

THE RETIREMENT OF SIR CHARLES TODD.

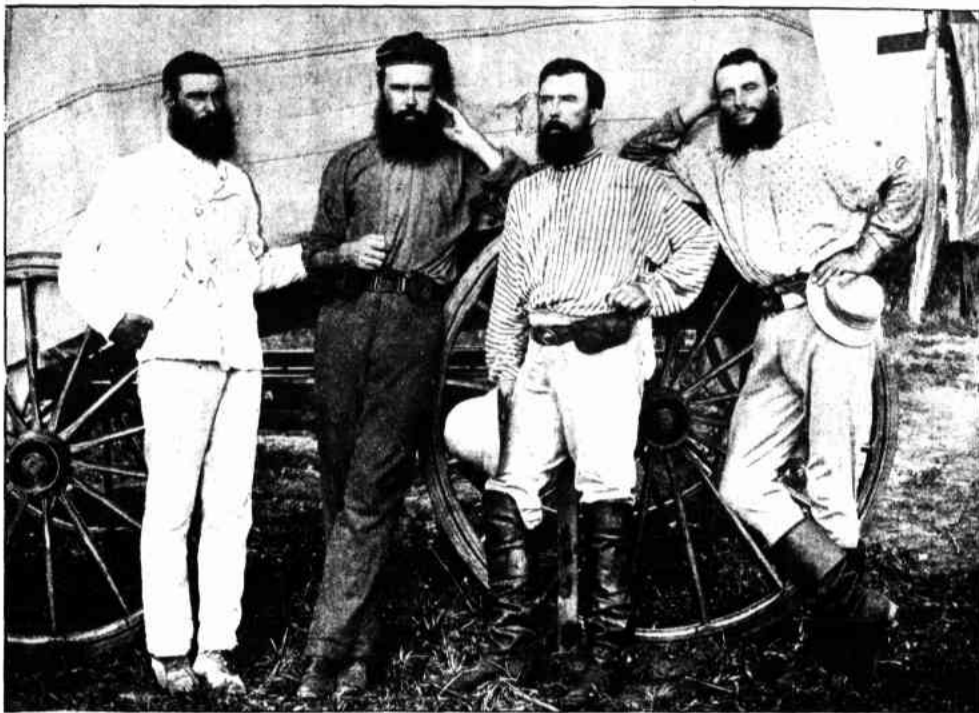
CAMP ON THE ROPER RIVER IN 1872.



Adelaide Photo. Co.
SIR CHARLES TODD ON HIS RETURN FROM THE NORTHERN TERRITORY IN 1872.

is largely responsible for its satisfactory arrangements. When requested to grant an interview to a representative of The Advertiser Sir Charles, with characteristic modesty, asked to be excused, as he did not like speaking about himself. The reporter, however, was importunate, and eventually Sir Charles yielded in his usual genial manner. I was born at Islington on July 7, 1826, but was reared and educated at Greenwich, where on December 6, 1841, I entered the service of the Royal Observatory as astronomical computer, Mr. Airy, afterwards Sir George Airy, the Astronomer Royal, having undertaken the reduction of the Greenwich observations of the moon and planets from the year 1769 onwards. At the end of 1847 the late Rev. James Challis, Plumian Professor of Astronomy at the University of Cambridge, offered me the position of assistant astronomer at Cambridge, which I accepted, and I entered on my new duties early in 1848. In May of 1854 Mr. Airy wrote me and requested me to return to Greenwich to take charge of the new galvanic department, and also to undertake duties as astronomical assistant. While in charge of this department I was responsible for the transmission of time signals and the dropping of time-balls throughout England. I was surprised in 1855 to receive a note from Mr. Airy, making me an offer, on behalf of the Colonial Office, of the position of Superintendent of Telegraphs and Government Astronomer in South Australia. I accepted the appointment. This was, of course, before telegraphic communication was in operation in this State, and I had to decide what system I would adopt in initiating the new order of things. As only a short line, from Adelaide to the Port and the Semaphore, were as yet authorised, I selected Henley's magnetic telegraph instruments as being the cheapest in their working. Mr. Cracknell was appointed on my recommendation. We came to Australia in the ship Irene, which was commanded by Captain Bruce, arriving on November 5, 1855.

Having reached the scene of our future labors we lost no time in getting to work. Although the line to Port Adelaide had been authorised, Mr. McGeorge anticipated our work by the erection of a cheap line to the port, which was completed, just about the time of our arrival. This, however, did not deter us from putting into effect the scheme decided upon, and the new line was opened on February 18, 1856. The Government decided on further work of a similar character, and the extension of the line to Gawler was commenced almost immediately. These undertakings, however, were but small compared with what was to follow. To span the distance between Ade-



Mr. J. A. G. Little. Mr. R. C. Patterson. Sir Charles Todd. Mr. C. Mitchell.

colony of Tasmania was not to remain separated from the mainland for long, although the first submarine cable laid across Bass' Straits in 1859 broke down within a few days. A second cable was laid from Cape Schank in 1869 to Australia, and thus permanent communication was established. Speaking of the construction of the line to Port Darwin, Sir Charles said:—"I submitted a scheme to Sir Reginald Macdonald as early as the beginning of the year 1859 for a line to cross the continent. This was embodied in a dispatch to the Colonial Secretary. A number of other proposals were also submitted for connecting Australia with England. Mr. G. Osborne proposed to lay a cable from East Java to Marton Bay. Notwithstanding the rival projects I steadily kept my own pet scheme in view. The explorations of Stuart, who had at this time crossed the continent, greatly assisted me. I read a paper before the Philosophical Society (now the Royal Society) early in the year 1863, on the subject. The Governor of the day (Sir



Hammer & Co., photo.
SIR CHARLES TODD IN 1900.



SIR CHARLES TODD IN 1882



Bond, Photo.
LADY TODD IN 1892.



THE TARARUA AT ROPER JETTY.



W. S. Smith, Photo.
SIR CHARLES TODD AND MR. GRIFFITHS AT THE OBSERVATORY.

SIR CHARLES TODD.

AN INTERESTING AND USEFUL CAREER.

By the retirement of Sir Charles Todd the Post and Telegraph Department loses a capable officer, who has directed its affairs and moulded its career, and who

laide and Melbourne with wire was a big project, but not so daring as to dismay the authorities of the time. It was during the year 1856 that I first submitted a scheme to the Government for the intercolonial line, for which Government provision was made on the Estimates, and the line was completed and opened in July, 1858.

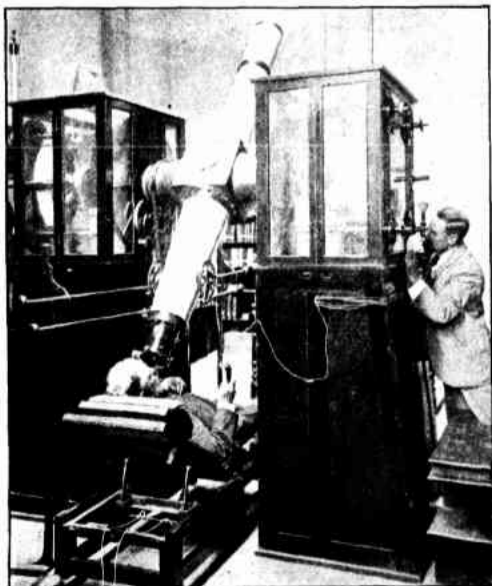
It seemed to me that the conditions which obtained abundantly warranted the exten-

sion of the inter-State lines, and I therefore strongly recommended that Sydney and Brisbane should be brought into direct telegraphic communication with Adelaide and Melbourne by the extension of the line to these cities.

The line from Sydney to Melbourne was erected within a short time, and was opened on October 29, 1858. This was extended to Brisbane in 1861. The island

Dominic Daly) was in the chair. The paper attracted a good deal of attention in England, and was printed almost in extenso in the Electrician of April 24, 1863. The Chief Secretary (Mr. C. S. Waterhouse) joined in the vote of thanks passed to me by the Philosophical Society, and cordially supported my scheme. Notwithstanding this the thing slumbered until 1870, when Commander Osborne, brother of

Admiral Schervail Osborne, visited Australia, and called at Adelaide. He proposed, on behalf of an English company (afterwards the Eastern Extension Company) to lay a cable from Singapore via Java to Port Darwin, and to erect thence a land line around the Gulf of Carpentaria to join the Queensland line. My suggestion to carry the line across the continent to the north coast was strongly supported by



W. S. Smith, Photo.
TAKING OBSERVATIONS AT THE TRANSIT CIRCLE AT THE OBSERVATORY.



W. S. Smith, Photo.
THE THERMOMETER STANDS.



W. S. Smith, Photo.
MEASURING THE RAIN AT THE OBSERVATORY.