

the installation of electric light throughout their streets, and in order to avoid interfering with the working of telephone lines, such a work as that can only be undertaken under strict rules and regulations similar to those adopted in other countries, and especially by the Board of Trade in England. The members of the Committee who met in Sydney were all experts. The Governments were protected by the presence of the permanent heads of the Telegraph Services. The Corporations of the cities of Melbourne and Adelaide were admirably represented by Mr. Arnot, Electrical Engineer of the city of Melbourne, and Mr. Langdon, City Surveyor of Adelaide, while the interests of the Electric Light Companies were well looked after by Mr. Haes and Mr. Callender. We had under consideration the regulations of the Board of Trade on electric lighting lines in England, and we also had before us extracts from the Electric Light Laws and Regulations obtaining in Austria, Hungary, Italy, Belgium, France, and Switzerland. To a very large extent we adopted the rules and regulations of the Board of Trade of England, but we introduced, as we think, many very important alterations in those rules, and added others which will do much, we think, to conserve the safety of the public and the interests of the Telegraph Departments. I have now much pleasure in moving that this report be adopted.

The Hon. J. G. WARD (N.Z.): I second the adoption of the report of the committee of experts on this matter. The attention they have given the subject is shown by the report they have submitted. I concur in the remarks made by Mr. Todd, and I may say there are many matters which render it imperative that there should be a uniform system. I think myself the recommendations contained in the report will, to a large extent, remedy many of the evils existing in the past. I have very much pleasure in seconding the motion.

The PRESIDENT: I have been pleased to listen to the remarks made by Mr. Todd, and I think the draft code of rules and regulations in the report placed before us contain many most valuable suggestions for the safeguarding of the electric telegraph systems from interference by electric light wires. At the same time I do not quite agree with the resolution that the report be adopted. I think it would be sufficient if we were to receive the report, because different circumstances may operate in each colony. This is not a matter of intercolonial moment or importance. It is more a matter for the control of the operations of electric light and power companies within each colony, and I think we should not bind ourselves, too, closely by the adoption of the report. By adopting the report we might be bound, in a measure of speaking, to carry out the suggestions made therein, and circumstances might arise in either colony which would render it advisable to differ from them. The object we have would be served by carrying a motion that the report be received. I have drafted a resolution—

“That the report of the Committee containing rules and regulations to be observed for the erection or laying of electric light and power wires be received, with the thanks of this Conference to the members of the Committee for their valuable services.”

I think that will meet the case better than the adoption of the report, which, I presume, very few of us have yet had an opportunity to read. There is a great difference between adopting and receiving a report. By receiving it, it will be made part of the labours of the Conference.

The Hon. J. G. WARD (N.Z.): Received and printed.

The PRESIDENT: The printing has already been moved. If Mr. Todd will withdraw his motion, I shall be pleased to move that the report be received.

Mr. C. TODD (S.A.): I can do no more after what the President has said than, with the permission of the Hon. Mr. Ward, withdraw my motion. After I had moved it, it came across my mind that I was asking the Conference to do something more than it might be willing to do. I think the motion might state that the report should be recommended to the consideration of the different colonial Governments, if the President does not mind.

The PRESIDENT: I don't mind that.

Mr. C. TODD: In the early stages of the Committee's labours I moved three important motions, which were as follows:—

1. “That it is desirable that the laws and regulations relating to the erection of electric light and power wires for the supply of electrical energy should, as far as possible, be uniform throughout the Australian colonies.”
2. “That no local or municipal authority, company, or person shall be allowed to lay in, or erect on, or along any street or public thoroughfare any electric light or power wires without statutory authority.”
3. “That a Board of Control consisting of, say, three members, be appointed in each colony, under whose supervision all works relating to electric lighting and the transmission of power shall be carried out in accordance with the rules and regulations approved by the Governor in Executive Council; and that a central or intercolonial Board of Control, consisting of representatives from the local boards, should also be appointed to make such amended rules and regulations as may from time to time be necessary, and to deal with matters cognate thereto.”

We might merely recommend the report to the consideration of the different Governments, leaving out the word “favourable.”

The Hon. A. WYNNE (V.): I follow our President in this matter. It is one which will require legislative enactment in each of the colonies to give authority for electric lighting and electric tramways, and no member here can state how the legislature of any particular colony will deal with the matter. Regulations will be framed under the respective Acts, and I do not think, for my part, that I can consent to adopt this report. It ought to be received for consideration, and the work of the Committee will be of great value to the different Parliaments when they come to deal with the matter, but it is beyond our power to insist upon the subject being carried out on the exact lines of this report.

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