

## Sub-enclosure to Enclosure in No. 1.

MEMORIAL TO THE HON. ALFRED DEAKIN, M.P., PRIME MINISTER OF THE COMMONWEALTH, FROM CERTAIN MANUFACTURERS, MERCHANTS, TRADERS, BANKERS, AND OTHERS USING TELEGRAPHIC CABLES FOR TRANSMISSION OF MESSAGES TO PLACES OUTSIDE OF AUSTRALIA.

SIR,—

We, the firms, companies, and persons whose signatures are attached hereto, all being frequent users of telegraphic cables, respectfully desire to bring under your notice the present unsatisfactory condition in Victoria of the cable service, and to request that you will take into consideration the whole subject, with a view of placing the cable service upon a better footing than at present exists.

We are of opinion that the views and requirements of those persons who are the chief users of the cable service have not received that consideration to which they are entitled, and that matters of secondary importance have, in the negotiations and discussions which have taken place on the subject, received undue attention, to the neglect of the interests of trade and commerce which the cables are primarily designed to serve.

For the year 1904 the external trade of Victoria was valued at no less a sum than £44,497,970, and practically the whole of the business involved in this sum was dealt with by cable. This amount of trade represents great industrial activity throughout Victoria, while increasing attention is being paid to new markets. We append a list of the chief markets of the world with which direct trade has been established, showing in what manner Victoria is dependent for cable communication with them.

As business men we know from experience that the expansion of the trade of the State is closely connected with the cable question, as success in securing business depends largely upon the promptness with which negotiations are conducted. Owing to its great distance from the principal markets of the world, Victoria is placed at a serious disadvantage when competing with other nations. Hence the paramount necessity of the cable service being freed from red tape and circumlocution, and of the increase of facilities for its use in every possible direction.

We can testify that when the Eastern Extension Cable Company opened public offices in Melbourne, facilities were afforded to cable users in startling contrast to those previously provided by the Postal Department.

Experience of the company's methods demonstrated that the cable business should be in the hands of those who control the cables, and not have to filter through a second administration with local authority only; that the cable business should be in the hands of experienced officials dealing solely with such business, and who can exercise the discretion needful in dealing in a businesslike manner with cases out of the ordinary run arising from time to time, and requiring immediate attention. The cable company, having a telegraph wire from the cable at Adelaide to its office in Melbourne, and using the telephone system as an auxiliary, brought business firms in their offices into immediate contact with the cable system, and the gain in rapidity of communication and general despatch of business occasioned thereby was a very great aid to commercial transactions. It is difficult for us to overestimate the value of these and other advantages received while the Eastern Extension Company had a public office in Melbourne, and it is consequently a serious drawback to have these advantages withdrawn, and the old system reverted to.

Furthermore, it is only in Melbourne that this has been done, for in Sydney, Adelaide, and Perth the Eastern Extension Company continues to have public offices. In Sydney the Pacific cable will shortly commence to actively compete with the Eastern Extension cables, and the office which excels in promptitude and efficiency will undoubtedly capture the lion's share of the cable business. This competition, leading to a further improvement in the handling of cable business, will have a tendency to make large cable users constitute Sydney as the headquarters of their business. We feel that uniformity of treatment, which is regarded as one of the bases of the Commonwealth Constitution, should extend to cable facilities in the two cities, especially in view of the importance of such facilities to the trade and commerce of the State.

For these reasons we regard the settlement of the cable question as a pressing necessity, and respectfully urge that Melbourne be placed on an equality with Sydney by permitting both the Pacific Cable Board and the Eastern Extension Company to open public offices in Melbourne and compete for our business.

*Places with which Direct Trade is established.*

Name of Country.	Cable Communication.
Great Britain	Pacific and Eastern.
Europe	Eastern.
United States and Canada	Pacific.
South Africa	Eastern.
India	Eastern.
Straits Settlements and Java	Eastern.
China	Eastern.
Japan and Manchuria	Eastern.
Philippine Islands	Eastern.

We have, &c.,

THOMPSON, FRASER, RAMSAY PROPTY. (LTD.)

(R. RAMSAY, Director.)

ALFRED HARVEY AND Co.

(JAS. VENTLE, G. CARTE HYDE.)

[And 231 others.]