

15 June, 1911.]

UNIVERSAL PENNY POSTAGE.

[9th Day.]

Mr. SAMUEL : Yes, but it is per mile.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : Yes, the rate between here and the suburbs of London may be $\frac{1}{2}d.$ per mile, and it may be from here to Glasgow $1d.$ per mile.

Mr. SAMUEL : Yes, but the total amount is very different.

Sir FREDERICK BORDEN : It depends upon the distance. The cases are not analogous, are they.

Sir JOSEPH WARD : But if the railway department, for the purposes of arriving at general revenue, was sectionised as you sectionised it in connection with the proposal for penny postage, I do not believe it would make a reduction between short distance and long distance rates, because it would show a loss every time. I do not think the postal world does show a loss every time. However, I have placed the matter before the Conference, and my own opinion is, as I said at Rome, and I reaffirm it here, that with the power of individual agreement between these countries I believe before many years pass by all the postal services of the world will be forced into a system of universal penny postage as the outcome of the individual action of different countries. I am very glad to see that this proposal is supported by, I think I am right in saying, if not a majority of the Conference, what appears to be about an equal division upon it, and in order to have unanimity, the proper thing for me to do is to accept the alteration suggested by Mr. Harcourt.

CHAIRMAN : I take it the Conference agrees to the Resolution I have just read.

[AGREED.]

IMPERIAL POSTAL ORDER SCHEME.

“ That it is desirable to complete the Imperial postal order scheme by its extension to Australia, and its full adoption by Canada, so that the British postal order shall be obtainable and payable in all parts of the Empire, and thus afford a ready and economical means of remitting small sums not only between the United Kingdom and other parts of the Empire, but between each part and every other.”

Mr. SAMUEL : The system of the British Postal Order now extends over almost the whole of the Empire, and a postal order of a uniform character is issued, and is cashed in the United Kingdom, South Africa, New Zealand, Newfoundland, India, the West Indies and the other Crown Colonies. Wherever this system exists, it has proved successful and works quite smoothly, and no difficulties of any kind have been experienced in all the countries that have adopted it, and they have expressed their satisfaction with it. There are only two exceptions in the whole wide area of the British Empire, one a partial exception in the case of Canada, and one a complete exception in the case of Australia. Canada does not issue the British Postal order at all. Canada cashes them, but only at 22 of the chief offices in the largest towns; and Canada will not allow any adhesive stamp to be put on to the postal order which it cashes; elsewhere odd sums, pennies or cents, can be made up with stamps. In Australia the system is not adopted at all, and the British postal order is neither cashed nor issued. It is impracticable to arrange for the reciprocal interchange of the separate postal orders of all the different Dominions. That would mean that at the 20,000 offices of the United Kingdom, for example, each postmaster or sub-postmaster would have to make himself familiar with the postal order of each one of the Dominions, and it is obvious that there would be very great risk of forgery, and in such circumstances it would be exceedingly easy and very profitable for any one to forge a postal order which purported to be the postal order of Newfoundland or some island of the West Indies, and present it to be cashed at different post offices in different parts of the country; and it would be almost impossible for the sub-postmasters and postmasters to refuse to cash documents purporting to be the postal orders of some distant part of the Empire.