

because of the anomaly which would be created, and owing to it being thought that the charges on messages between New South Wales and Victoria, and New South Wales and Queensland, should be as nearly uniform as possible, whereas were the Queensland proposal adopted the following would be the position :—

New South Wales to Queensland.—1s. for the first 12 words (at least six of which would be address and signature), and  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  for each additional word.

New South Wales to Victoria.—1s. for the first 10 words (exclusive of address and signature), and  $2d.$  for each additional word.

Queensland was informed that if it would agree to the addresses being sent free, and to charge 1s. for the first 10 words and  $2d.$  for each additional word, New South Wales would be prepared to consider the matter. The question still remained unsettled, but, in a letter explaining the reasons which guided Queensland in making the above-mentioned proposal, the Brisbane Office states that “*it has been recognised in all European Administrations, and confirmed by the International Bureau (see Rule 19, &c.), that the words in addresses and signatures should be counted,*” and that “*the Australian Colonies appear to be the only Administrations which do not observe this rule.*”

In a letter dated 11th August, 1897, the Adelaide Office drew attention to the fact that “a general reduction of telegraph rates, local and intercolonial, is again being urged in several of the Colonies,” and stated that “our rates compare very favourably with those obtaining in Europe.” That office also stated that the Queensland Postmaster-General is anxious that some re-arrangement should be arrived at, but he considered—

1. That no Colony should take separate action.
2. That any change should include the charging for addresses and signatures.
3. That the rates internally should be uniform throughout the Colonies, if this can possibly be arrived at, but in any intercolonial case rates should be uniform.

The whole subject has to be considered at the present Conference, the points for consideration being—

1. The charges on messages to and from New South Wales and Queensland.
2. The adoption of uniform rates between contiguous Colonies.
3. The adoption of uniform rates between Colonies not contiguous to one another, as between Queensland and South Australia, New South Wales and Western Australia, &c.
4. The advisability or otherwise of charging for addresses and signatures, or signatures alone.
5. The adoption of uniform charges for inland messages.

We are still of opinion that any re-arrangement of charges should be on the basis of charging for every word, whether in addresses or text. This is the International principle. We would also respectfully point out that the present rates appear very reasonable when the great distances covered, and the small population, are taken into consideration. They compare very favourably with those obtaining in Europe, as the following table will show :—

		Minimum Charge.	Rate per Word.	Distance about
		<i>d.</i>	<i>d.</i>	Miles.
Between London and	Paris.....	10	2	287
”	Madrid.....	10	4	1195
”	Antwerp .....	10	2	270
”	Berlin .....	10	2	746
”	Vienna .....	10	3	980
”	Hamburg.....	10	2	657
”	St. Petersburg.....	10	$5\frac{1}{2}$	1774

Names and Addresses being counted.

With a view, if possible, to effect some reduction, we suggest the following Tariff for consideration :—

	Queensland.		New South Wales.		Victoria.		South Australia.		West Australia.	
	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>	<i>s.</i>	<i>d.</i>
Queensland .....	...	...	1	6	0	2	2	3	0	3
New South Wales .....	1	6	0	2	...	...	1	6	0	2
Victoria .....	2	3	0	3	1	0	0	2	1	6
South Australia .....	2	3	0	3	1	6	0	2	2	3
West Australia .....	3	0	0	4	2	3	0	3	1	6
Tasmania .....	In proportion, <i>plus</i> cable rate									

The Address and Signature, to the number or twelve words, to be sent free.

In this table the first amount indicates the rate for the first ten words, exclusive of names and addresses, the second amount indicates the rate for every succeeding word.