

APPENDIX.

TELEGRAPH CABLES (CORRESPONDENCE RELATING TO).

[Extracts from Parliamentary Paper F.—8 of 1898.]

No. 11.

Sir SANDFORD FLEMING to the Hon. the PREMIER, Wellington.

SIR,—

Ottawa, 3rd January, 1898.

I have the honour to transmit, for your information, a copy of a letter on the subject of the Pacific cable which I have addressed to Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier of Canada.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, Premier of New Zealand.

SANDFORD FLEMING.

Enclosure in No. 11.

Sir SANDFORD FLEMING to Sir WILFRID LAURIER.

SIR,—

Ottawa, 28th December, 1897.

For some months past I have frequently been asked by writers of the Press to furnish information respecting the Pacific cable. I have been so applied to as it is well known that I have long felt the deepest interest in the project, having been appointed by the Canadian Government to take part in the Colonial Conferences of 1887 and 1894, and in the Imperial Committee of 1896. I have invariably declined to comply with the request from the feeling that it was distinctly understood that the proceedings of the investigation by the Imperial Committee should be treated as confidential until made public by Her Majesty's Government. I have in consequence felt debarred from alluding either to the evidence obtained by the Committee or to the conclusions submitted in their report, or in the special reports presented to the Canadian Government by the Canadian Commissioners and by myself.

These several documents were presented nearly twelve months ago; since then questions have arisen which were not considered by the Imperial Committee, and many important facts are also obtainable from other sources, explanations respecting all of which should, I conceive, be communicated to the public.

Since the Imperial Committee closed its investigation the Conference of colonial Premiers has been held in London. Among other matters the Pacific cable was brought before this Conference, and, from what has transpired, the subject was complicated by a new proposition having been submitted by the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. Consequently, the consideration of the project was deferred. Six months have since elapsed, and I feel called upon to make known some facts and explanations bearing on the questions which, in my humble judgment, the public should understand. I trust you will approve of the information being given to the public in the form I have now to submit to you.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. Sir Wilfrid Laurier, Premier.

SANDFORD FLEMING.

Sub-enclosure to Enclosure in No. 11.

THE PACIFIC CABLE.

EVERYWHERE it is apparent that the British Empire is being formed by a process of growth and development, and there are many forces actively in operation, all tending to give it shape and strength and distinctive character. Lofty ideals are entertained by men of thought, experience, and patriotism; but the future is veiled from us, and we cannot foretell the precise form of relationship which will eventually be assumed by members of the British family of nations in so many meridians of longitude.

3—F. 8A.