

The Hon. John Gavan Duffy then submitted a proposed agreement by the contracting parties with the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, with a view to future correspondence as to the time, place, and mode of payment of subsidy; whereupon

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird moved, and the Hon. John Gavan Duffy seconded, the following resolutions, which were unanimously carried: "That an agreement be entered into between the Colonies of New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, and Tasmania—(1) In regard to their joint contribution to the Eastern Extension Company for the reduction of cable rates to Europe, on the terms approved between the colonies and the company; (2) in regard to the joint contribution of the said colonies to the payment of the cable subsidies to the Eastern Extension Company, including the Tasmanian cable subsidy; and (3) in regard to the joint contribution of the said colonies to the guarantee against loss by South Australia by reduction of rates through that territory; and (4) that the Government of South Australia be requested to act for the other contracting colonies in concluding the agreement with the Eastern Extension Company, and in collecting and paying the joint subsidies and contributions to the same company."

#### EXECUTIVE COUNCIL CHAMBER, SYDNEY, 10TH MARCH, 1891.

*Present:* New South Wales—The Hon. Daniel O'Connor, M.P., Postmaster-General (President); S. H. Lambton, Esq., Secretary to the Post Office Department; E. C. Cracknell, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs. Victoria—The Hon. John Gavan Duffy, M.P., Postmaster-General; James Smibert, Esq., Deputy Postmaster-General. South Australia—The Hon. Sir John Bray, K.C.M.G., Chief Secretary; Charles Todd, Esq., C.M.G., M.A., F.R.S., Postmaster-General. Tasmania—The Hon. B. Stafford Bird, M.P., Treasurer and Postmaster-General; Robert Henry, Esq., Superintendent of Telegraphs. New Zealand—The Hon. J. G. Ward, M.P., Postmaster-General; William Gray, Esq., Secretary to the Post Office and Telegraphs. Western Australia—The Hon. John Forrest, C.M.G., M.L.A., Premier and Treasurer.

The Conference having assembled at 10 o'clock, the minutes of the proceedings on the 9th instant were read and confirmed.

A communication was read from Mr. W. Warren, manager of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company, forwarding a telegram from the chairman of the said company (Sir John Pender) on the subject of finding a better route for the Darwin cable, which was ordered to be printed.

Sir John Bray informed the Conference that the Indian Post Office had intimated, in a letter to the Postmaster-General of South Australia, that they were unable at present to begin to exchange post cards with the Australasian Colonies, as desired by the Adelaide Conference, nor were they able to reduce the rates of postage on letters to 2½d., on account of the high sea transit rates, at present charged by the British Post Office.

The Hon. Sir John Gavan Duffy then laid before the Conference a memorandum on the subject, reduction of Press telegrams, which was ordered to be printed.

The Secretary laid before the Conference the report of the proceedings, which, upon the motion of the Hon. John Gavan Duffy, seconded by the Hon. B. Stafford Bird, was adopted.

The business being concluded, the Hon. Sir John Bray moved a cordial vote of thanks to the President for the ability with which he discharged the duties of his position, and for the kindness and hospitality he had shown to the delegates.

The Hon. B. Stafford Bird seconded the motion, and joined in hoping that in future Conferences they would again have the pleasure of the presence of Mr. O'Connor, who had proved so able a President.

The motion was carried unanimously. (See Press reports.)

The Hon. J. G. Ward then moved, That the thanks of the Conference were due to the Secretary (Mr. A. C. Budge) and to the heads of the departments for the zeal and ability they had displayed in the performance of their functions. Seconded by the Hon. John Gavan Duffy, and carried unanimously.

The Conference then adjourned *sine die*.

## REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS BY PERMANENT HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS.

In pursuance of the instructions of the honourable the delegates assembled in Conference, we have carefully considered the questions remitted to us. Finding that several of the matters, as well as Question No. 7 of the Hon. Mr. Duffy's programme, referring to intercolonial postal regulations, were embraced in the Australasian Convention, our draft of which was recommended at the Adelaide Conference for adoption by the various Governments, we have taken the opportunity of very carefully revising such draft. We have now the honour to submit the following report and recommendations:—

### *Advertising on the Back of Telegraphic Envelopes.*

Having considered this proposal carefully, we are unable to recommend that it be entertained.

### *Insurance of Parcels.*

The London Post Office has invited attention to a system of insurance introduced between the United Kingdom and India in 1889, and stated that the system has worked well—that the amount of insurance-fees received in London on parcels despatched was estimated at upwards of £58 during the first six months, whilst no compensation had up to that time been paid.

We recommend that the proposal of the London Post Office to give compensation for parcels which are lost in transit on payment of an insurance-fee of 6d. for the first £5 and 6d. for every additional £5 be agreed to, and that the London rates be charged; but that the limit inland and intercolonially be £20; £52 to be the limit as regards parcels exchanged with Great Britain and foreign countries. A clause providing for this has been inserted in the revised draft convention,