

Sub-enclosure 1 in No. 32.

The SECOND SECRETARY, General Post Office, London, to the CHAIRMAN, Pacific Cable Board, London.

SIR,— General Post Office, London, 5th November, 1913.

I enclose a copy of a letter which we have received from the Eastern Telegraph Company regarding the week-end cable-letter services.

You will see that the company strongly favour the application of the single rate to the Australasian service, and that the decision in this respect in regard to the South African service, and to contemplated services with India and elsewhere, will depend upon what is done in the Australasian case.

We should be sorry if this opportunity were lost, because we believe, as you know, that the proposed simplification would be of considerable advantage to the Administrations concerned, and also that if it can be arranged without increase of rate it will be of appreciable benefit to the public.

In view of these advantages, we should be prepared, subject to Treasury approval, to accept the proposed rate of 3½ centimes a word on the messages dealt with by us; and, as the Australian Administration is, we are assured, strongly in favour of the unification of the service, there ought not to be much difficulty in securing their consent to the arrangement. You will, no doubt, remember that Australia offered in December last to accept a rate of 1¼d. on all cable letters (covering transmission on the Commonwealth lines where necessary), provided a uniform rate of 9d. were introduced. It is true that they added the condition of a minimum of 9s., but your proposal of a 15s. minimum might be acceptable to them.

In the circumstances we hope that the Board will take an early opportunity of reconsidering the matter in the light of the Eastern Company's proposals.

Right Hon. Sir H. W. Primrose, K.C.B., C.S.I.

I have, &c.,

E. CRABB, Second Secretary.

Sub-enclosure 2 in No. 32.

The MANAGING DIRECTOR, Eastern Telegraph Company, London, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

The Eastern Telegraph Company, Electra House, Finsbury Pavement E.C.

SIR,— [no date].

We have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 22nd August last, on the subject of week-end telegrams.

As stated at the meeting held in May last at the General Post Office, the Eastern and associated companies are prepared to accept the minimum charge for twenty words, involving a minimum charge of 12s. 6d. for South Africa, with a word rate beyond of 7½d., and to Australia a minimum charge of 15s., with a word rate beyond of 9d.

As far as the Eastern and associated companies are concerned, they are prepared to pay the Government charges out of these rates, provided the out-payments are as follows: General Post Office, 3.75 centimes per word; South Africa, ½d. per word; Australia 1¼d. per word (this sum to be the total amount paid by the Eastern Extension Company to the Australasian Commonwealth).

In the case of Australasia the associated companies would be prepared to make the additional charge a sum of 10d. per word instead of 9d. if the Pacific Cable Board would agree.

The chief object of these companies is to have a uniform system of charging for week-end telegrams throughout the whole of their system, and unless this uniformity can be attained it does not seem worth while disturbing the existing system with South Africa.

Week-end telegrams will probably be introduced for India, China, Straits Settlements, and other places in the Far East, and it is, therefore, very desirable to have a uniform system that can be applied to all countries, except North America.

Although the associated companies would prefer to deliver week-end telegrams on Monday, they are prepared, for the present, to retain them until Tuesday, and they hope that the Pacific Cable Board will waive their objection to maintaining four different classes of week-end telegrams, which is difficult to work and confusing to the public.

I have, &c.,

W. HIBBERDINE,

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

For Managing Director.

Sub-enclosure 3 in No. 32.

The CHAIRMAN, Pacific Cable Board, London, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,— The Pacific Cable Board, London, 25th November, 1913.

I have the honour to acquaint you, for the information of the Postmaster-General, that I last week submitted to my Board Mr. Crabb's semi-official letter to me of 5th instant, and its enclosure from the Eastern Telegraph Company, on the subject of week-end cable services.

My Board still hold the view that it is important to preserve a clear distinction in conditions (corresponding with the distinction in character, which formed an essential feature in the original