

join with Sir John Bray in asking Mr. Duffy to withdraw the motion, as it could have no practical effect at present.

The Hon. T. Unmack sympathised entirely with the resolution, as he was a thorough believer in cheap postage; but at the same time he felt that the matter was more a question of policy, of the Treasury finances, than for them to settle. It would make a difference in the finances of Queensland—a loss they were not then in a position to entertain. They could not face a loss of £100,000, as Victoria did. [Mr. Duffy: "This will only cost you £18,000."] He thought he could give the figures a little nearer than his honourable friend could. In Queensland they paid for the conveyance of mails throughout their immense territory fully £60,000 for coach and horse services, which had to be taken into consideration when proposing to carry letters at 1d. Whilst he was pleased to hear that some of the Post and Telegraph Departments were conducted without loss, he must say that Queensland stood in an entirely different position, chiefly owing to her large territory. Her loss in 1889 amounted to nearly £100,000, whilst it was only reduced a little since. If they adopted Mr. Duffy's suggestion, he found—assuming there would be no increase, which was not likely—they would lose £32,625 a year; if the increase was one-third, the loss would be £24,000; if the increase of business was one-half, the loss would be a little over £19,000. Under these circumstances, he could not at present consent to propose anything of this kind for the entertainment of his Government; but when their financial position improved, he hoped they would not be behind the other colonies in supporting a measure of the kind. When they adopted the twopence-halfpenny rate to Europe, he addressed a memorandum to his own Treasurer on the subject, stating that he felt the adoption of the penny postage rates throughout the colonies and intercolonially must be the inevitable consequence. The matter was discussed then, and they came to the decision that they were not in a position justifying them to entertain it. The Hon. Mr. Duffy, however, deserved their best thanks for having introduced the matter prominently before the colonies. They had expressed their opinions, and no doubt at any future conference the matter would be again ventilated, and they might then be in a better position to entertain the proposal. He hoped Mr. Duffy would withdraw it in the meantime.

The Hon. D. O'Connor thoroughly sympathised with the proposal, and would be very proud to give his assent to its adoption by all Australasia; but he also recognised the positions of his honourable friends who had spoken on it, Messrs. Bray, Bird, Ward, and Unmack, that it was a matter requiring at least Cabinet consent, and he presumed it had not been brought before the various Governments prior to their representatives coming here. However much they desired it, he saw at once it was impracticable for them to bring it into operation. Any argument in favour of the reduction of the cable rates would come with more force in favour of reduction of postage. For, while cable reductions chiefly affected a limited number, the whole of the people in the various colonies would participate in this; no class could be said to enjoy this boon at the expense of another. He thought it was one of the most beneficial proposals that could possibly be made. He dissented from Mr Bird in saying it was ill-timed; it was well-timed; and instead of taking up the functions that would fall on a united Parliament of Australasia, the departments would have the machinery in their hands to carry it out. Was it not absurd that people could send a letter 17,000 miles for 2½d., and could not send one 400 miles for 2d.? Should they not endeavour to remedy that? Although the loss of some of the colonies might be at present as great as their representatives said, they should consider the great increase of correspondence they would get from other places. New Zealand especially would gain by the introduction of a uniform penny postage. There seemed to be only one thing for his honourable friend, Mr. Duffy, to do, to withdraw the resolution, but with a distinct understanding that he had done a great deal of good. In the near future the Governments of the various colonies would be compelled by public pressure to have a uniform penny postage.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy said he accepted the suggestions, and withdrew the resolution, which only purported to be recommendatory. He knew that at this Conference they could not pass any law. He felt that he had informally got the opinion for which he looked, and was glad that it was favourable to the proposition. The time might not be exactly opportune to bring it forward, because they had just reduced the postage to Europe to 2½d., but he thought it was fully time that the inland postage throughout Australia should be reduced. He trusted that in the immediate future it would be so reduced, for, after all, federation or no federation, the colonies were one in their desire for postal unity, and for facilities to carry on business intercourse. In the capital of each of the colonies you meet people from other places at every corner of the street. However, in deference to the expressed opinion in favour of the principle, he would now withdraw the motion, and trust that the matter would receive further consideration when circumstances were more propitious, and then be carried into law. He had had some figures in connection with the matter prepared, which he handed in, and would ask to have printed with the papers, showing how it was estimated the various colonies would be affected.

Motion withdrawn.

Letters Relating to Sweeps, &c.

The Hon. J. Gavan Duffy moved, "That, in the opinion of this Conference, it is advisable that the system of dealing with letters relating to sweeps should be uniform throughout Australasia." In bringing forward this resolution, he did not profess or wish to take any high moral ground, or to represent a more straight-laced people than those of other colonies. But, as the Conference was aware, Victoria had legislated very strictly against all sweeps. In the first place, against the sweeps themselves; against their being advertised in their own colony's papers, or by any other method in their cities; and also by giving the Postmaster-General very stringent powers as regards dealing with letters known or suspected to relate to sweeps or similar transactions. The 30th clause of their present Post Office Act provides: "If the Postmaster-General has at any time reasonable ground to suppose any person to be engaged in receiving any money . . . for any