

CHEAP CABLE MESSAGES.

No. 22.

[EXTRACT from FINANCIAL STATEMENT, 1908, Parliamentary Paper B.-6, page 10.]

CHEAP CABLE MESSAGES.

A PROPOSAL of far-reaching importance, which will, it is hoped, receive the serious consideration of all parts of the Empire, is that of Mr. J. Henniker Heaton, M.P., to establish a penny-a-word rate for cable messages. In my opinion, the scheme is feasible, and it has, therefore, my entire sympathy and support. With the Pacific cable in the hands of the Mother-country, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, it would not be difficult or, comparatively speaking, costly to extend the State-owned system by creating a land line across Canada and laying a special cable across the Atlantic. The application of modern rapid automatic instruments should enable the line to be worked to a payable capacity, and the control throughout under one Administration should result in such a greatly increased efficiency as to render the project a commercial success. From an Imperial, commercial, and social point of view the establishment of a penny-a-word rate for cable messages throughout the Empire would be of inestimable value.

No. 23.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to Mr. J. HENNIKER HEATON, M.P., London.

(Telegram.)

Wellington, 20th November, 1908.

I wish your advocacy penny-word cables every success. It is a great Empire-binding project, and would bring our people in widely scattered portions of Empire closer together than in any other way possible.

[Tel. 08/4006(1)]

No. 24.

[NEWS EXTRACT, 6th May, 1909.]

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 6th May, 1909.

The Postmaster-General (Hon. J. Thomas) intends to place a proposal for cheaper cable rates before the Pacific Cable Board.

The scheme is that the present rate of 3s. per word should stand, but that a 1s. 6d. rate for code and 1s. for plain English be charged for delayed delivery cables.

[H.I. Tel., Vol. 2, No. 468.]

No. 25.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Melbourne, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.
SIR,—

Postmaster-General's Department, Melbourne, 11th May, 1909.

I have the honour to inform you that I have had under consideration for some time the question of making the best use possible of the Pacific cable, in which the Commonwealth of Australia is so largely interested, and I understand that at present this cable is practically idle for about seven hours out of the twenty-four—a condition which means that during that time a large amount of capital which might under other circumstances be profitably employed is not being utilised. It has consequently occurred to me that, with a view of getting the best return for the money invested in this cable and making it known to and popular with the public, it would be desirable to introduce between the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom a system of delayed telegrams, in both code and plain language, at rates lower than those at present existing.

2. Under existing conditions, the cables are used almost entirely for commercial purposes, excepting for a brief time occupied in the transmission of Press messages, and the high rate almost precludes their use for social purposes.

3. I would therefore suggest that, in order to enable the Pacific cable to be used to its fullest extent, an arrangement be adopted whereby messages in code handed in for *deferred delivery*—i.e., for delivery twenty-four hours after receipt—should be accepted at half the current rates—viz., 1s. 6d. instead of 3s. per word—the apportionment to be made as follows:—

Commonwealth of Australia	2d. per word (instead of 5d.),
Pacific cable	8d. „ („ 1s. 7d.),
Canada and Atlantic cables	8d. „ („ 1s.);

also that telegrams in plain language, similarly deferred, should be charged the same rate as is now in operation in the case of Press telegrams—viz., 1s. per word, with the same apportionment as that now made in connection with Press telegrams.

Commonwealth of Australia	2d. per word.
Pacific cable	4d. „
Canada and Atlantic cables	6d. „

4. I beg to commend this proposal to your favourable consideration, and shall be glad to learn that it will receive the support of your Government and representatives on the Pacific Cable Board.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Wellington.

JOSIAH THOMAS, Postmaster-General.

[P.C. Rates, 09/9 and 09/10.]