

No. 32.

The MANAGER in AUSTRALASIA, Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited), Melbourne, to the Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington.

The Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited),
Melbourne, 24th February, 1898.

SIR,—

As you are aware, the Eastern and Associated Cable Companies have submitted proposals for laying an “all-British” cable to Australia *via* Cape Colony, and that a Committee representing the Imperial Government, India, Cape Colony, and the several Australian Governments has been appointed to consider this and other cable projects.

The basis of the extension of this cable from the Cape to Perth is upon the renewal of the present duplicate-cable subsidy of £32,400 per annum for a period of ten years.

In view, however, of the widespread dissatisfaction and feeling of insecurity with the present long Australian land-lines, and the numerous complaints that have been lodged both in London and the colonies of the serious delays in transmission of messages, and the frequent interruptions, which, it is stated, have caused great inconvenience and loss to the telegraphing public, I have the honour to inform you that my directors have instructed me to intimate to the several Australian Governments that “the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, with the view of making more complete the proposed ‘all-British’ cable service between England and Australia, is prepared, at its own expense, to extend the proposed Cape cable to Albany, and thence lay, work, and maintain a cable to Glenelg (Adelaide), or thereabouts, provided the Australian Governments will continue the existing subsidy of £32,400 per annum for twenty years. This would increase the length of the Cape cable by nearly 1,500 knots, involving the company in an additional outlay of at least £200,000, which they are prepared to incur for the purpose of establishing a quick and reliable cable service between the Mother-country and the Australian Colonies.”

I may state that the object of selecting Glenelg or thereabouts for the landing-point is that Adelaide may continue to be the junction or distributing-point for the international traffic, and I have no doubt a satisfactory arrangement could be arrived at for the transmission of intercolonial telegrams between Adelaide and Albany whenever the land-lines are interrupted.

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, P.C.,
Premier of New Zealand, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. WARREN,
Manager in Australasia.

No. 33.

The MANAGER in AUSTRALASIA, Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited), Melbourne, to the Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington.

The Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited),
Melbourne, 3rd March, 1898.

SIR,—

As there appears to be an impression that my company, in submitting an offer to provide an “all-British cable” service between England and Australasia *via* the Cape, is asking for a preferential right against competition, I have the honour to state, for your information, that this is quite an erroneous one, as all they wish, or ask for, is to have the first refusal to supply further cables when necessary to meet the public requirements in the regions already served by them with cable-communication, and which, I may state, was agreed to by the British and Australasian Governments prior to the laying of the Singapore-Hongkong cable in 1894.

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, P.C.,
Premier of New Zealand, Wellington.

I have, &c.,
W. WARREN,
Manager in Australasia.

No. 34.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the MANAGER in AUSTRALASIA of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited), Melbourne.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 15th March, 1898.

I have the honour, by direction, to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 24th ultimo to the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon, referring to the proposed cable from England to Australia by way of Cape Colony, and submitting proposals for its continuation to South Australia.

In reply, I am directed to express regret that this colony is not prepared to contribute towards such an undertaking.

Also, in reply to your further letter of the 3rd instant, Mr. Seddon desires me to convey his appreciation of the intimation that your company in offering to provide an “all-British” cable service between England and Australasia is not seeking preferential rights against competition, but only a first refusal to supply further cables in regions already served by the company.

The Manager in Australasia, Eastern Extension
Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited), Melbourne.

I have, &c.,
W. GRAY,
Secretary.

[Read here Nos. 20–24.]

Approximate Cost of Paper.—Preparation, not given; printing (1,400 copies), £6 13s.

By Authority: JOHN MACKAY, Government Printer, Wellington.—1898.