

*Subjects for consideration.*

A list of the subjects proposed to be discussed at the Conference was then tabled by the Secretary. It was arranged that those subjects of a detailed character should first be submitted to the permanent Departmental Heads to report upon. The subjects of a more general nature were reserved for direct consideration by Ministers.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY moved—

“That the Sub-Committee of Permanent Heads be requested, previous to considering the various items placed before them, to revise the list and report to the Conference as to such matters as they consider either unnecessary, or that time will not permit them to proceed with.”

Hon. J. R. DICKSON seconded the motion, which was put and passed.

On the motion of the Hon. Joseph Cook, the Heads of Departments present were appointed a Sub-Committee for the purpose of giving effect to the previous Resolution.

The Conference adjourned until 10:30 next day.

TUESDAY, 29<sup>TH</sup> MARCH.

The Conference met at 10:30.

In the absence of Hon. Sir Philip Fysh, Hon. Joseph Cook was voted to the Chair on the motion of the Hon. J. Gavan Duffy, seconded by the Hon. J. R. Dickson, and the Conference adjourned until next day at 10:30.

This course has been found necessary on account of the Permanent Heads of the Postal and Telegraphic Departments having such a large number of subjects to handle and report upon to the Ministerial Heads, that they had not yet completed their work.

WEDNESDAY, 30<sup>TH</sup> MARCH.

The Conference met formally at 10:30 A.M.

Hon. JOSEPH COOK was voted to the Chair in the absence of the President.

Hon. J. R. DICKSON moved—

“That, to enable the Departmental Heads to proceed with work in Committee, the Conference adjourn until 10:30 A.M. next day.”

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY seconded.

Motion put and passed.

The Conference adjourned accordingly.

THURSDAY, 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH.*Papers.*

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY tabled a Paper furnishing Returns in connection with the Telegraph Service of Victoria.

Hon. J. R. DICKSON tabled a similar Paper on behalf of Queensland.

*Proposed Reduction of Postage Rate.*

The Conference proceeded to discuss the proposed reduction from 2½d. to 2d. per half ounce postage of Letters passing in both directions between the United Kingdom and other parts of the British Empire.

Hon. JOSEPH COOK (New South Wales) said there had already been a great deal of correspondence in regard to this proposal between these Colonies and the Mother Country, and also between Canada and the Mother Country. It appears that Canada wanted to make the rate very much lower to the British Possessions, and to differentiate between 2d. for the Empire and her Colonies, and 2½d. between the Empire and the rest of the world. So far as New South Wales was concerned they felt there was every reason why the present rate should not be reduced from 2½d. to 2d. There was no great demand in the Colonies for such a reduction. What demand there was had come from certain distinguished gentlemen in England who interested themselves from time to time in Postal and Telegraphic matters. If the proposed reduction was made it would at once mean an agitation and a demand for a reduction of the Intercolonial and Inland rates on the ground of anomaly. A Postal Commission was, he believed, being held, or about to be held, in London, where this question was also to be considered, and New South Wales had definitely instructed her Agent-General to say that his Colony could not consent. Victoria, he understood, had refused point blank to send a representative.