

of entering. The proposal had been made to send a representative from each colony, but of course it was understood that they would only be dummies in a sense. Whether they were to be represented as separate States or by one or two individuals was a matter that required more consideration. He certainly did not like the proposal to send two representatives, one for the Northern Colonies and one for the Southern Colonies. He would like the two representatives to represent them as a whole. He did not like the idea of separating the colonies in groups. If the Postal Union would accept them on the conditions laid down, well and good; but they should join it as a united people. Let one or two representatives be sent to represent the whole of the colonies. While agreeing generally with the principle of the resolution, he should prefer to have it amended so as to represent a more united front; but, while agreeing to it in that amended form, he had some doubt as to whether they could dictate their own terms.

The Hon. T. Unmack said that Queensland was ready to join the Union, although it was not anxious to do so. The one advantage which had been pointed out was the only one that would accrue to them. If the resolution were passed in its present form it would be tantamount to saying that they would not join at all. In 1885, at the Lisbon Conference, it was only decided with great reluctance to give the colonies one vote. The representatives should have power to accept such terms as they considered advisable. He saw considerable objection to the grouping of the colonies. There should be some understanding between themselves as to what terms they would be on with each other in the event of their accepting two votes. He thought that the colonies were entitled to one vote each. In the Postal Union there were twelve States, the revenue of which amounted to £11,000,000, with an annual foreign trade of £35,500,000. These twelve States had twelve votes. The Australian Colonies numbered seven, including New Zealand. Their united annual income was £27,558,000, and their foreign trade £122,862,000. They should have a vote each. The question was whether they should go further and leave the decision as to terms with the representatives. He trusted that before they arrived at a resolution they would more fully consider the matter.

Sir John Bray said that it would be better if the resolution were divided into two. They had a right to express an opinion as to the conditions under which they would enter the Postal Union. He did not see why the colonies should not be adequately represented, and each colony have a vote. He thought it would be better to say in the motion "adequately represented," instead of two representatives.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy said he had much pleasure in accepting the suggestion, and would move, That the Australasian Colonies be represented at the Postal Union Conference. The motion was unanimously agreed to.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy moved, That the representatives of Australasia to the Postal Conference advocate the admission of Australasia into the Postal Union on the condition that Australasia receives adequate representation, and that the maritime-transit rates be not lowered without the consent of the countries maintaining the sea service. The Hon. B. S. Bird seconded the motion, which was unanimously agreed to.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy gave notice that on the following day he would move, That, in the opinion of this Conference, the time has arrived when a uniform rate for the postage of letters of 1d. per ½oz. should be adopted throughout the whole of Australasia.

3. *The Eastern Extension Telegraph Company.*

Sir John Bray moved, That it is desirable to enter into the agreement with the Eastern Extension Company on the basis of the draft agreement laid on the table. One of the most important questions was what Queensland and New Zealand intended to do.

The Hon. T. Unmack said there seemed to be a desire that he should speak, but he would prefer to hear the others first. One of the questions before the Conference was to convert Queensland from the error of her ways. He was prepared to hear all that they had to say, and would be better able to speak afterwards. If he spoke from present facts he would say candidly that he was not in favour of joining.

The debate was then adjourned.

SATURDAY, 28TH FEBRUARY, 1891.

The Reduced Cable Rates.

Sir John Bray resumed discussion upon his motion, submitted at the previous meeting, That it is desirable to enter into the agreement with the Eastern Extension Company on the basis of the draft agreement laid on the table. He said that the loss under the proposed new agreement was really an imaginary one. Fifty per cent would be borne by the company itself, and the remainder would be divided proportionately amongst the different colonies. He regretted exceedingly that the English Government had taken the action it had in refusing to be a contributor. What was proposed at the Adelaide Conference would, in his opinion, with the certain increase of business, involve a loss extending only over one year or thereabouts; and considering that Government, Press, and private messages would be affected by the reduction, he thought the two outstanding colonies might fairly unite with the others in the subsidy.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy said that as federation was in the air, he thought it rather hard that Queensland should exhibit a desire to stand outside the general arrangements. Mr. Unmack should remember that they were not entering into any permanent, but merely into an experimental, arrangement for twelve months. The colonies already paid so much hard cash in subsidy to the cable system, and the present proposal was merely a guarantee against loss. The revenue of the Eastern Extension Company was about £231,000; and in reducing the rates the company was prepared to bear one-half of any loss which might accrue, and it only asked that the Australasian Colonies should