

go as far as this—as soon as the Colonies can afford it we hope to do it. South Australia does not now feel able to fall in with the suggestion, but hopes at some future time to do so, therefore I think we might well adopt this motion of Mr Cook's. I wish to reserve the right to urge the Colonies, when they can afford it, to reduce the $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ rate to $2d.$ I do not think it is worth while making any amendment. While I am with Mr. Cook in opposing the reduction to a penny, I am thoroughly in accord with the suggestion Mr Henniker-Heaton has made, that it would be desirable a $2d.$ stamp should carry us throughout the British Federation, and I hope it will not be very long before this will be done.

Hon. A. J. THYNNE Upon this question of a $2d.$ postage to England, the Government of Queensland are prepared to adopt Mr. Henniker-Heaton's proposals, and if the Imperial Government will take the steps necessary to carry out this, we are prepared to incur the necessary expense of seven or eight hundred pounds. We have considered the matter, and think the extra cost to us would be repaid by the convenience to the people of Queensland. As regards penny postage, it is not within practical politics. It is no use our offering serious consideration to any proposition that is not likely to be adopted within the next few years. The Australasian Colonies are not in a position, nor are they likely to be in a position, to consider this question during the next few years from a practical point of view. I should be very glad if we could agree to the $2d.$ postage. We should then have the pleasure of knowing that whether our letters went into the next village or into the village where we were born—those of us who can claim nativity with the Antipodes—our Antipodes, we should be able to send them with the same postage stamps. It would thus make no difference whether they were carried a distance of a few hundred miles or a few thousand miles.

The CHAIRMAN: I am in accord with the gentlemen who have spoken. The penny postage is not within the range of practical politics. I regret the time for the adoption of the $2d.$ postage proposal is inopportune. We should all lose considerably under it. Victoria would lose something like £1600 or more. Some of the Colonies can ill afford to lose money just now. We must all regret the time is inopportune, but the times will not always be inopportune. Perhaps before more than another year has passed the great zeal and energy Mr Henniker-Heaton has thrown into this matter will be rewarded.

The motion was put and passed.

The Conference adjourned at 1 15 p.m. till 10:30 a.m. on Friday, February 8.

FRIDAY, 8TH FEBRUARY, 1895.

The Cable Guarantees—(vide Minutes, p. 16.)

The PRESIDENT Our first business will be the consideration of the report of the Committee in regard to the question of Cable Guarantees. Honourable Members will remember that when we were in Committee we put it to the representative of Queensland that this would be a favourable opportunity to come into the Guarantee. It is highly desirable that Queensland should be at one with the rest of the Colonies in this matter. I do trust that she will see her way to come in, as she will be in a much stronger position when other cable matters come to be discussed.

Mr COOK: I earnestly hope Queensland will see her way to come in with us, not merely from pecuniary considerations, but as a proof of her earnestness in these larger Federal matters which bear so much upon the particular cable in which Queensland is so prominently interested. There is a very strong feeling in my own Colony that nothing should be done in regard to that particular cable which will retard it. I presume a similarly strong sentiment exists in the other Colonies, and that being so it appears that the position of Queensland would be very much strengthened by coming in with us in our present undertaking.

Dr COCKBURN also spoke to a similar effect.

Mr THYNNE: I may say at once that I intend to advise my colleagues to comply with the wish that has been expressed by the Colonies represented here—(hear, hear)—in regard to the cable guarantee. With regard to the cable subsidies, I may say at once that that is a different question, because it is against our policy, and it is a proposal for which I shall not be able to obtain any consideration. I may be permitted to say, for my own part, I am very strongly indeed impressed with the necessity for even a greater amount of give-and-take amongst the Colonies than we have been able to obtain, and I would be extremely sorry to see a Colony standing apart, even in a matter in which she might not be so deeply interested as the others. As long as I have a voice in matters of this kind it will always be used in favour of co-operation on the part of the Colonies. (Hear, hear)

The Report of the Committee was adopted.

Telegraphic Communication between Western Australia and South Australia.

Mr. COCKBURN asked that this question might be left in the hands of the two Colonies to deal with, as they were quite prepared to do all that could be done in the matter.