

To effect an object of so much importance the arguments submitted in the two publications go to show that all traffic passing over the Empire cables should be transmitted at the lowest rates possible. It is regarded as undesirable that the electric nerves of the Empire should be called upon to earn large profits by levying toll on the intercourse of the people who are separated by distance. It is held that the better policy is to remove all unnecessary tax by making the rates for transmission so low that the gross earnings will merely suffice to cover all working-expenses. Again, it is placed beyond cavil that the principle of a uniform charge for all distances, as in "penny postage," is peculiarly applicable to telegraphy, and therefore its adoption in the chain of Empire cables is certain to be fully vindicated. There is, indeed, every reason why we should adopt means to reduce the rates for transmission by the Empire-girdling telegraph system to a moderate uniform tariff, and seek to make it similar to the Imperial penny postage system.

In both publications last mentioned it is authoritatively stated that the cost of completing and fully equipping the whole circle of Empire cables would not exceed £5,000,000, to be contributed in equitable proportions by each of the autonomous units of the Empire. The whole expenditure required must be regarded as quite insignificant compared with the incalculable gain resulting from a State-controlled telegraph system girdling the globe and bringing all the outlying self-governing British communities into instantaneous touch with each other, and with the Imperial centre. There are the best grounds for the belief that nothing would better aid in welding together the Empire—that nothing would prove more effective as an instrument of civilisation.

Empire Cables.—Cheapening of Telegraphy by the All-red Line.

The design of the Empire cables is to promote by a threefold means the well-being of the British people, and aid in the steady development of the great political organism of the new century.

First, by uniting all the autonomous British possessions, separated by the oceans, by an electric globe-encircling Imperial girdle.

Second, by providing all the peoples, so widely sundered, with a practical and effective system for the interchange of information, for the purposes of trade, for the cultivation of friendly relations, and generally to aid the several communities within the Empire in becoming better acquainted with each other.

Third, by securing, with the maximum of speed and efficiency, the minimum of cost in transmitting intelligence from any one point to any other point in the Imperial circle of telegraph-cables.

The first and second objects have been alluded to in the address to His Excellency Earl Grey, and in the preceding explanatory note; the third object, the cheapening of telegraphy, will now be considered.

It is a common error to imagine that the cost of transmitting by telegraph is in proportion to the number of miles the messages are transmitted. An ordinary letter has a definite weight, and it cannot be carried a mile without an expenditure of effort, or a hundred miles without a proportionately increased expenditure. A million letters may weigh twenty or thirty tons, and to transport a consignment of twenty or thirty tons involves the expenditure of fuel, oil, wear-and-tear of machinery by railway or by steamship, always regularly increasing in proportion to the distance carried. A telegraph message, on the other hand, has no weight; no material substance is conveyed—merely a number of signals are transmitted; a million of such wire-conducted signals have no weight; they may be transmitted by means of a well-appointed telegraph system a thousand miles as readily as a hundred miles or ten miles. There is no wear-and-tear, no fuel is consumed, or any such expenditure, be the distance long or short.

We are, of course, presupposing that in both cases the means employed, whether it be by railway, by steamship, or by telegraph-line, are each in perfect order and fully equipped with every necessary accompaniment, including a full staff of operators and men of the several classes in each case.

By thus analysing and contrasting the two systems it is made plain that an exceedingly important distinction must be drawn between the carriage of letters and the transmission of correspondence by telegraph. This feature will hereafter be noticed as an additional reason for adopting a low rate, uniform for all distances, for transmitting telegraphic matter. Meanwhile it may be mentioned that the telegraph has come so much into favour that it has been made a service of the State in every civilised country in the world, with only two exceptions, and Canada is one of these two.

At the present day Canada is in this particular matter behind every nation in Europe and every part of the British Empire. The telegraph-lines of the Mother-country were, at first and for a number of years, owned and controlled by companies, but in the public interests a change was made by authority of Parliament. The Government expropriated all the telegraph-lines, and paid the companies their full value. They were placed under the control of the Post Office Department. Under that Department they became, and have long been, a remarkably efficient and successful public service. No better model for imitation by the Dominion can be found. Take a single illustration: Any person in any part of the three kingdoms may send to, or receive from, any other person, however remote, a message of twelve words at the small cost of 6d.—that is, at the rate of $\frac{1}{2}$ d. a word—each additional word being charged $\frac{1}{2}$ d. This privilege is enjoyed and much used by the forty millions of people between Land's End and "John o' Groat's House."

In the Dominion we have not yet followed the example set us by the Mother-country, and until we do we shall simply be denying ourselves the advantages which every European nation and all parts of the Empire, other than Canada, have gained.

More than seventy years ago a far-seeing, patriotic Englishman discovered the true policy to follow in connection with the conveyance of correspondence and transmission of intelligence. Before the good Queen Victoria ascended the throne the postal service of England was complicated and costly. The inland postage of letters varied from 4d. to 1s. 8d. per letter, and still higher