

hours and twenty minutes delay at Susa and St. Michel, at the rate of 0·75 lire or seventy-five centimes per ounce of letters, and the same per kilogramme (or 0·33975 lire per English pound) of printed papers. These terms, which are very considerably less in proportion to the distance than is paid by Her Majesty's Government for the passage of the mails through France, appear to me to be exceedingly moderate.

The Italian Government would also be willing to undertake the sea service from Brindisi to Alexandria with their contract steamers of the Adriatico-Orientale Company, either on a similar system of charges, or for a lump sum within specified weights. The figures that were at first given to me for the sea service were 0·50 lire (fifty centimes) for each English ounce of letters, and the same for each kilogramme of printed matter, but I was subsequently informed that if the British Government had really an idea of entrusting the sea service to the Italian Government, and were inclined to make a positive offer for it, either a tariff of 0·30 lire (thirty centimes) for each ounce of letters and each kilogramme of printed papers, or a lump sum of 3000 lire per voyage for weights of mails not exceeding twelve tons as a maximum or four tons as an average going and returning, might probably be accepted. This charge was considered to correspond to nearly eleven lire per league of voyage, or a third of what the Italian Government pay to the contractors, Messrs. Palmer and Co., for the mail steamers from Brindisi to Alexandria.

In comparing the route *via* Marseilles with that *via* Brindisi to Egypt, as regards the time occupied, it will only be necessary, as both routes go together to Macon, to make that station the common point of departure.

The following may be taken as the time occupied by the existing route :

	Hours.	min.
From Macon to Marseilles	10	43
Transfer mails at Marseilles	2	0
Marseilles to Alexandria, 1460 nautical miles, including four hours detention at Malta	150	0
Macon to Alexandria	162	43

And the following would be the time for the Brindisi route, if the passage were made by horses and mules over Mount Cenis.

	Hours.	min.
Macon to St. Michel	6	5
Delay at St. Michel	1	40
Passage of Mont Cenis to Susa	8	0
Delay Susa	0	40
Susa to Bologna	8	8
Delay at Bologna	0	10
Bologna to Brindisi	18	30
Transfer mails at Brindisi	2	0
Brindisi to Alexandria, 822 nautical miles	82	15
Macon to Alexandria	127	28

For the Brindisi route by the summit railway over the Mont Cenis, when that shall have been completed, the time would be—

	Hours.	min.
Macon to St. Michel	6	5
Delay at St. Michel	0	45
St. Michel to Susa	4	30
Delay at Susa	0	45
Susa to Bologna	8	8
Delay at Bologna	0	10
Bologna to Brindisi	18	30
Transfer mails to steamer at Brindisi	2	0
Brindisi to Alexandria, 822 nautical miles	82	15
	123	8

Again, when the tunnel through the Alps and the permanent line in connection with it are complete, the delays at St. Michel and Susa will be avoided, and the journey between these places may be performed without break of gauge or change of vehicles, including stoppages, in three hours. There will, therefore, be an advantage of thirty-five and a quarter hours in favour of the Brindisi route previous to the construction of the Mont Cenis Summit Railway, of thirty-nine and a-half hours after the construction of that railway, and of forty-two and a half hours after the completion of the permanent tunnel line from St. Michel to Susa.

In communicating with the Italian Government and with the officers of the Italian railways, I have pointed out that, in laying out the periods of time on which the above calculations have been made, it was desirable to fix, not the shortest time in which the journeys could be performed, but such rates of speed as would admit of punctuality. And I believe that in the above figures a sufficient margin has been left to cover any accidental delays that may occur to a moderate extent on so long a journey. I am of opinion, further, that the time may be kept with greater certainty *via* Brindisi than *via* Marseilles, because—(1) land transit generally may be performed more punctually than sea transit—(2) the sea passage would be less stormy and more certain, inasmuch as the worst part of it, across the Gulf of Lyons, would be avoided—(3) there would be a special railway service through Italy.