

No. 40.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street,
London, S.W., 21st April, 1899.

SIR,—

I beg herewith to transmit copy of a joint letter addressed to the Colonial Office by the Agents-General for Victoria, Queensland, Tasmania, and myself, with reference to the Pacific cable, and also copy of reply received this day.

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

I have, &c.,

W. P. REEVES.

Enclosure 1 in No. 40.

The AGENTS-GENERAL to the SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street,
London, S.W., 30th March, 1899.

SIR,—

We have the honour to direct your attention to the present position of the proposal to establish telegraphic communication between England and its Colonies of Australia and New Zealand, *via* Canada and the Pacific.

This proposal has been the subject of discussion for some years past, and, as the advantages to be derived by its being carried into effect are well known and understood, we do not propose to bring them again under your notice.

You are aware that, at the Postal Conference of the representatives of the Australasian Colonies held at Hobart in March of last year, a resolution was adopted reaffirming the opinion that the project should be commenced as speedily as practicable, and that subsequently the Australian and New Zealand Colonies intimated their willingness to guarantee four-ninths of the cost of laying the cable, and also to make good up to that amount any deficiency which may arise in working the same.

It was also understood that Canada was willing to join the Mother-country in guaranteeing the remaining five-ninths of the cost of the line, and any deficiency in its working.

Under these circumstances, and having regard to the number of years during which this project has been under the consideration of both the Imperial Government and of the colonies, we venture to request that you will be pleased to take such steps as may be necessary in order to obtain as soon as possible a definite assurance that the Imperial Government will unite with the colonies in giving the requisite guarantee, so that the establishment of the line may be proceeded with.

We have &c.,

ANDREW CLARKE, Agent-General for Victoria.

W. P. REEVES, Agent-General for New Zealand.

HORACE TOZER, Agent-General for Queensland.

P. O. Fysh, Agent-General for Tasmania.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Enclosure 2 in No. 40.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Downing Street, 20th April, 1899.

In reply to the letter of the 30th ultimo, received on the 10th instant, and signed by yourself and the Agents-General for Victoria, Queensland, and Tasmania, on the subject of the Pacific cable scheme, I am directed by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain to inform you that he hopes at an early date to be in a position to communicate to you the decision of Her Majesty's Government in regard to this matter.

I have, &c.,

The Agent-General for New Zealand.

H. BERTRAM COX.

No. 41.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 28th April, 1899.

PACIFIC cable: It is announced that the Imperial Government decided contribute yearly subsidy in accordance with Pacific Cable Committee's report, '97.

No. 42.

The SECRETARY of STATE for the COLONIES to His Excellency the GOVERNOR.

MY LORD,—

Downing Street, 28th April, 1899.

I have the honour to transmit to you, for communication to your Ministers, a copy of a letter which has been addressed to the High Commissioner for Canada and the Agents-General for the Australasian Colonies, from which you will learn the nature and extent of the assistance which