

POSTAL AND TELEGRAPHIC CONFERENCE.

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS.

SATURDAY, 14 NOVEMBER, 1896.

THE Conference was opened at the General Post Office, Sydney, at 10.15 a.m., when the undermentioned gentlemen, representing the Colonies, were present, viz. :—

Queensland : { Hon. A. J. THYNNE, M.L.C., Postmaster-General, Queensland.
{ JOHN McDONNELL, Esq., Under Secretary and Superintendent of Telegraphs.
South Australia : { Hon. J. A. COCKBURN, M.D. (Lond.), M.P., Minister for Education and Agriculture,
South Australia.
{ Sir CHARLES TODD, K.C.M.G., Postmaster-General, South Australia.
Victoria : { Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY, M.P., Postmaster-General, Victoria.
Tasmania : {
New South Wales : { Hon. JOSEPH COOK, M.P., Postmaster-General, New South Wales.
{ S. H. LAMBTON, Esq., J.P., Deputy Postmaster-General, New South Wales.
Western Australia : Hon. E. H. WITTENOOM, M.L.C., Minister for Mines, West Australia.

Moved by the Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY, and seconded by the Hon. Dr. COCKBURN,—“That the Hon. Joseph Cook, M.P., be President of this Conference.” Carried.

Moved by the Hon. Mr. DUFFY, M.P., and seconded by the Hon. Mr. THYNNE,—“That Mr. James Dalgarno perform the duties of Secretary to this Conference.” Carried.

It was determined, without formal motion, that the Conference being of a confidential character, it was not expedient that the Press should be present, at all events so far as the Federal Mail Service is concerned.

The Hon. Mr. COOK laid before the Conference the following telegram, dated 6th November, 1896, that had been received from the Hon. the Premier of New Zealand, viz. :—

“Postal Conference. As general elections take place beginning of next month, exceedingly regret it will not be possible for any Minister to attend. I note that only Federal Mail Service tenders and Washington Congress representation and subjects will be dealt with, and I presume that another conference for general business will be held about usual time next year. I have not formed any definite opinion *re* Washington representation, but think that one representative, or perhaps two, should suffice. I shall be pleased to learn your own views, and what proposals likely to be made by other Colonies. Subjects for consideration by Washington Congress have already been discussed with your office, but I will send full list by post. Regret my absence from Wellington prevented my replying earlier.

R. J. SEDDON, Postmaster-General.”

The following telegram, dated 11th November, 1896, from the Hon. Sir P. O. Fysh, K.C.M.G., Treasurer and Postmaster-General, Tasmania, was also read :—

“Regret that continued sitting of Parliament and irregularity of steamer sailings both prevent my being present on Saturday.”

The Hon. J. GAVAN DUFFY intimated that he had been requested by the Tasmanian Government to act as the representative for that Colony.

The PRESIDENT delivered his opening address, thanking the Conference for his election, and indicating that in following out the intention when summoning the Conference the business would consist—

- (1) Of the matter of the Federal Mail Service.
- (2) Of the question of representation at the Universal Postal Union Congress at Washington.

A letter from the Berne Bureau dated 5th October, 1896, relating to the business for the proposed Washington Congress, which letter had only just reached the Colony, was read.

The PRESIDENT laid upon the Table lists of subjects (Appendix A) that would be likely to engage attention at the Washington Congress, and also of some matters considered urgent affecting intercolonial postal and telegraphic interests; whereupon it was moved by the Hon. Dr. COCKBURN, seconded by the Hon. Mr. DUFFY, and carried,—“That the lists of subjects to be dealt with by the Conference, read by the President, be referred to the Permanent Heads, who are requested to add to the list any other matters of sufficient importance and urgency, to be included in the list, and as soon as the list has been prepared that a copy of the subjects for discussion should be sent round to each delegate.”

It was determined without formal motion that the Ministerial delegates should at once proceed to consider, in Committee, the matter of the Federal Mail Service.† The whole of the other gentlemen (including the shorthand-writer) withdrew.

Later on it was decided to adjourn the Conference until Thursday, at 10 a.m.

J. DALGARNO,
Secretary.

JOSEPH COOK,
President.

THURSDAY,

† NOTE.—*Prices* of this matter will be found on page 5.