

Working expenses, submarine line, Java to Gulf of Carpentaria, including Port Darwin, 4 stations:—

<i>Two Terminal Stations.</i>					£	£
2 electricians, at ...	...	...	...	...	500	1,000
2 operators ...	...	...	...	...	250	500
2 do. ...	...	...	...	...	200	400

Two Intermediate Stations.

2 operators, at ...	...	...	...	...	250	500
2 do. ...	...	...	...	...	200	400
Stores, say ...	...	...	...	...	...	1,000

Working expenses, submarine line, terminating at Port Darwin:—

Two Terminal Stations.

2 electricians, at ...	...	...	...	...	500	1,000
2 operators ...	...	...	...	...	250	500
2 do. ...	...	...	...	...	200	400

One Intermediate Station.

1 operator ...	...	...	...	...	...	250
1 do. ...	...	...	...	...	...	200
Stores, say ...	...	...	...	...	...	750

Land line, Port Darwin to Gulf of Carpentaria:—

9 stations—salaries and stores, at £570 each ... £5,130 £8,230

Working expenses of submarine line the entire distance—Java to Gulf of Carpentaria ... £3,800

Showing an annual saving on working expenses, in favour of the through submarine line, of £4,430.

This saving is only apparent, as the interest at 7 per cent. per annum on the cost of land line, say £54,000, will only amount to £3,780, against the interest saved on the cost of the cable from Port Darwin to the Gulf of Carpentaria, 7 per cent. on £234,000 ...						£12,600
Deduct interest on land line ...	...	...	...	...	...	£3,780
Difference on working expenses ...	...	...	...	...	...	4,430
						8,210

Balance against the through submarine line ... £4,390

Saving of £4,390 per annum by constructing the land line as far as Port Darwin, with the additional advantage of opening up a good pastoral country on the Roper River and other places *en route*.

This arrangement, however, rather complicates the matter, as it will be difficult to arrange how the land line from the Gulf is to be provided for, and by whom maintained. The major portion of it will run through territory under the control of the South Australian Government, who will be naturally jealous of any outside interference in the construction of telegraphs in their province; and I am by no means sanguine that they will undertake the work themselves.

On the whole, I consider that Mr. Fraser's scheme for completing telegraphic communication between Australia and the civilized world is more practicable, and will prove, by far, more advantageous to the interests of the Colonies generally, than any propositions which have been placed before the public; and with the arrangements he has now made with the Netherlands-India Government, will for many years be the cheapest route for the dispatch of telegrams to India, China, Europe, and America.

I must not conclude without again urging the Government to invite co-operation of the neighbouring Colonies, so that a Conference may be arranged for at an early date.

E. C. CRACKNELL,

Superintendent of Telegraphs.

22nd September, 1869.

No. 9.

Colonial Secretary's Office, Brisbane, 26th November, 1869.

SIR,—At the instance of the Postmaster-General of this Colony, I have the honor to forward to you the enclosed memorandum, drawn up by the late Postmaster-General, Mr. Douglas, and yourself, upon the subject of the proposed telegraphic communication between the Australian Colonies and Europe, by way of Java, and to inform you that such memorandum, amended by the omission of that portion of it relating to the continuance of the land line from the head of the Gulf of Carpentaria to Port Darwin, has received the formal sanction of His Excellency the Governor in Council.

I have, &c.,

CHARLES LILLEY.

The Colonial Secretary, New South Wales.

Enclosure.

MEMORANDUM respecting Telegraph Communication between Australia and Europe.

TELEGRAPHIC communication between Great Britain and Australia must now shortly be accomplished. The Telegraphic Maintenance and Construction Company, having successfully laid three cables across the Atlantic, are now engaged in connecting Suez with Aden and Bombay.

Captain Sherard Osborne has lately been in correspondence with Mr. Verdon, and advocates alternative routes based upon subsidies to be borne entirely by the Australian Colonies, and varying in amount from £55,000 to £47,000 per annum.