

sure you will pardon reference to it when I tell you that our feelings compel us to make this public acknowledgment of your kindness, your generosity, and your ready assistance. The crimson thread of brotherhood has impelled you, so to speak, to hold out to us the hearty helping hand of brothers in our distress, and your sympathy and assistance have done much to raise the hopes of those who were well-nigh smitten to the earth with sorrow and loss. I ask you, then, to convey to those you represent our grateful thanks for the generous, kindly, hearty, and noble assistance which has done so much to raise the hopes and rouse the energy of those who have suffered so severely by the flood. We possess that traditional energy and pluck with which Britons are always credited, and we do not despair; we have vast resources in the colony, and are ready and willing to utilise them, and we give you fair notice that we are not, if we can help it, going to be behind any of the other colonies; but will give you a fair race and be at the head if possible. (Hear, hear!) Our losses have been great; our rivers have been comparatively blocked, our railway traffic has been disturbed, and we are at the present time at a great disadvantage, but I am sure you will all be pleased to convey to your respective colonies the intelligence that we are not cowed, but have still the same energy and pluck to overcome all difficulties. (Hear, hear!) At previous Conferences great hospitality has been shown to the representatives of the various colonies, and I had hoped when last year I invited you to come here, to have shown you some of the many beauties of this colony, but unfortunately I have now to ask your forbearance in this respect, as owing to the flood disaster, wherever I may take you, you will see wreck and ruin, though they do not appear so great now as they did a few weeks ago. It will be my endeavour to make your visit as pleasant and comfortable as possible, and I am sure that not only the members of the Government but also the people of the colony will join me in the effort to make your brief stay among us enjoyable, and enable you to leave us with the same good impression we have carried away from the other colonies. The Postal Conferences which have already been held, have done a great deal of good, inasmuch as they have compelled us to keep up with the march of progress adopted by the whole postal authorities throughout the world, and have also enabled us to provide many extra postal facilities for the public. I therefore hope that these Conferences will be maintained and carried on, because we know that much good will result from them; among the other good effects resulting from them in the past, they have gradually tended to foster a federal spirit. This working together in harmony is gradually drawing tighter the bonds of union, and hastening that federation of the colonies which we all desire. The business paper which has been laid before you is compiled, as you are aware, from the notices given by the various colonies represented, and it shows that there is a large amount of business to be discussed. Most of it is of a departmental character, and that, I presume, will be dealt with in the usual way by the permanent heads of the departments, who will then bring up their report to the Conference. Still there are some very important matters for Ministerial discussion, of which, I take it, the foremost will be the appointment of a representative to the Postal Union Congress. This matter, I need scarcely point out, is of the greatest importance to the postal interests of all the Australian colonies, because, as you are aware, the seven colonies, including New Zealand, have but one vote among them. The discussion of this vital subject should call forth the federal spirit which sinks all minor differences and merges all our interests in one in order to secure effective representation at the Postal Conference of the world. I believe that we are all animated by one desire in this matter, and will do all we can to accomplish the object of that desire. At all previous Conferences brevity has been the order of the day, and I am not going to depart from the custom by now enlarging upon any of the proposals on the business paper. I therefore adopt that as my motto, and ask you now to proceed to business. (Hear, hear!)

Mr. BOYES said he had been desired to apologise for the absence of the Postmaster-General of Tasmania.

Mr. C. TODD also tendered an apology for the Hon. WM. COPLEY for his non-attendance, owing to his presence being necessary in South Australia during the general elections.

Mr. GEORGE H. BUZACOTT was appointed Secretary, on the nomination of the Hon. J. G. WARD, seconded by the Hon. J. KIDD.

It was unanimously resolved that the Press be admitted to the proceedings of the Conference.

The following members then presented their commissions:—The Hon. TH. UNMACK, the Hon. J. KIDD, the Hon. J. G. WARD, the Hon. A. WYNNE, Mr. R. A. SHOLL, and Mr. C. TODD.

Mr. R. HENRY stated, that in consequence of the inability of the Hon. the Postmaster-General of Tasmania to attend the Conference, he had wired that gentleman suggesting that the Hon. A. Wynne be commissioned to act on behalf of Tasmania.

NOTICES OF MOTION.

SECOND CABLE ROUTE.

The Hon. J. G. WARD to move,—

That, in the opinion of this Conference, the time has arrived when a second cable route should be established, *via* the Pacific to Vancouver, touching at such places *en route* as may be hereafter agreed upon.

CANADIAN POSTAL SERVICE.

The Hon. J. G. WARD to move,—

That this Conference considers it desirable to negotiate for a Canadian Pacific Postal Service.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE SAN FRANCISCO MAIL SERVICE.

The Hon. J. G. WARD to move,—

That this Conference directs a protest to be sent to the Postmaster-General, Washington, regretting the continued non-participation of the United States in the matter of the Subsidy to the present San Francisco Mail Service, and also directs his attention to the excessive overland transit rates between San Francisco and New York, and respectfully requests him to urge the Pacific Railway Company to give more favourable terms.

ELECTRICAL.