

## PAPERS.

Hon. J. G. JENKINS tabled Postal and Telegraphic Statistics of South Australia for 1897.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY tabled Telegraphic Statistics for Victoria, 1897.

## TELEGRAPHIC.

Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY moved,—

That the following stand Orders of the Day for Monday :—

(b) (65.) Alternative Cable Route. (N.S.W. 23.)

(c) (66.) Pacific Cable. (Q. 21.)

(d) (67.) Overland Telegraph Line, South Australia. (Q. 13.)

Hon. J. G. JENKINS seconded.

Carried.

## NOTICE OF MOTION.

Hon. J. G. JENKINS gave notice to move on Monday, 4th April,—

“That this Conference recommends to the Governments of Australasia that no alteration in International Postal or Telegraphic Rates be made without the Colony proposing to make such alterations advising the other Colonies, and endeavouring to arrange for uniformity of action.”

## REPORT OF SUB-COMMITTEE.

The Conference further considered the Report of the Sub-Committee of Permanent Heads on the subjects submitted to them :—

Nos. 72, 73, and 81.—“Intercolonial Telegraph Rates.”—“Resolution of Conference Chambers of Commerce *re* Intercolonial Telegraph Charges.”—“Reduction of the New South Wales-Queensland Telegraph Rates, and alteration in mode of charging on Inland and Intercolonial Telegrams.”

The question of reducing the rates—2*s.* for the first 10 words, and 2*d.* each additional word—on telegrams between New South Wales and Queensland, has been under consideration on several occasions.

In 1885, a proposal was made to Queensland that the rates be reduced to those then, and now, existing between New South Wales and Victoria, viz., 1*s.* for the first 10 words, and 2*d.* for each additional word. A reply was received that, having regard to the long distances over which telegrams pass in Queensland, the Government of that Colony was not then disposed to make any reduction in the charges levied. In 1887 the attention of Queensland was again drawn to the matter, but a reply was received to the effect that, for the reasons already given, the Government of that Colony was “still unable to meet the wishes of the Government of New South Wales with regard to the proposed reduction.”

At a Conference held at Adelaide in 1890, a Resolution was agreed to, of which the following is an extract, viz. :—

“That between any two contiguous Colonies, 1*s.* shall be the initial charge for 12 words, and 1½*d.* for each additional word ; names and addresses to be paid for.”

Owing to some of the Colonies not taking the necessary action, this Resolution was not given effect to, nor was a somewhat similar Resolution making the charge “between any two contiguous Colonies 1*s.* for 15 words, and 1½*d.* for each additional word, names and addresses to be paid for,” which was adopted at a Conference held at Sydney, 1891. A Resolution, similar in terms to the latter, was submitted for consideration at the 1892 (Hobart) Conference, but was rejected.

In 1896 the Chambers of Commerce in Sydney, Melbourne, and Adelaide wrote to the New South Wales, Victorian, and South Australian Post and Telegraph Administrations, asking for the reduction of the Intercolonial telegraph rates. The Sydney Chamber of Commerce asked that, after the first ten words, the charge on messages between New South Wales and Victoria be reduced from 2*d.* to 1*d.* per word. The Melbourne Chamber of Commerce made a similar request with respect to messages from Victoria to New South Wales, besides asking that consideration be given to the existing rates on messages between Victoria and South Australia. The Adelaide Chamber of Commerce also asked for a reduction.

The matter was considered at the 1896 (Sydney) Conference, when the Permanent Heads reported as follows :—

“We refrain from making any recommendation. We would, however, suggest for the consideration of Ministers that, in the event of an alteration of the rates being made, it should be *on the basis of the International principle of counting addresses and signatures*, as recommended at the Conferences held at Adelaide and Sydney in 1890 and 1891 respectively.”

In December, 1897, the Brisbane office opened up a correspondence with the Sydney office on the question of reducing the rates on telegrams to and from New South Wales and Queensland. The proposal of Queensland was to charge 1*s.* for 12 words, including address and signature, and 1½*d.* for each additional word. To this proposal New South Wales could not agree,