

colonies in what was for the benefit not of one only, but of the whole. He would ask permission to withdraw his motion in favour of that moved by Mr. Duffy.

The Hon. D. O'Connor said that after the candid and moderate speeches of his colleagues there was nothing to be gained by prolonging the debate. The matter had been thoroughly discussed. But he would like to point out to his honourable friend, Mr. Bird, also to Mr. Unmack and Mr. Ward, that there were two solid reasons why the proposal to do away with the guarantee and revert to the six-shilling rate would not bear serious consideration. First, as had been ably said by Mr. Bird, and also adverted to by the two gentlemen following him, the public mind of Australia had become educated to expect a reduction; it was an absolute necessity, and the Conference would be regarded as a sham if it were not adhered to. There was still in his mind a strong idea that the two colonies standing out would yet come in. He felt certain of it. It might be the policy of their Governments, but they had not really had the time to devote to this special matter. [Mr. Unmack: "We have considered it nearly sixteen years."] That was the very reason; they had been so long considering one side that they had lost sight of the other side. But he believed that the colony which had taken such an enlightened view with regard to federation—the very fundamental principle of which meant that some colonies must give up something in the interests of all—would yet come in; for in this very thing increased postal and telegraphic communication and cheap postage was the very vital principle of federation itself; it was the finest embodiment of the faith of Federation, yet they refused because it involved—what? Not the giving up of a choice portion of territory, or anything that would endanger their prosperity or their position, but a small sum of money which they could easily give and not even miss. Poor as the consideration was, it would be taken as a practical test of their faith in federation—as a proof whether they really regarded it as a reality or as a sickly sham, as Mr. Duffy had said. And as they had very staunch opponents in all the colonies the fact would be greedily grasped and pointed to as a proof that their belief in federation was only a sham. Indeed, if he were on the opposite side against federation, which, thank Heaven, he was not, he knew what use he could make of it as a test of sincerity of a colony that said it was in favour of federation, but refused to pay a sum of money so small that it would not affect financially a tenth-rate business firm in Victoria or New South Wales. He had to express a hope that the whole of the colonies would yet join in that guarantee.

The Hon. T. Unmack concurred that no good could result from continuing the discussion. All had made up their minds. They were not there to discuss federation or anything approaching to it, or the effects of it, and so he would not take up the remarks they had made on that question; but with all deference would submit that the contribution of a few thousand pounds or so did not affect the question of federation. There was no necessity just now for Queensland or New Zealand to prove their loyalty to federation; they were all to the fore on that, so there was no need to introduce it at all. It had been said this agreement would be a good thing for the colonies. Since he had spoken a few days ago, whatever desire or wish he might have had to listen to fresh reasons to change his views had been entirely removed. His position had been strengthened a hundredfold by what he had heard. Since he last addressed them, he had been astonished at the numberless communications that had been made to him endorsing his view and his action, and asking him to persevere in opposing the agreement, because it was looked upon generally with feelings of aversion. It was thought that the Governments should not be called upon to pay anything towards the company. On one day he was interviewed by at least forty or fifty gentlemen, some from South Australia, whom he did not know, but who were in opposition to the proposal—some from Victoria, others from New South Wales, his own colony, and others—and each one of them expressed delight with Queensland and New Zealand for having the courage to express their opinions, and oppose the motion. He knew, although it was not his business, but they would find very considerable difficulty in their various Parliaments to pass such a vote. He knew there would be very strong opposition to sanctioning such a guarantee; but that, of course, was entirely their own business, not his. He knew, as a fact, that in Queensland he would be utterly unable to carry such a vote through the House; and if he made a promise he would like to be in a position to keep it, and they would expect him to do so. Mr. Bird had stated it would be a good thing for the colonies: so was the position he was taking, for it encouraged competition. It was said the public had been educated to look for a four-shilling rate; who were the public? In Victoria and New South Wales there were over a million of population each; how many out of that million used the cable? He did not suppose there were more than a thousand; and they were calling upon more than a million to contribute a large sum of money to put in the pockets of about a thousand. Then again Mr. Bird argued that this agreement would not stand in the way of another cable, because it could be terminated at one year's notice. He ventured to say that the agreement was the very thing that was in the way. Now was the time when others were anxious to start an opposition cable; now was the time, therefore, to remove the obstacles. But instead of adopting his suggestion to pay straightforwardly 6s., they were going on the one hand to pay 2s. from the Treasury, and on the other hand the public would pay their 4s. What chance of success would any rival company have ever to start a cable with any higher charge? They could not even ask 5s. [Mr. Duffy: "You pay 6s."] But you pay more than 6s. He believed in a bird in the hand, not in the bush. If they put their names to a guarantee they must be prepared to pay for it. If they gave the public a taste of blood, so to speak, by letting them have their messages at 4s., no rival line could ever be started at a higher rate. It would have to start as low in order to compete. Therefore they were encouraging a monopoly in order to discourage others; that was the effect of it. He was sorry they could not see it. But at the same time he was pleased to hear the kindly sentiments expressed to those colonies who would not come in; and he still hoped they would not pay the guarantee.

The Hon. J. G. Ward said his colony had decided to absolutely stand out. Since the last meeting of the Conference he had had the amended agreement telegraphed over to his colleagues in New Zealand. They had considered it in its amended form, and had come to the unanimous con-