

No 2

The PRIVATE SECRETARY to the Hon. MACKENZIE BOWELL, Newcastle, to the Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington.

SIR,—

Newcastle, New South Wales, 16th October, 1893.

Pursuant to instruction from the Hon Mackenzie Bowell, Minister of Trade and Commerce for the Dominion of Canada, I now have the honour to enclose to you a printed copy of the memorandum which I sent to you a few days ago respecting the projected Pacific cable.

I have, &c.,

The Hon. the Premier of New Zealand.

J L. PAYNE, Private Secretary

No. 3.

The Hon. MACKENZIE BOWELL, Ottawa, to the Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington.

SIR,—

Minister's Office, Ottawa, 7th February, 1894.

By this mail you will receive a copy of an Order in Council [not printed] respecting the Conference of Australasian delegates to be held in Canada, which I sincerely hope may meet your approval.

I might say that June was selected after consultation with Sir John Thompson, our Premier, and Sir Thomas McIlwraith, who spent a few days in Ottawa on his way to England.

I also enclose to you a copy of a letter which I have just received from Mr Sandford Fleming, in reply to the despatch which you received from the Colonial Office [not printed] respecting the proposed Pacific cable, so that you may know the facts in that relation.

I think it well to also enclose, for your information, a copy of Mr Fleming's address before the Second Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire, in London, in 1892, on the same subject.

Trusting to see you, or some one whom you may delegate, in Canada in June,

I am, &c.,

M. BOWELL,

Minister of Trade and Commerce.

The Hon R. J. Seddon, Premier, &c., Wellington, New Zealand.

Enclosure 1 in No. 3.

Mr SANDFORD FLEMING to the Hon. MACKENZIE BOWELL.

DEAR SIR,—

Ottawa, 6th February, 1894.

Referring to the documents respecting the Pacific cable transmitted on September 15th last year from the Colonial Office, London, to the Australian Colonies for the information of the respective Governments, I beg leave to remark as follows:—

First, With respect to the letter from the Secretary of the General Post Office, of date July 5th, 1893 [not printed] On careful examination of the scientific calculations, the results of which are presented in the letter, it is with a feeling of regret that I find the statements made inaccurate and misleading. Calculations based on the most reliable data go to show that to obtain the working-speed mentioned—namely, twelve words a minute—the weight of cable on the Vancouver-Fanning section is greatly overstated. Moreover, I find that the Post Office authorities are far astray in the question of cost. When in London a few weeks back, I made it my special business to consult two of the oldest cable-manufacturing companies on this point. I have now received the very best assurances from them that they will be quite prepared to enter into contract to lay cables on the Vancouver-Fanning route, or on any of the four routes described by me in the memorandum I handed you in Sydney on the 11th of October last, at prices under my estimates.

Second, With respect to the report of Captain Wharton, Hydrographer of the Admiralty, dated February 28th, 1887 This is old, and I need scarcely say that during these seven years much light has been thrown on the advantages of a Pacific cable and the necessity for its establishment. In this report Captain Wharton argues against a Pacific cable, and in favour of maintaining telegraphic connection between England and Australasia by one route, that is to say, by the lines of the Eastern and Eastern Extension Telegraph Companies. The arguments he uses are much the same as those advanced by Sir John Pender Chairman of these companies, at the time of the Colonial Conference of 1887 These arguments were conclusively answered by delegates during the discussion, as the proceedings of the Conference clearly show If further evidence is necessary to bring out the peculiar advantages of a Pacific cable I may be permitted to refer to the remarks which I submitted, as delegate of the Board of Trade of the City of Ottawa, to the Second Congress of Chambers of Commerce of the Empire held in London in 1892 [see Enclosure 2] I venture to add that, with the light of added experience, and under the new conditions which have sprung up, I doubt if Captain Wharton or any other British officer would write the same report to-day It seems to me unfair to that gentleman to reproduce an old report, perhaps hastily written with but little data before him, and hold him responsible at this hour for the opinions which he then expressed.

Yours, &c.,

SANDFORD FLEMING.

The Hon. Mackenzie Bowell, Minister of Trade and Commerce.