

within the limits of the town where posted. Regarding the proposal of Canada to reduce her outgoing postage, this Conference is strongly of opinion that no reduction should take place which would be a departure from the present uniform rate, for the following reason, *inter alia*:—At present a charge of 2*d.* per $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. is made in Australia for the carriage of letters to however small a distance, while the Canadian proposal would involve the carrying of letters over the same routes at a greatly reduced cost. This would, in the opinion of the Conference, lead to confusion and dissatisfaction.”

On the motion of the Hon. JOSEPH COOK the Report was adopted.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY moved that the following reply be sent to the Postmaster-General of Ottawa:—

“It is satisfactory to learn that your contemplated action *re* postage rates is postponed pending London Conference.”

The motion was put and passed.

It was agreed, on the motion of the Hon. J. G. JENKINS, that a copy of the Resolution should be despatched to the Premiers of the different colonies.

Alterations in Postal and Telegraph Rates.

Hon. J. G. JENKINS moved—

“That this Conference recommends to the Governments of Australasia that no alteration in international postal or telegraphic rates be made without the colony proposing to make such alterations advising the other colonies and endeavouring to arrange for uniformity of action.”

It was not necessary for him to make any lengthy explanation, as the meaning was patent to all members, excepting to say that in the past, in one or two instances, there had been some alterations made in one of the colonies in postal rates either in newspapers or letters, and they in South Australia thought it would be better—and he was sure the other members of the Conference would agree—that before any alterations, even of a trifling character, were carried out by the Postal and Telegraph Department of a colony, the same departments in the other colonies should be advised, so as to secure as far as possible uniformity throughout all the colonies. He especially referred to intercolonial postage. As to local alteration it would not so much matter.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY seconded the motion. The observance of such a resolution would be most useful on the part of all the postal administrations of Australasia. Even over any slight change in the intercolonial postal and telegraph arrangements, the departments of the different colonies should first consult one with the other, so that all objections might be fairly considered and got rid of. He had much pleasure in seconding the motion.

Motion put and passed.

Telegraphic—Alternative Cable Route.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY explained that Mr. Warren was present, and had received a reply from the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company to place before the Conference. He moved:—

“That the Conference resolve itself into a Committee to interview Mr. Warren.”

Motion was put and passed.

Upon the Conference resuming—

Hon. JOSEPH COOK obtained leave to move a Resolution without notice. He said they were all aware that the representatives of the other Colonies had been endeavouring during the last few days to ascertain from the manager of the E. E. Telegraph Co. (Mr. Warren) on what basis fresh arrangements could be entered into after next year for carrying on the cable business over the Company's lines. He had to express disappointment at the unsatisfactory nature of the reply received from the Company on the subject. Of course, Mr. Warren was only able to do what the Company authorised him to undertake. But with regard to the attitude of the Company, he thought the Conference had great reason to complain at the way they had acted. Negotiations had been pending with the Company during the sitting of the present Conference, and at the close of it they had no definite proposal from the Company, and nothing, so far as could be seen, by which any fresh arrangement could be entered into when the present undertaking ceased. In conducting the negotiations, the Conference had submitted three plain queries to be answered. If those queries had been answered there would have been something definite upon which to make a fresh arrangement. The most vague replies, however, were given to the questions that they had asked. The Company was asked, in the first place, what would be the cost of messages passing from the Colonies to England after the subsidy should expire during the next year; secondly, what would be the cost, assuming the subsidy was still paid to them, leaving out of count altogether the question of a duplicate cable. Another question asked the Company was—What would be the rate on messages, assuming the subsidy was paid and the Colonies entered into the Company's proposal for the construction of an alternative route? The Company simply said, in reply to those queries, that they could make no reduction in the present rates. The reply, in fact, was one that did not justify