

No. 137.

The ACTING-MANAGER in AUSTRALASIA, Eastern Extension Company, Melbourne, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

SIR,—
The Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited),
Melbourne, 8th August, 1899.

Referring to my communication dated the 27th ultimo, I have now the honour to submit for your information the details of the sliding-scale proposed by my company in connection with the Cape cable. The tariffs mentioned are to be uniform throughout Australia and Tasmania, the respective Governments still retaining their local transit and terminal rates.

Minimum Annual Revenue required by Associated Companies.

Present revenue guaranteed by the Australian Governments	...	£227,000
Plus estimated yearly expenses of the new Cape line	...	123,000
		£350,000

The present receipts from the Australian traffic (taking the average of last three years) amount to £365,000, or £15,000 more than the minimum required. If the minimum revenue is maintained, the company offer a uniform half-crown tariff, on the following sliding-scale: If the tariff is reduced to 4s., the company will take the average receipts of the three years 1898, 1899, and 1900, and if the minimum of £350,000 is reached, the rate in 1901 will be reduced to 3s. 6d. If the average receipts of £350,000 are maintained in 1901 at the reduced rates, the tariff will be reduced in 1902 to 3s. If the average receipts be again maintained in 1902, the tariff will be reduced to 2s. 6d. in 1903. Should the average receipts not keep up to £350,000, any one of the above reductions would be postponed until the receipts averaged the standard figure of £350,000 for three consecutive years. The rate to South Africa will be reduced to 2s. per word, or thereabouts.

I have, &c.,

J. EUSTON SQUIER,

Acting Manager in Australasia.

P.S.—When the ordinary rate is reduced to 4s. per word, the Government rate will be fixed at 3s., and the Press rate at 1s. 6d.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

No. 138.

The Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington, to the ACTING-MANAGER in AUSTRALASIA, Eastern Extension Company, Melbourne.

SIR,—
Premier's Office, Wellington, 22nd August, 1899.

I have the honour to acknowledge, with thanks, the receipt of your letter of the 27th ultimo, covering copy of a communication from yourself to the Postmaster-General of Victoria, regarding the terms on which a cable would be laid between Cape Colony and Australia.

As you are probably aware, this colony is committed to the Pacific cable, and could not, therefore, support the Cape-Australia cable scheme.

I have, &c.,

R. J. SEDDON, Premier.

The Acting-Manager in Australasia,

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

No. 139.

The MINISTER of EDUCATION, Adelaide, to the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Office of the Minister of Education and Agriculture,
Adelaide, 22nd August, 1899.

DEAR SIR,—

I forward herewith copy of a report prepared by the Postmaster-General, Sir Charles Todd, on the proposals recently submitted by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company: (1) To lay a cable from South Africa to Fremantle and Glenelg; and (2) to reduce the rates on cable-grams to 4s. a word on ordinary messages, 3s. on Government messages, and 1s. 6d. on Press messages, subject to further reductions as explained in the report. It will be seen that the financial aspect of the proposed Pacific cable is fully dealt with. As the whole question of cable-communication is now under consideration of the several colonies, it seems to me desirable to furnish you with the report, and I shall be glad to be favoured with your views thereon, especially as the whole matter will come on for consideration by the Federal authorities before long.

Yours, &c.,

RICHARD BUTLER,

Minister of Education.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.