The Canadian Pacific Railway Company,

88, Cannon Street,

London, E.C., *March* 15, 1886.

MEMORANDUM—CABLE TO AUSTRALIA.

On the 19th instant, Mr. Henniker Heaton moves in the House of Commons "That it is desirable that an alternative telegraphic cable, entirely under the control of the British Government, be constructed from England, viâ the Cape of Good Hope to Australia, and from thence up to India, so that, in the event of war, communication may be kept up with Her Majesty's Colonial and Indian possessions, should the Red Sea Cable be interrupted."

It is evident that Great Britain should no longer place complete reliance upon the Red Sea Cable for telegraphic communication with her Australian, Eastern and Indian dependencies.

In the event of war it is most probable that, with the blocking of the Suez Canal, telegraphic communication would at once be interrupted. Means should, therefore, be taken to provide at an early moment an alternative cable to China, Australia and India. Mr. Henniker Heaton's motion is the first step towards the desired result, but it is thought that for the following reasons the alternative cable should be laid in connection with the Canadian Telegraph system, instead of, as proposed, viâ the Cape of Good Hope.

At the present moment there is direct communication by means of several cables with the North American continent, all the cables touching the Newfoundland and Nova Scotian coasts. The Canadian Pacific Railway Telegraph system is now in operation from the Atlantic to the Pacific, or completely across the Dominion of Canada, giving at the present day a through wire from London to the Pacific without touching foreign soil. The distance from British Columbia to Auckland, New Zealand, *viâ* the Sandwich and the Fiji Islands, is, approximately, 6,100 miles, to which would be added, say, 15 per cent. for slack. A cable by this route would have the advantage of repeating stations almost the entire distance from Honolulu to Auckland, thus securing means of protection on the one hand and rapid transmission on the other, besides facilitating the repairs of breaks, should they occur. Between New Zealand and Australia and India telegraphic communication already exists. Looking at the Cape route, it is found that a cable now extends from England to the Cape de Verde Islands, the length, *viâ* Portugal and Madeira, being 2,633 miles. From St. Vincent to the Cape is about 3,950 miles, and from the Cape to King George's Sound about 4,950, or a total distance of approximately 8,900 miles, to which must be added 15 per cent. for slack.

Comparative lengths of cable to be laid are therefore about as follows:—

Cape route	10,235 miles.
Canadian route	7,015 ,,
Difference in favour of Canadian route	3,220 miles.

The distance between the Cape and Australia is 4,950 miles, and allowing 15 per cent. for slack, the total length amounts to 5,692 miles. Nearly midway between the Cape and Australia are the small volcanic islands of Amsterdam and St. Paul (British), upon which doubtless a repeating station would be established. In fact, this would be absolutely necessary (although the islands rise abruptly from deep soundings) in order to break the circuit in so long a distance.

Between Vancouver and New Zealand the bottom, composed as it is chiefly of brown ooze, mud and sand, with but very little coral, is favorable for the laying of a cable.

It must also be taken into consideration that by the Pacific Cable, the Sandwich, Samoan, Fiji and other island groups will be given telegraphic communication with the rest of the world, while commercial interests between Australia and Canada, as well as the United States, will be benefited to no small degree.

The Cape Cable, on the other hand, will only open up a second line with the South African Colonies which are at present connected with Great Britain by the cable to Mozambique and Port Natal.

It is not out of place to mention in this memorandum the desirability of laying a direct cable from Vancouver to Hong Kong, viâ the Aleutian Islands and Japan, in connection with the system already mentioned between Vancouver and Great Britain.

At the present moment telegraphic communication with British possessions in China depends upon the wire through Asiatic Russia on the one hand and the French wire *viâ* Singapore and Saigon on the other, both of which would doubtless be immediately interrupted in the event of war with Russia. The distance from British Columbia to the northern islands of Japan, *viâ* the Aleutians, is as follows:—

Port Simpson B. C. to Unimak, Aleutian Islands	1,200 miles
Unimak to Attou " "	760 "
Attou to Northern Japanese Islands	650 "
	2,610 miles

From the Northern Japanese Islands the wire could be carried through Japan or the cable laid to Shanghai or to Hong Kong direct. This cable would have the same advantages of repeating stations as the cable to Australia, and would form the only British telegraphic communication with China and Japan.

The Canadian telegraphic system, above referred to, is owned and managed by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company, and lies entirely through British territory. The system is first-class in every respect, the wire is of extra strength, being manufactured expressly for the Company in England, and trouble has been taken in the appointment of the manager and the staff to make the line in all its details a success.

The distance between the Cape and Australia is 4,000 miles, and allowing 14 per cent. for slack, the total length would be about [illegible]. Nearly midway between the Cape and Australia are the small volcanic islands of Amsterdam and St. Paul (Indian), upon which doubtless a repeating station would be established. In fact, this would be absolutely necessary, although the islands rise abruptly from deep soundings, in order to break the [illegible] a distance.

Between [illegible] and [illegible] lies the bottom, composed as it is chiefly of brown zone, [illegible] and sand, with [illegible] is especially for the laying of a cable.

[illegible] Lake Sanderson that by the Pacific Cable, the Sandwich Islands, the [illegible] would be given telegraphic communication [illegible] of the south, which [illegible] [illegible] Hawaii, to within the [illegible] of the south-west.

The Cape Cable, on the other hand, will only [illegible] with the Saint Helena Cable, [illegible] Ascension, Sierra Leone, [illegible] Cape Verde Islands, [illegible] Port Nouvo.

It is not out of place to [illegible] in this connection the feasibility of laying a direct cable from Vancouver to Hong Kong, [illegible] islands that Japan is connected with the system already mentioned between Vancouver [illegible].

At the present [illegible] connection with British possessions in China depends upon the wire through Asiatic [illegible] and the French wire via Saigon and Saigon on the other, both of which would [illegible] interrupted in the event of war with France. The distance from British Colonies or [illegible] Japan, viz. the Aleutians, is as follows:—

Port Simpson B.C. to Unalaska, Aleutian Islands	1,250 miles
Unalaska to Attou	760 "
Attou to Northern Japanese Islands	630 "
	2,640 miles

Place the Northern Japanese Islands the wire would be carried through Japan on the cable laid to Shanghai, as [illegible] direct. The cable would have the same advantages of repeating stations as the cable to Australia, and would form the only British telegraphic communication with China and Japan.

The Canadian telegraphic system, above referred to, is owned and managed by the Dominion Telegraph Company, and is entirely Canadian and British territory. The system is [illegible] [illegible] of other strength, being [illegible] exclusively for the Company in Canada. [illegible] the appointment of the manager and the staff to make the line as efficient [illegible]