

I think it must be obvious, without further argument, that all the cables of the Eastern Telegraph Company are so vulnerable, that the existence of an alternative line through Canada and the Pacific, would be of incalculable advantage. The possibility of sending a single message in an emergency, *via* Canada and the Pacific, might actually be worth more to the Empire than the whole cost of the new line.

Mr. Pender subjoins "that the existing Company, as the pioneer of telegraphic communication with Australasia, is entitled to a large share of consideration at the hands of the Colonies." There may be much truth in this, as I am not familiar with the history of the work of extending submarine telegraph service to the Australasian Colonies. I will only observe that this is not the first time that a company or an individual has been called upon to relinquish a monopoly by the exigencies of the public welfare.

I do not wish that any injustice be done to this Company or to any individual. If they have any claims for consideration or compensation, these claims should undoubtedly be met in a fair and honourable manner. But, I ask, is it for a moment to be thought that Canada and Australasia are never to hold direct telegraphic intercourse because a Commercial Company stands in the way? Are commercial relations between two of the most important divisions of the British family for ever to remain dormant in order that the profits of a Company may be maintained?

Has Mr. Pender's Company more claim to consideration than the Australasian Colonies themselves? And are the people of these Colonies never to be relieved of the exorbitant charges which that Company exacts?