

15 June, 1911.]

IMPERIAL POSTAL ORDER SCHEME.

[9th Day.]

Sir D. DE VILLIERS GRAAFF—*cont.*

advantageous to Colonial Administrations. The United Kingdom prints the orders—and great expense is involved in this—and supplies them free of charge together with the relative stationery; allows 1*l.* for every 1,000 orders issued and 1*l.* 10*s.* for every 1,000 orders paid in addition to which Colonial Administrations are at liberty to charge such commissions over and above the British rate as they may desire, the surcharge being retained by them as Revenue. The United Kingdom also gives credit for the value of all orders issued in the Union, but not cashed by the public within the usual period, and finally carries out the administration of the whole business. The postal order transactions in the Union are growing rapidly without causing any decrease in the money order business. The number issued throughout the Union in 1910 was 2,693,712, an increase of half a million over the previous year, while the number of orders paid was 2,020,730, an increase of 305,893 in the last year. So that it has worked very satisfactorily with us, and the Department has everything to say in its praise, and we will be glad to see Australia come into the same system, and, if it were possible for Canada to extend it, we would welcome it.

Sir WILFRID LAURIER: I received yesterday from my colleague, the Postmaster-General, a long despatch showing a number of difficulties in the administration of this scheme. The difficulties seem to be of a somewhat serious character, and will involve, perhaps, a good deal of trouble and worry upon the Post Office Department; but as those difficulties have been overcome elsewhere, I do not see why they could not be overcome in Canada also, and I shall ask my colleague not to stand in the way of the unanimous adoption of this scheme.

Mr. FISHER: We have the advantage of those who have experience of it in both the United Kingdom and the other Dominions. I observe that this proposition is rather a recent piece of business brought on by the United Kingdom, and it is not in the original Agenda. It is not any the less valuable on that account, but it would have been of value if we had known that you were going to bring it up.

Mr. BATCHELOR: The Memorandum was issued on the 7th of February.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: Yes, we got it on the 7th of February.

Mr. FISHER: Anything that can facilitate transmission of Government orders of any kind will be very acceptable to us, and I shall take the same step as we have taken in other matters, and try and co-operate as far as possible. Without committing myself absolutely I have no objection to the Resolution. I am very glad to know that the system is working well elsewhere, and what others are doing we can put up with.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: The postal orders we send out have increased by 21 per cent., and the increase in the number paid is 23 per cent., and the system is reported upon most favourably by the Departmental Officers.

Mr. FISHER: But Sir Wilfrid Laurier and myself represent much larger communities and more scattered people. Our difficulties are not known to you at all; but that is not the point. If we can co-operate with you we shall do it cheerfully.

CHAIRMAN: Then I may take it that even postal orders do not break our unanimity.

[AGREED.]

Adjourned to to-morrow morning at 11 o'clock.