

to make—I beg leave to refer, in a few words, to the antagonism which exists to a Pacific cable. The opposition to the undertaking takes its origin with the Eastern and Eastern Extension Telegraph Company. This powerful organisation enjoys a monopoly of telegraph business, at highly remunerative rates between this quarter of the globe and London; its great aim is to prevent the profitable monopoly being interfered with. What although there is a vital necessity for binding Australia, Canada, and Great Britain together?—the maintenance of profits is the primary consideration with this Company; the interests of the public are of little account; even the protection and integrity of the empire are entirely secondary. The Eastern and Eastern Extension Company has great influence in high quarters, and the evidence goes to show that its representatives and agents have left nothing undone, ever since the first inception of a Pacific cable, to cast doubt on its practicability, to undervalue its advantages, and to thwart every effort to promote its establishment. I deeply regret to be driven to the conclusion that at this very moment the hostile influence of this great organisation is employed in directions least expected, and that we must not be surprised if we find its agents and advocates continuing to exaggerate difficulties, even to create difficulties where none are known to exist. But it would trespass on your time much too long to enter into explanation on this point. I must content myself by giving a note of warning as to what we may still expect from the same quarter.

I had the honour, Mr. President, to transmit to you last year a paper on Imperial telegraphic communications. It was an address prepared for the Second Congress of Chambers of Commerce and Boards of Trade of the Empire, held in London in July, 1892. In that paper I referred to the extraordinary effect telegraphy had in the development of trade, and I directed attention to its application to the defence of trade and shipping, especially in the case of countries geographically situated as these colonies are. I pointed out that we could not have ocean telegraphy by too many routes, and that it would be the height of folly to rely in a critical moment on one route. In that paper I ventured to set forth the means which would in any national emergency give to Australian shipping on the high seas almost complete immunity from attack. I do not propose to trespass by repeating the arguments then employed. I ask your permission, however, to quote the last few words as a fit conclusion to the imperfect remarks which I have been privileged to make to-day.

“These considerations lead me to think it a matter of supreme importance to trade and shipping, to the expansion and support of British interests, that the telegraph should as speedily as