

wires from London to the Indian Ocean, embracing in their circuit 247 degrees of longitude—more than two-thirds of the circumference of the globe.

One important point remains to be touched upon—the cost of telegraphy by the Imperial system. It may be gathered from what I have stated that the charge for transmitting messages between London and Vancouver need not exceed 6 or 8 cents a word; and, as Vancouver is not far from half-way between the United Kingdom and Australasia, the charge for the whole distance should not be more than 14 or 18 cents per word. Of course, it is recognised that if the Marconi Atlantic service proves successful the laying of a State cable across the Atlantic may be deferred, and in that event the transatlantic rate will in all probability for a time be 10 cents—that is to say, 5 cents higher than I have estimated. But in any event the total charge for transmission between Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom should not exceed 25 cents (or 1s.) per word. A shilling rate will be immensely appreciated in New Zealand and Australia, where they have been always accustomed to excessively high telegraph charges. When I visited Australia eight years ago I desired to telegraph friends in Canada and receive replies about once a week. On arriving at Sydney I sent one message, but it cost so much—the charge being 10s. 4d. per word—that I did not again indulge in the luxury of cabling to any extent.

This is not the place to allude to the powerful cable-monopoly or the struggle between private gains and public benefits which has, ever since the first inception of the Pacific cable, been going on. Suffice it to say that the triumph of the public interest has commenced; that the telegraph charges between Australia and London are now reduced, and it may possibly be claimed that the advocacy of the Pacific cable has had some effect in causing the reduction. The present charge is 4s. a word. The reduction to 1s. would be distinctly an outcome of the two Canadian proposals discussed and recommended by this association, and must hereafter be regarded as a service rendered by Canada, of inestimable value to the Empire. To make this plain we have only to bear in mind that, as New Zealand is antipodean to the British Islands, when the globe-encircling telegraph is completed there will be no place more remote from the Imperial centre than New Zealand. Obviously, therefore, the transmission charge on telegrams from any one of the King's possessions to any other, on any part of the surface of the globe, should not be greater than 1s. a word. The maximum charge may, indeed, be less than 1s. I am hopeful and sanguine enough to think that there are electrical discoveries yet in store, and that the triumphs of telegraphy will make still cheaper rates possible. Members of this association are awakened to the fact that existing charges for ocean telegraphy are far too high. We all know that the expense of cabling is practically prohibitive to the majority of people. It is only on matters of great urgency, or those in which large interests are at stake, that cablegrams are sent. Cables are employed by persons in official positions, by managers of large mercantile firms, by the very rich, and by those engaged in stock operations; but the majority of people do not use them. Moreover, by reason of the expense, many who use cables resort to them as seldom as possible.

It is in the general interests that all this should be changed, that telegraphy should be popularised, and every kind of hindrance to free intercourse be removed. It is felt that there should be nothing to prevent cables and telegraphs being as freely employed as the penny post. To popularise telegraphy, by sea as well as by land, is, to my mind, a movement which concerns the British more than any other people. We greatly require a postal telegraph service between all parts of the Empire, and, above all things, we need rates so cheap that the service may be freely used by all classes. I have furnished evidence to show that Canada can greatly assist in the development of such a service, and it must be clear to all that, when consummated, the improved and cheapened service will revolutionise the world's correspondence. In this age the ordinary mail is fast becoming too slow and inadequate. Year by year our wishes and our wants will more and more seek to be made known by telegraph.

In concluding these sentences, Mr. President, in which I have endeavoured to comply with your request, I have referred to the resolutions which the association passed a year ago with respect to nationalising the telegraphs of the Dominion and establishing a State-controlled means of telegraphy across the Atlantic. I am perfectly satisfied that by carrying into effect these resolutions Canada would secure for her people a much cheapened and more useful cable telegraph service, and that ulterior benefits of the very highest Imperial importance would be the outcome. Thus, in helping herself, Canada without further effort, without the smallest risk, and without any additional cost, would inaugurate a policy immensely far-reaching and beneficent. Almost immediately the kindred communities of New Zealand and Australia would feel its good effects; eventually its benefits would extend to India, South Africa, and elsewhere; and thus, in promoting our own domestic interests in the matter of telegraphy, we should contribute to the advancement and well-being of the whole Empire in a substantial, thoroughly practical, and effective manner.

ADDENDA.

It was said by one gentleman at the meeting that a single cable across the Atlantic might prove inadequate, and that as a protection against interruptions it would be advisable to have it laid in duplicate. I ask permission to add, by way of explanation, that a similar view was expressed before the Imperial Pacific Cable Committee which met in London in 1896. It was indeed urged by some witnesses that cables laid across any ocean should be laid in duplicate. I was then in London, and, in reply to the allegation, submitted to the Committee as follows (*vide* Canadian Parliamentary Return No. 51 for 1899, page 77):—

"In the evidence submitted to the Committee it has been alleged as absolutely necessary, if a trans-Pacific cable be laid at all, that it should be laid in duplicate. Curiously enough, the gentlemen who have laid greatest stress on the necessity for two cables across the Pacific are among those most adverse to the establishment of a Pacific cable under any circumstances. It has been made to appear that a single cable has been rarely laid in any part of the