

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

WEDNESDAY, 27TH JULY, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Mr. Duthie, Mr. Fisher, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Hon. W. J. M. Larnach, Mr. McLean, Mr. McNab, Mr. Montgomery, Captain Russell, Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Mr. Tanner, and Hon. J. G. Ward.

The order of reference having been read by the Clerk, the Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon moved, and it was resolved, That the Hon. W. J. M. Larnach be Chairman of the Committee.

The Committee then adjourned till further notice.

THURSDAY, 4TH AUGUST, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Hon. W. J. M. Larnach (Chairman), Mr. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. Guinness, Mr. McNab, Mr. Montgomery, Captain Russell, Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, Mr. Tanner, and Hon. J. G. Ward.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

The Clerk read the order of reference referring the question of the establishment of a Pacific-cable service to the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. J. G. Ward, That a return be procured showing, with regard to cablegrams both between New Zealand and England and between New Zealand and Australia,—(1) Press rates, Government rates, and commercial rates separately; (2) revenue received separately; and (3) the number of messages separately since the reduction in charges: also a return giving similar information for a like period previous to the reduction in charges.

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. J. G. Ward, That application be made to the Eastern Cable Company, pointing out that the colony are past contributors and guarantors, and requesting them, as a matter of courtesy, to let the Committee have copies of their balance-sheets for the last eight years.

Resolved, on the motion of the Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, That the papers in the hands of the Postal Department referring to the establishment of a Pacific-cable service, and not being confidential, be printed and circulated amongst the Committee.

Resolved, on the motion of the Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, That maps be procured showing,—

- (1.) The existing cable-lines between England and Australasia;
- (2.) The proposed cable-line between England, the Cape of Good Hope, and Western Australia;
- (3.) The proposed route of the Pacific cable;
- (4.) The existing cable-line between France and New Caledonia;
- (5.) The existing cable-line between America and Honolulu:

such maps to show the points of touching and transmission.

The Committee then adjourned till further notice.

WEDNESDAY, 24TH AUGUST, 1898.

The Committee met pursuant to notice.

Present : Hon. W. J. M. Larnach (Chairman), Mr. Duthie, Mr. Fraser, Mr. Graham, Mr. McLean, Mr. McNab, Mr. Montgomery, Captain Russell, Rt. Hon. R. J. Seddon, and Hon. J. G. Ward.

The minutes of the previous meeting were read and confirmed.

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. J. G. Ward, That the balance-sheets of the Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company for the past eight years be printed and circulated.

Resolved, on the motion of the Hon. J. G. Ward, That the maps supplied to the Committee by the Postal Department be lithographed and circulated.

The Hon. J. G. Ward gave notice that he would move at the next meeting of the Committee that,—

- (1.) In the opinion of this Committee it is desirable that telegraphic communication between England and New Zealand *via* Canada and the Pacific should be established.
- (2.) That the Colony of New Zealand should agree to join with such of the Australian Colonies as are prepared to do likewise upon the basis of a guarantee of four-ninths of the cost of construction and working-expenses.
- (3.) That for the purpose of working the cable it is desirable that a central authority should be empowered upon behalf of the contributing countries to carry out the laying and working of a cable across the Pacific.
- (4.) That in the opinion of the Committee this should be intrusted to the Canadian Government, upon the understanding that each contributing colony have the right to be represented and to vote upon all matters appertaining to policy, acceptance of tenders, or anything material in the conducting of the cable.
- (5.) That New Zealand's share of the guarantee should be a maximum of £20,000 per annum.