

FLEMMING²SS

agreement entered into by the Company with the Government of France. The agreement entered into by the Company with the Colonial Governments is dated early in 1892; that with France nearly a year later; and the latter agreement has the effect of placing the New Caledonia cable absolutely under the control of the French Government. I am unable to see that the Telegraph Company has acted in good faith with Queensland and New South Wales in throwing itself entirely into the arms of France. This, however, is a question for others to decide. I can only state, on the authority of the Premiers of these colonies, that they now regard the New Caledonia cable as a purely local affair, rendered necessary in great part by local circumstances which I need not enter into, and that they are ready on behalf of their Governments to co-operate with the Governments of the other colonies and with Canada in carrying out any well-devised scheme for establishing, quite independent of the New Caledonia cable, a telegraph across the Pacific, which, as far as practicable, shall be British throughout.

It has been urged in some quarters that it is impossible to lay a cable through the Pacific Ocean from any part of Australia or New Zealand to Canada without landing at some place such as New Caledonia, Samoa, and Hawaii, where British influence is not supreme. I have taken upon myself the duty of pointing out that it is quite possible to establish a cable without touching the possessions of any foreign power, and I beg leave to direct your attention to four routes which a British cable may follow; these I have indicated on the map before you.

ROUTE No. 1.

Commencing at Vancouver Island, the cable would extend to Fanning Island; thence to the nearest island of the Fiji group. From Fiji it may run direct to New Zealand, and thence to the Australian continent; or it may run first to Norfolk Island, and from that point bifurcate to the northern part of New Zealand, and to a convenient point near the boundary between New South Wales and Queensland. The distances by this route are as follow:—

			Knots.
Vancouver Island to Fanning Island	...	...	3232
Fanning Island to Fiji, North Island	...	...	1715
Fiji to Norfolk Island...	...	...	1022
Norfolk Island to North Cape, New Zealand	...	...	415
Norfolk Island to Tweed mouth, near boundary New South Wales and Queensland	...	...	761
Total	...	...	7145