

No. 209.

The Hon. the ACTING-PREMIER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 22nd September, 1902.

PRINCIPAL officer Eastern Extension Company touting for business Christchurch, Dunedin. Already several firms withdrawn business from Pacific cable, and others likely follow. Cable Board should immediately take steps to check, otherwise will have to face further loss traffic. Cable what Board does.

No. 210.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the ACTING-PREMIER.

(Telegram.)

London, 24th September, 1902.

REFERRING to your telegram of 22nd September, Chairman Pacific Cable Board requests me ask what you would suggest Board to do.

[Read here No. 255.]

No. 211.

The Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

SIR,—

Premier's Office, Wellington, 26th November, 1902.

I have the honour to confirm my cablegram of the 22nd September on the subject of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company's representative canvassing for business, and to acknowledge the receipt of your reply received on the 26th idem.

Seeing that the Pacific cable would be open in a few weeks for international traffic, I decided to take no further action in the matter, particularly as the Board apparently was not anxious to advertise the cable at the present juncture.

For your information I may state that a representative of the Eastern Extension Company visited the South Island and left with business firms and others blank telegram-forms stamped "Via Extension," as well as a rubber stamp for impressing the same direction on the forms. He also, by representations in favour of the Eastern Extension route, urged the use of his company's cables in preference to the Pacific cable, with the result that no inconsiderable quantity of traffic was diverted from the latter route. Had it not been known that previous representations had failed to rouse the Board to take some action to check the loss of business, I would have considered the advisability of moving in this direction here, no less to preserve the legitimate traffic over the Pacific cable than to neutralise the misrepresentation which has been going on. Copy of circular [not printed] issued by the company is forwarded for your information.

I have, &c.,

J. G. WARD,

For the Premier.

The Hon. W. P. Reeves, Agent-General for New Zealand, London.

No. 212.

The Hon. the PRIME MINISTER to the AGENT-GENERAL.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 9th March, 1903.

WARD wishes you inform Pacific Cable Board that Eastern Extension Telegraph Company actively canvassing Australia, New Zealand. Board must do likewise if desires hold its own.

No. 213.

The AGENT-GENERAL to the Hon. the PRIME MINISTER.

Westminster Chambers, 13, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

SIR,—

13th March, 1903.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your telegram of the 9th instant, instructing me to inform the Pacific Cable Board that the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company were actively engaged in canvassing in the Australian Colonies and in New Zealand, and to advise the Board to take steps in order to meet this action on the part of the company.

I at once communicated your message to the Board, and in reference thereto the Chairman has represented to me that in any steps the Board may determine to take they have necessarily to mainly depend on your good offices, and I have accordingly telegraphed to you [not printed] asking you on behalf of the Board to recommend the steps which you would advise them to take for the purpose of competing with the Eastern Company in canvassing for traffic.

I made a similar request in my telegram to you of the 24th September last, but in your letter of the 26th November last acknowledging its receipt you did not make any recommendation as regards the steps which it would be desirable for the Board to take.

I am glad, however, to be able to state that the Chairman informs me that, so far as he is able to judge from the weekly traffic returns, the Pacific cable appears to be holding its own in Australasia, and that had it not been for the interruptions in the line in Canada it would in all probability have done much more than hold its own.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier, Wellington.

W. P. REEVES.