

VICTORIA.

SUBMARINE ELECTRIC TELEGRAPH,

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN AND HER MAJESTY'S AUSTRALASIAN COLONIES.

PETITION.

Ordered by the Legislative Assembly to be printed, 31st July, 1857.

TO THE HONORABLE THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE COLONY OF VICTORIA.

The Petition of the undersigned George Bowness Carr, John Alexander Mainley Pinniger, John Wortley de la More, and Henry Masterman, of London, Esquires:

SHEWETH—

That your Petitioners are the promoters of a public company having for its object to establish a direct independent line of Submarine Electric Telegraph, between Great Britain and Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies.

They propose to lay down such Electric Telegraphs as will effect a communication between some point on the line of Electric Telegraphs of the Honorable East India Company, and the Australasian Colonies, by which means Her Majesty's Australasian Colonies will, on the completion of the telegraphic lines already in operation, or projected, have direct communication, by Telegraph, with Europe, Great Britain, and America.

The Company will take power to lay down such branches and connecting lines as may be thought advisable. In order to afford the public the greatest amount of accommodation, it is intended to have two conducting wires throughout the main line.

Your Petitioners have secured the co-operation of an eminent firm, engaged in the business of manufacturing submarine cables, who are ready to undertake the contract for the construction and laying down of the lines of telegraph, on favorable terms.

It is intended that the Company shall be incorporated, either under the English Joint Stock Companies Act, 1856, or by a Special Act of the Legislature.

Your Petitioners are desirous of obtaining from the Legislature of this Colony, powers to lay down and work their Telegraphs, to and upon the coasts of this Colony, and such other special and exclusive privileges and advantages as the Legislature may consider beneficial to the Company, and be willing to accord.

Provided the application of your Petitioners be granted in the course of the present year, the undertaking will be completed before or in the course of the year 1861.

A proportion of the capital of the proposed Company will be reserved for allotment in Australia, together with a proportion of seats in the direction of the Company, to be filled by gentlemen connected with Australia, and resident in England, or in the Colonies, as may be deemed expedient; and it is also intended to constitute a Colonial Council. As it is essential, in order to the raising of the requisite capital for this great undertaking, that the inducement of a minimum guaranteed interest should be offered to the public, your Petitioners venture to hope that the Colonial Government alone, or in conjunction with the Imperial Government, will be willing to enter into an arrangement for securing this object, such as agreeing upon security being given for the completion of the undertaking, to pay a moderate fixed rate of interest on the outlay during construction, and to guarantee the same for a fixed period after its completion.

The Company will, in such event, be prepared to place Colonial Government messages upon the same footing of preference as the Imperial Government messages, and to charge for such messages the same rates as may be demanded for ordinary public or private messages. To allow the Colonial Government a voice in framing the tariff of rates; to permit the Colonial Government, in common with the Imperial Government, to appoint an "ex officio director" on the board of directors, to watch their joint interests; and, if they shall so desire, to have agents of their own, at any of the stations along the line, to superintend the receipt and transmission of their messages.

Your Petitioners feel that the advantages to be obtained for Great Britain and her most important Colonies, by this undertaking, are too obvious to need mention; whilst the success which has attended other undertakings of a similar nature, in various parts of the world, leave no reasonable doubt of the feasibility of that now proposed.

Your Petitioners, therefore, humbly submit that the undertaking is one, in all respects, worthy of the support and assistance of the Colonial Governments.

And your Petitioners, therefore, most humbly pray that you will be pleased to permit a Bill to be submitted to the Legislature of the Colony of Victoria, and will extend to it your favorable consideration.

And your Petitioners will ever pray, &c.

- (Signed) G. B. CARR,
Regent's Park, London.
- (..) J. A. M. PINNIGER,
Gray's Inn, London.
- (..) JOHN WORTLEY DE LA MORE,
117, Bishopsgate-street Within, London.
- (..) H. MASTERMAN,
17, Bucklersbury, London.