

fore, again urge the necessity of action of some kind by your Government. If Canada now moves the cable will be assured. As I have repeatedly stated, this great Imperial connecting-link will cost the taxpayer nothing, and it will add nothing to the public debt.

Hon. R. R. Dobell, Ottawa.

Yours, &c.,
SANDFORD FLEMING.

Letter from the Premier of Queensland.

DEAR SIR,—

Chief Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 19th February, 1898.

With reference to your letter of the 3rd of January ultimo, receipt of which I have already caused to be formally acknowledged, in which you were good enough to forward, for my information, a copy of a letter addressed by you to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, on the subject of the Pacific cable, which I have perused with much interest. I now beg to state that the Government of Queensland have in no sense altered their views as to the advantage to be derived by the Australasian Colonies, and the Empire generally, from the construction of the proposed Pacific cable connecting Australia with Great Britain *via* Canada. The matter was, as you are aware, discussed at the conference between the Right Hon. the Secretary of State for the Colonies and the Premiers of the self-governing colonies held in London last year. It was with some surprise I heard Sir Wilfrid Laurier announce during the course of the proceedings that his Government was not yet prepared to give practical effect, so far as the Dominion of Canada was concerned, to the proposal that the colonies interested should guarantee their shares of the cost of the construction of the cable. I am pleased, however, to be able to give you my hearty assurance of our entire sympathy with the movement in favour of this important national undertaking, and I trust that before long it may be possible to take some definite steps in the direction of executing what is by Queensland regarded as not only a very desirable, but a very practical scheme.

Believe me, &c.,
HUGH M. NELSON.

Letter from the Premier of New Zealand.

SIR,—

New Zealand, General Post Office, Wellington, 16th March, 1898.

Referring to my letter of the 12th ultimo, acknowledging receipt of copy of your letter to Sir Wilfrid Laurier on the subject of the Pacific cable, the Right Hon. Mr. Seddon now directs me to say, in reply, that he hopes to hear that no efforts will be spared on the part of Canada to ensure the accomplishment of the scheme for a cable from Australia to the United Kingdom by way of the Pacific. The New Zealand Government strongly favours the Pacific cable.

Sir Sandford Fleming, Ottawa, Canada.

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

No. 15.

FURTHER PAPERS OF THE CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS.

HOUSE OF COMMONS DEBATES: THIRD SESSION—EIGHTH PARLIAMENT.—DEBATE ON THE PACIFIC CABLE.—OTTAWA, THURSDAY, 26TH MAY, 1898.

Mr. Casey: Before that motion is carried, Mr. Speaker, I wish to bring a matter before the House which I consider is of sufficient importance to justify our devoting a little time to it, even at this late period of the session. I need not say that what I shall bring up is not a motion of want of confidence in the Government, nor even any attempt to find fault with the Government. It is a matter on which I hope to elicit the opinion of the House to some extent, and possibly the opinion of the Government: a matter which I consider to be of Imperial importance. I refer to the question of the laying of a Pacific cable to connect Vancouver with Australasia. It will be within the memory of all of us that this subject has occupied the consideration of colonial Conferences, of colonial Governments, and of this House at different times. Not to go further back than the first Intercolonial Conference of 1887, held in London, we know that resolutions were passed there favourable to the laying of such a cable. Subsequently, when the then Minister of Trade and Commerce (Sir Mackenzie Bowell) visited Australia, negotiations took place which led to the summoning of the Intercolonial Conference in Ottawa in the early summer of 1894, where that question was again considered, and the laying of the cable approved by resolution. I shall not detain the House by reading these resolutions in detail, but I may say they were to the effect that the Imperial Government should be asked to consider as to what aid they would give, and that the Canadian Government should be asked to ascertain what such a cable would probably cost. As a result of that conference, in the year following the Government of this country called for tenders, and the lowest tender for the construction of that cable, and its maintenance for three years by the contractors, including all possible risks during the making and laying of the cable, amounted in round numbers to about one and a half million pounds sterling. None of these tenders were accepted, as they were invited merely for the purpose of ascertaining about what such a cable would cost. The matter was not concluded after these investigations, but early in 1896 an Imperial Committee was called together in London to consider the subject, at which Sir Donald A. Smith (now Lord Strathcona and Mount Royal) and Sir Sandford Fleming were appointed to represent the Canadian Government; there being representatives present from the Imperial Government and from the Australasian colonies. That Committee held its sittings through the summer and autumn of 1896, and at great length investigated all questions connected with the cable, and established not only the practicability of a cable being laid in the waters in question, but also that the cost would be