

not consider that any better course can be adopted to ensure the maximum reduction in rates at the minimum expense to the colony. We are now bound to an annual subsidy for 13½ years, and we should certainly not increase our liabilities by encouraging syndicates to undertake new works, with doubtful results, and which are not absolutely required.

In reference to the Agent General's despatch, dated 12th February last, I do not think the reduction of 1s. 4d. per word to the public from 1st July is worth consideration, as it will be too small a concession to make any visible increase in the number of words sent, and will not be appreciated by the mercantile community.

It is also clear that the whole of the colonies will not agree to contribute anything to the duplication subsidy on the Darwin-Singapore cables, Queensland and New Zealand having already refused to join.

As regards the 2s. 8d. per word for the press, which is to take effect at once, if the colonies agree that the non-contributing colonies should share in the concession, there can be no objection to this, as neither Queensland nor New Zealand get their press messages direct; they are either compiled in Sydney or Melbourne.

E. C. CRACKNELL,

Superintendent, Electric Telegraphs.

SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES, 31st March, 1886.

A.

STATEMENT showing the proportions payable per annum by the Australasian Colonies in order to recoup, so as to cover the following expenses, viz. :—

Maintenance of five stations, at £2,000 each per annum	£ 10,000
Maintenance of two cable steamers, at £10,000 each per annum.....	20,000
Sinking fund for renewals and replacing cables.....	80,000
Interest on cost of cable (£2,000,000), at 5 per cent.....	100,000
Total.....	£210,000

CALCULATED ON BASIS OF POPULATION AT 3RD APRIL, 1881.

Colony.	Population at 3rd April, 1881.	Proportion payable on business—300,000 words at 5s. Deficiency, £135,000.			Proportion payable on business—400,000 words at 5s. Deficiency, £110,000.			Proportion payable on business—556,660 words at 3s. Deficiency, £126,501.		
		£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Victoria	882,232	42,031	13	9	34,248	0	10	39,385	11	2
New South Wales.....	781,265	37,221	7	5	30,328	10	6	34,878	1	7
South Australia	293,297	13,973	7	8	11,395	14	5	13,093	13	8
Western Australia.....	30,013	1,429	17	10	1,165	1	11	1,339	17	6
New Zealand.....	500,910	23,864	11	6	19,445	4	2	22,362	3	4
Queensland.....	226,968	10,813	6	2	8,810	16	11	10,132	11	0
Tasmania	118,923	5,665	15	8	4,616	11	3	5,309	1	9
	2,833,608	135,000	0	0	110,000	0	0	126,501	0	0