

from being present when my paper (of which I had sent you a copy) was read at a meeting of the Royal Colonial Institute on the 8th of May,

You say: "I cannot allow your statement to pass unchallenged that 'the protest against the proposed cable is largely based upon fallacies.'"

Those who read that protest will find that it is largely based upon two statements, which I regard as fallacious. First, that "the existing service was established solely by private enterprise—no Government subsidy, guarantee, or exclusive landing rights having been granted to the company."

I do not think any person reading that statement would suppose that the "existing" companies with which the proposed Pacific Cable will compete are now, and for many years past have been, assisted by Government subsidies and guarantees, amounting to the present time to £2,100,000. The Eastern Extension Company alone have received of that amount about £643,000, and the African lines, described by you as an alternative route to Australia, £1,337,000.

Second, that the calculations made in the protest to show the unprofitable character of the undertaking assumed that the life of the cable would be only fourteen years.

You say: "You are entirely mistaken in stating that some 5,350 miles (or about 90 per cent.) of the 18,000 of cable now forming the system of the Eastern Extension Telegraph Company is more than twenty years old and is still in working condition."

My authority for that statement was the Berne list, published in 1892, as furnished by the Eastern Extension Company to the International Telegraph Bureau, and which I accepted as reliable. The following are the figures:—

	Date of Laying.	Length of Cables in nautical miles.
From Madras to Penang	1870	1,455
From Penang to Singapore	1870	415
From Singapore to Saigon (Cochin China) ...	1871	637
From Saigon to Hongkong	1871	983
From Singapore to Batavia (Java)	1870	539
From Banjowangie to Port Darwin	1871	1,137
From Flinders, near Melbourne, to Low Head (Tasmania)	1869	180
Total	5,346