

likewise be connected—viz., Durban, Karachi, Bombay, Madras, Calcutta, Rangoon, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Sydney, Newcastle, Brisbane, Townsville, Auckland, Wellington, Lyttelton, and Dunedin.

Would it not be in the interest of a great commercial people to have these and all such points in the outer Empire connected by a means of communication so perfect as the electric telegraph? Is it not a matter which vitally concerns every British community around the globe? Is it not in their common interest that they all should be placed in possession of the speediest medium of conveying intelligence the one to the other, free from the burden of high charges?

That a State-owned Pacific cable is the key to the situation, I am firmly convinced. Exhaustive examinations have proved its entire practicability. Its financial aspect has been minutely investigated by business-men of the highest rank. The Canadian Government appointed Lord Strathcona and the Honourable A. G. Jones for the purpose, than whom there are no men with stronger business insight. Their report is in the possession of the Government, and it takes the most favourable view of the project. As a State undertaking it would be self-supporting from the first year of its establishment, and would admit of charges being lowered year by year. That the final outcome of the laying of this cable would be an Imperial telegraph-service there can be little doubt. I am satisfied that the Pacific cable would prove to be the entering wedge to remove for ever all monopoly in ocean telegraphy, and free the public from excessive charges; that it would be the initial link in a chain of State cables encircling the globe, with branches ramifying wherever the British Empire extends, and that it would be the means of bringing into momentary electric touch every possession of Her Majesty.

In 1837 Rowland Hill, in advocating uniform penny postage for the United Kingdom, pointed out how desirable it would be to have the same low rate as on inland letters charged on letters passing to and from the colonies. This remarkable man concluded with the memorable words: "There is perhaps scarcely any measure which would tend so effectually to remove the obstacles to emigration, and maintain that sympathy between the colonies and the Mother-country which is the only sure bond of connection, as the proposed reduction on the postage of colonial letters."

Had Sir Rowland Hill known of the means of instantaneous communication which, since his day, has been placed at our command, he assuredly would have viewed it as the most civilising agency of the century. He would have seen that while promoting the activities of trade and commerce and improving the well-being of the human race, nothing would more tend to deepen the sympathies of our people and make firm the foundations of the Empire, than the adding to a universal penny postage the incalculable advantage of a State-controlled ocean telegraph system encircling the globe.

Holding the views which I have ventured to submit, I feel that in the public interest I should greatly err if I failed to seek an opportunity of giving expression to them. S. F.

No. 29.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 10th November, 1898.

Pacific cable: Advise by telegraph decision of Parliament.

No. 30.

The Hon. the PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 12th November, 1898.

WITH reference to your telegram of tenth. . . . Pacific cable: House had not time discuss Committee's report. Government prepared to join other colonies and guarantee one-ninth cost, in terms Committee's report, and will increase proportion to one-eighth, if necessary.

No. 31.

The SECRETARY, Wellington Chamber of Commerce, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

DEAR SIR,—

Wellington Chamber of Commerce, Wellington, 3rd December, 1898.

This Chamber has been asked to join in urging the Government to take steps to support the adoption of the Pacific route for cable communication with the United Kingdom. Will you kindly let me know how this matter stands as regards New Zealand?

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, Wellington.

S. CARROLL, Secretary.

No. 32.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, Wellington Chamber of Commerce.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 6th December, 1898.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 3rd instant, asking how the matter of the Pacific-cable scheme stands as regards New Zealand.