

As to Queensland, the Postmaster-General stated that she was prepared to contribute to a subsidy ^{The Conference.} for a cable from Kimberley (Norman Mouth) to Singapore, contributions being based on population. Telegram of 26th June says that without defined propositions from the other colonies she cannot at present do anything.

The Colonial Secretary of New Zealand sends copies of a memorandum of the Commissioner of Telegraphs (Sir Julius Vogel). He is in favour of a cable from the West Coast, and proposes three lines, which are the same as those suggested by Mr. Audley Coote. (See above.) There are so many details that correspondence will not settle the matter; and for this reason, as well as for the discussion of many questions connected with cable communication, a Conference is desirable. With regard to Mr. Coote, Sir Julius Vogel points out that "his principals were not willing or not able to carry out the arrangements he formerly made."

From Tasmania there is only an acknowledgment.

Western Australia (not addressed by Mr. Robertson) sends a copy of a letter sent to New Zealand (in continuation of correspondence between the two colonies), enclosing a minute of Executive Council on Sir Julius Vogel's memo. already mentioned. The colony is favourable to the holding of a Conference, at which it is thought the Government of India ought to be represented. She is in favour of a cable from her west coast to Ceylon by way of the Cocos Islands. 20th July, 1876.

Later correspondence on this subject is noted below.

Mr. Cracknell, in his telegram of 9th September, from London, expresses the opinion that the cheapest and only necessary (for the present) duplication is one between Singapore and Banjoewangie. He thinks that later a cable might be laid from Banjoewangie to North-West Cape. (See his letter of 29th September, 1876.)

The Secretary of State sends a communication from the Chairman of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company setting forth a proposal for a cable from Penang to Rangoon, as supplementary to the line from Madras to Penang.

Mr. Audley Coote gives the Governments the choice of several projects so far as concerns terms; a guarantee of interest, a subsidy, or the direct purchase of a cable.

The Consul of France sends a letter from the Governor of New Caledonia, with enclosure, setting forth the advantages of a line of telegraph between Australia and America. This is a project which is admitted to be too expensive without the assistance of the United States.

The Agent-General encloses a communication from the Chairman of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. That Company being made aware of the correspondence that had passed in Australia, had considered the subject, and now desired to offer certain proposals, which are set forth at length in the printed paper. They have in view two routes—one from Port Darwin to Banjoewangie, the other from North-West Cape to the same place—with a direct cable between Banjoewangie and Singapore. The cost would be for these respective lines £540,000 and £500,000, and on either amount the Company would require a subsidy of 6 per cent., and 3 per cent. for a reserve fund for repairing and replacing the cable. The annual payments would be thus for the respective routes £48,600 and £45,000.

JOHN ROBERTSON.

5th January, 1876.

Commodore HOSKINS to His Excellency the GOVERNOR, on subject of Rewards for Apprehension of Deserters from the Navy, and Free Telegraph Messages on Naval Service.

SIR,— H.M. Ship "Wolverene," at Sydney, 23rd January, 1877.

The approaching Intercolonial Conference about to assemble here at your suggestion appears to me to afford an opportunity of arriving at an harmonious arrangement respecting two matters affecting our naval interests; and I would ask your Excellency, should you see no objection thereto, to direct the attention of the Conference to them.

The first is the payment of a reward of five pounds by the Governments of the several colonies for the apprehension of deserters from the Navy, as a stimulus to activity on the part of the police. The second is the payment for telegrams on purely naval service matters.

2. With respect to the first, the Government of New Zealand has for many years made such a payment, and with the best result; and though the practice has been suspended of late in the Australian Colonies, the order to make them appears never to have been rescinded, and I have received from yourself and the Governors of Victoria and Tasmania an intimation that your Governments are willing to renew it.

3. I attach great importance to it, as I have already explained to your Excellency in my letters of the 16th August and 21st November, 1876, as one means of checking the great loss of men by desertion, which our ships now suffer on this station, a loss which bears hardly on our resources in men at Home, and which must prevent not only an increase to the Force now on the station, but also any hopes of visits from the squadron which is kept up for the purpose of instruction and of periodically visiting our foreign stations.

4. With respect to the telegraph question, it seems so obvious that the necessary official telegrams of a squadron maintained here for the benefit and protection of the colonies should pass, like their own official telegrams, free of charge, that I am sure it is only necessary that it should be mentioned for the concession to be made; and I only consider it desirable to bring it forward in order to have the principle authoritatively established and recorded with the general consent of the colonies.

I have, &c.,

A. H. HOSKINS,
Commodore.

Telegram from JOHN PENDER, Esq., M.P., on the subject of Duplication of Telegraphic Cables. THE Conference being about to meet, we have instructed our agents, Messrs. Taylor and Knevet, to place themselves at your disposal, and in the event of you wishing to communicate direct with Com-