

15 June, 1911.]

UNIVERSAL PENNY POSTAGE.

[9th Day.

Sir D. DE VILLIERS GRAAFF—*cont.*

privacy, that is to say, it receives priority in delivery with letters over all other classes of mail matter. So that we intend to abide by that for the present. My information also is that New Zealand, in 1906, moved at the Rome Convention for this international penny postage, but the only support it got was from the United States and Egypt. This is the information supplied to me by our Union Post Office. Whilst we are quite content with the principle of this motion we cannot join in it for the present.

The CHAIRMAN: I do not know whether it would suit you, Sir Joseph, to recur to the motion which you moved at the last Conference: "That in view of the social and political advantages, and the material commercial advantages to accrue from a system of international penny postage, this Conference recommends to His Majesty's Government the advisability, if and when a suitable opportunity occurs, of approaching the Governments of other States, members of the Universal Postal Union, in order to obtain further reduction of postal rates, with a view to the more general, and, if possible, universal, adoption of the penny rate." It seems, perhaps, that is as far as we shall be able to go with unanimity to-day, and it probably expresses a wish which would be felt by all of us round this table.

General BOTHA: Yes, that is all right; and a resolution of that kind, I think, we would support.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: I have just been looking through the Report of the Conference at Rome. I recollect the Canadian Delegate did not vote against the proposal at the Conference. I remember that quite well. As a matter of fact, here is the record of it, and it shows that Canada abstained from voting, and that is a very important point. Canada did not vote against that resolution, and I want to put that on the record. For resolution there voted the United States of America, Australia (at that time New Zealand had not an independent vote, but we got it at that Conference), and Egypt. So the United States, Australia, New Zealand, and Egypt voted in favour of that proposal alluded to in Mr. Samuel's remarks. There voted against it Germany, The Argentine, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Hungary, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Holland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, and Uruguay; and Canada, Great Britain, India, and Japan abstained from voting.

Mr. SAMUEL: Then we are both right, because I said that Egypt and the United States were the only countries that supported the Resolution, and you said Canada did not vote against it.

Sir JOSEPH WARD: Egypt, Australia, and the United States supported it, and Canada, Great Britain, India, and Japan abstained from voting. That is the position regarding it.

I want to say a word regarding the theory that Mr. Samuel asks the Conference to accept; and, speaking for myself individually, I am not, with all deference to him, going to accept that theory. If there is this principle of an analytical cutting-up of sections of the postal world, and applying the suggested principle of the loss of a penny, and a little over a penny in some cases, per letter, then I want to know in the first place how much does the British Post Office estimate they make as loss upon the sectional divisions within the United Kingdom and Ireland itself for the carrying of letters outside the cities at the penny rate? If this theory which is being applied for the purposes of argument by Mr. Samuel is to be accepted, then it is going to make an inroad upon any suggested lowering of rates over long distances, not only in the postal world, but in the railway world, of all countries. If the theory that you are going to take 15 years to recover the loss of revenue of 155,000*l.* with the United States of America is right, then Great Britain, in my opinion, ought not to recover for the next half-century the loss they incurred in the first instance upon the adoption of the penny post within the United Kingdom, because if