

as it is convenient for your Government to enter into a further agreement; and please let me give you a further assurance, that I have full powers to enter into binding contracts with your or any of the Australian Governments for this purpose.

Again, the newspapers I refer to have forgotten, or do not take the trouble to learn, that it is impossible to lay a cable through the Pacific Ocean from Australia to any part of North America without landing at some place outside the British sphere of influence—for instance, “Samoa,” this archipelago is under the protection of Germany, America, and England; then, again, “Hawaii,” this kingdom is under the protection of France, America, and England; so the cable going *via* New Caledonia can do no possible harm to Australia, for, in case of England being drawn into a war, Queensland could disconnect the Pacific cable at any moment should it be found necessary. Then, again, if the Press would but refer to the Government despatches printed in all the Gazettes in the year 1884, they would find that a binding contract had been entered into “with all the Nations of the World” to protect submarine cables; this compact was signed in Paris in the year 1884, and the Australian Colonies are each specially mentioned.

Should your Government think the present time is opportune, I shall be prepared to enter into a contract for laying the cables beyond New Caledonia, for which purpose I shall be glad to discuss the matter with you, before the Conference takes place in Brisbane on the 17th instant, as I have now every hope that England, France, Germany, and Canada will assist in the laying of this cable from your shores to cross the Pacific Ocean. I therefore take this opportunity to inform you that I shall be in Brisbane on the 14th instant, when I shall be glad if you will grant me an interview on this very important international undertaking. I may add, in conclusion, that the New Caledonia cable will be ready for shipment in May next, and the cable ship will leave for Sydney (where she will coal) in June, reaching Bundaberg early in August, when that section of the cable now under review will be laid with all despatch, and communication established between the two shores.

I have, &c.,

AUDLEY COOTE.

COPY.]

Brisbane, 21st March, 1893.

To the Hon. the Postmaster-General, Brisbane.

*Re* PACIFIC CABLE.

SIR,—I notice in to-day’s paper that a notice of motion has been tabled at the Postal Conference to consider the route of the Pacific Cable.

I have now the honour to refer to my last letter, and telegram to you, in reference to what you brought under my notice, in regard to a statement that had appeared in some of the newspapers referring to previous negotiations, the pith of which is as follows, viz. :—

That the New Caledonia Cable was to be laid by a French staff, on a French ship, and controlled by a French directorate in Paris.

This part of the statement is so far correct, but grossly exaggerated and misleading; that is to say, the directorate in Paris will control this first section of the proposed cable until the next section is laid, for they have been bound by the Governments of Queensland, New South Wales, and France to work and maintain the cable or the guarantee will cease, so they are bound to look after their own property and keep it in working order.

Then the statement goes on to say—“Queensland promises to give this foreign venture exclusive landing rights for thirty years.”

I need hardly say that this is the first time that I have heard of such a promise, and contradict it absolutely.

The aim of the Company is to lay and maintain the Pacific Cable in a way that I will again explain.

Negotiations for crossing the Pacific with this cable are still pending, as they have been for many years; but success is now at hand in the near future.

Canada comes first, who have long been anxious to have this cable landed on her Pacific shores; that Government have long ago informed me they are willing to join in the guarantee, and are always ready to send two delegates to a Conference, that is hoped will be held in Australia, to decide upon the terms of the guarantee.

Next *en route* comes Hawaii. The Government has already passed an Act of Parliament, giving as their share a subsidy of 25,000 dollars a year for fifteen years, as a contribution for their section of the cable, and have also promised to extend the time to thirty years so soon as the main Pacific cable is laid.

In regard to Hawaii, should anything arise, such as a change of Government in that Kingdom (which is not at all likely) I have been assured by both parties of the Government there will be nothing arise to prevent their assistance being faithfully carried out. Besides, that kingdom is under the protection of England, France, and America, so this subsidy has a threefold backing. Thence it is proposed to land at Fanning Island, now just annexed by England; thence Samoa. The assistance to be asked to the guarantee here will be Germany, America, and England; the proportion from each is yet to be decided.

Thence Fiji, which is virtually New South Wales, but the Imperial Government have long been asked by the local authorities, through their Governor, to assist in the guarantee.

Thence New Caledonia, thence Queensland. So the Pacific Cable, the moment it leaves New Caledonia, will be no more under the control of France than any other country or colony joining in the joint purse guarantee.

In regard to the route, if you will please look at the chart, it will be seen the route that is proposed is by far and away the best, and the one the cable is most likely to earn the guarantee on.

Besides,