

As it seems to me, some such organization would become a most potent Imperial agency. It would prove to be an invaluable means of educating our people everywhere respecting the life, the opinions and aspirations of all our fellow-subjects in the several parts of the Empire. It would directly place before each section of the British world the views formed or forming in all other sections.

I am thoroughly satisfied that the cable during a portion of each day could not be turned to any better account. Two hours a day would easily admit of ten or twelve thousand words being transmitted each week. This full volume of news published simultaneously in the chief centres of the Empire would have a wonderful influence. The good to result from a mutual interchange of information and sentiment is beyond calculation. Obviously it would steadily have a unifying tendency if every day in the year the pulsations of the great heart of the Mother-land could be felt by kith and kin beyond the seas, and if also every man within as well as without the central kingdom could read in his morning paper the same sympathetic evidences of interest in the common welfare, and all fresh from his fellow-subjects in all quarters of the globe. I venture to think that to organize an Imperial Intelligence Department such as has been indicated will come to be regarded as an eminently progressive movement. And I feel satisfied that in conjunction with the world-girdling chain of State cables there is no other conceivable agency which would more speedily mould our great world-Empire into a living reality.

That is the supreme object to be eventually attained. Meanwhile there are other great objects incidentally to be secured—objects which have received the unanimous support of all Chambers of Commerce. I confidently believe that if wise counsels prevail the proposed system of Empire cables will prove an inestimable boon “to the millions” who have heretofore been debarred from cabling to distant friends by charges absolutely prohibitive to them.—From the *Empire Review*, August, 1905.

Enclosure 2 in No. 103.

The SECRETARY, Pacific Cable Board, London, to the UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE, Colonial Office.
SIR,—

Queen Anne's Chambers, London, S.W., 21st March, 1906.

I am directed by the Pacific Cable Board to acknowledge the receipt of your letter [not printed] of the 8th instant, forwarding, for any observations which the Board may have to offer, a communication and enclosures (herewith returned) from Sir Sandford Fleming advocating the establishment of a continuous chain of State cables uniting all the self-governing British colonies.

2. In reply, I am directed to state, for the information of the Secretary of State for the Colonies, that the question of the establishment of such a chain of cables as suggested in Sir Sandford Fleming's letter of the 27th January, does not appear to be one upon which it is within the Board's province to express an opinion, but rather a matter for the consideration of the Governments concerned in it.

3. With regard to the figures used by Sir Sandford Fleming in support of the arguments brought forward in his article upon “State Cables and Cheap Telegraphy” in the *Empire Review* for August, 1905, I am directed by the Pacific Cable Board to make the following observations:—

- (a.) Sir Sandford Fleming's estimate of the carrying-capacity of the Pacific cable appears to be based on the assumption that the speed attainable by a specially selected operator working in one direction for sixty seconds can be maintained by the whole of the Board's staff working continuously in both directions day and night throughout the week. The experience of cable administrations does not support this assumption.
- (b.) As the actual eastward traffic is nearly 50 per cent. higher than the westward, it follows that, if the cable was filled to its utmost capacity in one direction, it could not be filled to the same extent in the other direction.
- (c.) Taking into account the necessary transmission of unpaid traffic, which amounts to about 30 per cent. of the whole, the Board's existing staff could not satisfactorily handle more than 30,000 paying words per week (some 50 per cent. more than the maximum at present carried in ordinary circumstances), and, consequently, such a traffic as that suggested in Sir Sandford Fleming's article would involve very large additions to the staff, and a further capital expenditure upon buildings for their accommodation.
- (d.) The 4d. or 10d. tariffs deduced by Sir Sandford Fleming from premises which the Board are thus unable to accept, are, moreover, misleading when compared with the through rate between the United Kingdom and Australia, inasmuch as they do not include the Australian terminal rate of 5d., or the Atlantic and Canadian charge of 1s., for transmission, and 1d. (approximately) for “date and time.”
- (e.) With respect to the suggested transmission of ten or twelve thousand words for simultaneous publication in the chief centres of the Empire, I am to state that it seems unnecessary to deal with a proposal for the gratuitous transmission of a mass of business over a costly cable.

I am, &c.,

HUGH LATHAM, Secretary.

The Under-Secretary of State, Colonial Office, S.W.