

but when thirty years was objected to and only ten years were offered, the company stipulated that in that case the agreements with South Australia, Western Australia, Tasmania, and New South Wales should be revived at the end of the ten years, unless the pooling arrangement were renewed.

In conclusion I would venture to suggest that a conference should take place between representatives of the Commonwealth and the company with a view to endeavouring to arrive at a satisfactory solution of this complex and difficult question.

I have, &c.,

J. WOLFE BARRY, Chairman.

The Right Hon. Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister and Minister for
External Affairs, Commonwealth of Australia.

Enclosure 2 in No. 1.

The SECRETARY, Pacific Cable Board, London, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office.

SIR,—

Queen Anne's Chambers, S.W., 3rd April, 1906.

I am directed by the Pacific Cable Board to state, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that, having regard to Reuter's telegram of the 28th ultimo, to the effect that the Eastern Extension Company had informed the Commonwealth authorities it did not propose to accept the cable agreement with that Government as amended by the Senate, the Board, at a special meeting held yesterday, resolved to despatch forthwith the following telegram to the Postmaster-General, Melbourne: "Pacific Cable Board at special meeting to-day understood that Eastern has refused to accept Commonwealth agreement; wishes to know whether Eastern is now prevented from accepting telegrams at their Melbourne offices, and whether all privileges State of Victoria are withdrawn from company. If not, on what date will both these things be done? See Board's letter, November, 1905, Q. 2/234."

I am, &c.,

HUGH LATHAM, Secretary.

The Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies, Colonial Office, S.W.

No. 2.

The MANAGER IN AUSTRALASIA, Eastern Extension Company, Melbourne, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington.

The Eastern Extension Australasia and China Telegraph Company (Limited),
Melbourne, 18th May, 1906.

SIR,—

I have the honour to bring under your notice the statement made in the attached letter received from the General Manager of the Royal Insurance Company, that the agents of his company in Wellington were informed by the receiving officer of the Wellington Telegraph-office that the Melbourne office of the Eastern Extension Company had been closed, and that future messages would have to be sent "*Via Pacific*."

I therefore beg to ask if your telegraph-offices generally have been instructed to so inform senders of cablegrams, or if the Wellington officer acted on his own responsibility and without authority. In either case I must respectfully ask that any such instructions, if issued, may at once be cancelled, or such impression dispelled, as the action complained of is most unfair and detrimental to my company, since it has never had the privilege of direct dealings with the public in any of the Australian States for the receipt and delivery of New Zealand messages. Moreover, the officer himself must know perfectly well that the Eastern Extension Company has no offices in New Zealand, yet messages "*Via Eastern*" are delivered throughout the State; also that under the International Telegraph Convention Regulation XLI senders have the right to prescribe the route by which their messages are to go.

I have, &c.,

W. WARREN,

Manager in Australasia.

The Secretary, Post and Telegraph Department, Wellington.

Enclosure in No. 2.

The MANAGER, Royal Insurance Company, Melbourne, to the MANAGER, Eastern Extension Company, Melbourne.

Royal Insurance Company, 414 Collins Street, Melbourne,
17th May, 1906.

SIR,—

We received from our Wellington agents, Messrs. W. M. Bannatyne and Co. (Limited), on the 30th April, a cablegram which, contrary to our instructions, was despatched "*Via Pacific*," and on requesting an explanation from them they write me as follows: "In reply to your inquiry, our cablegram was headed '*Via Eastern*' but on same reaching the Telegraph-office we were informed that the Melbourne office of the Eastern Extension Company had been closed, and that future messages would have to be sent '*Via Pacific*.' We may mention that cables have appeared in our papers from time to time, notifying the closing of the Melbourne office of the '*Eastern*.'"