 15th July, 1886, he was informed, in reply, that his proposal for a guarantee could not be entertained.

At the Sydney Postal Conference in 1888 Queensland again declined to join in the subsidy, or in any guarantee to the existing cable company, on the grounds that it would prevent her from subsidising or joining in the subsidy to any independent line of cable-communication.

At the Postal Conference in Adelaide, in May, 1890, Queensland again declined to join in the subsidy or guarantee for the same reason.

No. 14.—Statement showing the Distribution of the Amount to be guaranteed by the Australian Colonies under the Proposed Tariff. (Laid before the Conference by the Hon. D. O'Connor.)

Colony.	Population, 1888 Basis.	Without Increase in Traffic.	With Increase of 10 per Cent.	With Increase of 20 per Cent.	With Increase of 25 per Cent.	With Increase of 33 per Cent.	With Increase of 50 per Cent.	With Increase of 75 per Cent.	With Increase of 100 per Cent.	With Increase of 124 per Cent.
		£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
Victoria	1,090,860	19,546 14	4 17,975 19	7 16,405 4	10 15,619 11	7 14,310 14	7 11,692 8	9 7,765 6	0 3,838 9	2 68 10
New South Wales ...	1,085,740	19,454 16	3 17,891 9	3 16,328 2	2 15,546 2	9 14,243 8	11 11,637 9	4 7,728 15	10 3,820 8	3 68 3
New Zealand	607,380	10,883 6	7 10,008 15	3 9,134 4	0 8,696 15	1 7,968 0	1 6,510 3	7 4,323 12	1 2,137 3	11 38 2
Queensland	387,463	6,942 15	0 6,384 16	10 5,826 18	9 5,547 17	7 5,082 19	10 4,153 0	2 2,758 2	9 1,363 7	5 24 6
South Australia	318,308	5,703 11	11 5,245 5	4 4,786 18	9 4,557 13	8 4,175 15	5 3,411 15	5 2,265 17	3 1,120 0	9 19 10
Tasmania	146,149	2,618 15	4 2,408 6	7 2,197 10	2 2,092 12	7 1,917 5	7 1,566 9	10 1,040 7	1 514 5	2 9 3
West Australia	42,137	755 0	7 694 7	2 633 13	8 603 6	9 552 15	7 451 12	11 299 19	0 148 5	4 2 12
	3,678,046	65,905 0	0 60,609 0	0 55,313 0	0 52,664 0	0 48,251 0	0 39,423 0	0 26,182 0	0 12,942 0	0 231 0

No. 15.—Report on the Probable Result to the Australasian Colonies of the Adoption of a Universal Rate of 1d. per Half-ounce for Inland and Intercolonial Postage. (Laid before the Conference by the Hon. John Gavan Duffy.)

MEMORANDUM.—Owing to the limited information available, the probable result to the various Australasian Colonies of the adoption of a universal rate of 1d. per half-ounce for inland and intercolonial letters can only be ascertained approximately. Where possible, the value of stamps sold at the inland and intercolonial rates has been compared with the postage on the number of letters stated to have been despatched, and where there has been any considerable difference the mean has been taken. The probable immediate increase has been taken at 30 per cent. as the maximum in all cases.

VICTORIA.

Rates.—Inland, 1d. per half-ounce; intercolonial, 2d. per half-ounce; present value of intercolonial postage, £25,000; probable loss, £8,750.

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Rates.—City and suburban, 1d. per half-ounce; country or inland, 2d. per half-ounce; intercolonial, 2d. per half-ounce.

<i>Inland.</i> —Value of stamps and envelopes, at 2d.	...	...	£219,531
Less intercolonial	...	£20,000	
for duty stamps on receipt	...	24,000	
			44,000
			175,531
Less half for reduced rates	...	...	87,765
			87,765
Add 30 per cent. increase	...	...	26,329
Loss on inland penny postage	...	...	£61,437