

its entirety, and say that the whole of Western Australia shall have one time 8 hours in advance of Greenwich; South Australia, 9 hours in advance of Greenwich; and Tasmania, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland one time, 10 hours in advance of Greenwich; or shall we adopt only one time throughout? With regard to the adoption of one time, I may say that I consulted the Commissioners for Railways in my colony, and the chairman, Mr. Smith, wrote to me to say that as a matter of convenience for travellers, he was very strongly in favour of the adoption of one time throughout South Australia, Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. On speaking to Mr. Mathieson, the chairman of the Queensland Railway Commissioners, I found that he agrees entirely with Mr. Smith's view as to the convenience of the proposal, and thinks that one time would be far better than having three different times. It might perhaps be premature for me to move the adoption of any one particular time, but I will move—

“That it is desirable, in the interests of the colonies, to adopt the hour zone system, or some modification of it.”

The Hon. J. G. WARD (N.Z.): I shall second that resolution, and in doing so, I desire to compliment Mr. Todd upon the able exposition of the proposed zone system with which he has favoured the Conference. The amount of research displayed in his utterances shows that he has gone to a great deal of trouble to carefully study the subject. Without knowing how the resolution is regarded by the representatives of the other colonies present, I am bound to say that coming to the Australian colonies at different times as a visitor, I have long since been impressed with the need for some change in the system which the several colonies adopt in recording the time. The practical result of it is that when a man arrives in Melbourne and starts for Sydney, Adelaide, or Brisbane his watch becomes almost useless to him, and he has to inquire at the different stations as he goes along to know how much he has to put his watch backwards or forwards, as the case may be. In New Zealand at one time we laboured under a similar disability in the matter of recording the time. We had no less than four times in different parts of the colony. We found that system inconvenient and unsuitable, and we made up our minds to change it. We have now adopted one mean time, and it has worked admirably. When a man in the North Island gets a telegram now from the South Island he can see at once when it was put in, and he has no need to take off fifty minutes or add half an hour to find it out, as he would have had to do some time ago. The adoption of some system on the lines indicated by Mr. Todd would be a great advantage to receivers and senders of telegrams, and to the users of the railways in the several colonies. I think the adoption of a mean time for these colonies would in no way cause inconvenience, but would, on the contrary, be a very great advantage indeed, and I hope the information Mr. Todd has placed before the Conference, and the resolution he has proposed, will be the means of bringing about the change he desires.

The Hon. J. KIDD (N.S.W.): I also compliment Mr. Todd upon the manner in which he has brought this subject before the Conference. There is no one living in these colonies, who has travelled between them much, who has not felt the inconvenience of the different systems of recording time. Travelling from Melbourne to Adelaide there is a difference of time to be reckoned with; and, as Mr. Todd has pointed out, a traveller may get mixed up with three different ways of keeping the time at Broken Hill. I think it would be well if we could express some definite opinion upon this subject. Though it has not previously been prominently before us, our experience has, I think, shown us the necessity for some uniform system in recording the time by the adoption of some mean time for the whole of the colonies. If we could pass some resolution here recommending the adoption of the medium time—that is, the 9 hours time—it would meet the desires of pretty well all the colonies. I think that would be the proper medium to strike, as it would be right so far as the centre is concerned, and it would not make very much difference either to the east or to the west. New Zealand is not so much concerned, but as there is about two hours difference in time between Australia and New Zealand, two hours could be added for the New Zealand time. I think it would be better to have the medium time I have indicated, rather than three different times for the colonies. The difference in time between New South Wales and Victoria is about 25 minutes, and it is very inconvenient to reckon in travelling, or in transmitting or receiving telegraph messages. For all business people it would certainly be better that we should have one time between the colonies, and I would be glad if the motion made it the nine hours' medium.

Mr. TODD (S.A.): With the sanction of the Hon. Mr. Ward, I would like to amend the resolution, to read as follows—

“That it is desirable in the public interests that the hour zone system should be adopted, or that there should be one time throughout Australia—namely, the 135th meridian, nine hours east of Greenwich.”

The Hon. J. G. WARD: I agree to that.

Amendment agreed to.

The Hon. A. WYNNE (V.): Mr. Todd has given very sound reasons why we should support this motion. The change of time at the various borders is just as inconvenient as the break of gauge on our railways. On either side of the Murray—a distance of 80 or 100 yards—there is a difference of twenty-five minutes, and that exemplifies most clearly the necessity for a uniform time all over Australia. Recently I was in India, which is a very large country, and on their railways they have one time for the North and another for the South. That is to some extent inconvenient, but it is a great deal better than having such diversity of time as we have in Australia. One is never sure when travelling as to what is the right time. A traveller has in his mind the time of his own colony, and the moment he crosses the border he is put about by the change. The suggestion emanating from the Hon. Mr. Kidd should commend itself to us all, and I shall cordially support the motion proposed by Mr. Todd. For travellers especially—I speak of them as I have had more experience in that direction of the inconvenience than in connection with the telegraphic department—the present system is most annoying. It is, after all, only a question of becoming accustomed to the difference between the uniform time and the local time, and people will quickly adapt themselves to the change.