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The Admiralty has had in hand the work of sounding the new route since the beginning of 1888, so that there can be nothing to prevent the survey being completed during the manufacture of the cable, and the whole laid within two years.

At this moment, when the existing cables are broken down in three places, I feel it a public duty to submit the case as it now stands for your earnest consideration. I humbly think I have shown how you may speedily on easy terms obtain cheap telegraphy and the incalculable advantages of an alternative line by the Canadian route.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient Servant,

SANDFORD FLEMING.

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### CORRESPONDENCE.

*Letter from SANDFORD FLEMING to LORD KNUTSFORD.*

HOTEL VICTORIA, NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE,

LONDON, W.C., June 26th, 1890.

The Right Honourable LORD KNUTSFORD,

Secretary of State for the Colonies.

My LORD,

I feel constrained to address you on a subject which concerns Canada not less than other great divisions of the Empire.

When I left Ottawa two weeks ago, the matter to which I desire to refer had not been noticed in any quarter on the other side of the Atlantic. My attention has been directed since my arrival here to communications in newspapers of recent date, and more particularly to an article in the *Times* of the 20th instant, on the subject of telegraphy between Great Britain and Australasia.

If I understand the proposal which has been made, it is that the charges for telegraphing should be reduced to about one-half the present rates, on condition that the Imperial and Australian Governments join in guaranteeing a certain revenue to the Eastern and Eastern Extension Telegraph Companies; which guarantee would involve a liability estimated by the representatives of these companies at £54,000, more or less, per annum. To put the proposal in other words, the Governments are asked, as I understand it, to assume the responsibility of supporting and maintaining the monopoly of the present line of telegraph for a period of ten years.

The proposal is not new. It was made by the same Companies in a slightly modified form (the principle being the same) three years ago, but it was not then seriously entertained. My surprise is that it should again be renewed, and I feel it a public duty to point out the consequences which will result should the proposal be accepted.

To enable me to do so it is necessary that I should refer to the proceedings of the Colonial Conference of 1887, at which I had the honor to be one of the representatives of the Dominion.

At this Conference an obligation rested upon the Canadian Delegates to explain the position of Canada in relation to the telegraphic communications of the Empire, and it was acknowledged by nearly every member of the Conference, that it would not be possible to overlook the undertakings and the peculiar geographical situation of the Dominion, in considering the telegraphic relations of England and Australia, and in dealing with Imperial communications as a whole.

So much importance was attached to the subject, that after the proposal of the Telegraph Companies was submitted and every argument in its support advanced by their most able advocate and representative Sir John Pender, the Conference formally adopted two resolutions in favour of the Canadian route, and I desire to emphasise the fact that no propositions brought before the Conference were assented to more cordially or with greater unanimity.

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