

(7.) Because Sydney is the natural terminus of the Pacific and Torres Straits routes ; and in the distribution of the advantages incidental to mail services, Melbourne is entitled to the terminus of the service for which it is most conveniently situated, and towards which it contributes so large an amount. Without this concession, Victoria would contribute largely to all the services, and participate in the incidental advantages of none.

(8.) Because New South Wales will, in regard to the Torres Straits and Pacific Services, enjoy similar advantages to those which will be conferred on South Australia and Victoria by the Galle Service.

(9.) Because by the terminus being at Melbourne, the service would cost less to all the Colonies than by requiring the Galle steamer to go on to Sydney.

(10.) Because the voyage from Galle to Melbourne is 4,635 miles,—an extreme distance for any vessel to be kept under steam, and to perform her voyage with regularity at the speed required. To this long distance, the extension to Sydney involves an addition of 602 miles.

(11.) Because the finest dock in Australia has been built at Melbourne, mainly with the view of fitting the port to be the terminus of this line.

(12.) Because by the steamer calling at Glenelg, at least forty hours' notice will always be given to prepare for despatch of the branch steamers from Melbourne.

(13.) Because steamers sail almost daily from Melbourne to Sydney, thus insuring without delay or undue expense the immediate transmission of the mails.

(14.) Because Victoria pays about one-half of the entire subsidy to the Suez line.

(15.) Because the contemplated subsidy of the Imperial Government to the second line is contingent on its being an alternating line, as shown in Treasury letter, 14th August, 1872; and by the terminus of the Suez line being at Melbourne, the time for delivery of European mails at Sydney would be,—

Via San Francisco	...	...	...	...	...	47 days
Via Suez (by branch service)	...	...	...	...	...	47 days

(16.) Because any postal compact, such as it is desired to enter into at this Conference, must be based upon mutual concession; but if this terminus be not conceded to Victoria, that Colony would be, while the largest contributor, the only Colony to which no concession whatever was made.

(17.) Because, on the ground of population, commerce, and correspondence, Victoria has the greatest interest in the service.

(18.) Because Victoria is willing to contribute to other lines affording little or no advantage to her.

(19.) Because the Parliament of Victoria does not meet till May, and then will not confirm any agreement unless the terminus of this line be at Melbourne. It will then be too late to enter into fresh negotiations for any contract to commence the service in January next.

5th February, 1873.

J. G. FRANCIS.

EDWARD LANGTON.

Engineer-in-Chief's Office, Railway Department,
Melbourne, 8th January, 1873.

MEMO.—The distance from Melbourne to Belvoir, which is the terminus of the North-Eastern Railway, is 186½ miles; from Belvoir to Albury it is 2½ miles; and from Albury to Goulburn, which is the present terminus of the Southern Railway of New South Wales, the distance is 217 miles. This railway is open from Goulburn to Sydney, a distance of 134 miles.

The North-Eastern Railway will probably be opened to Belvoir not later than August next, and the journey between Melbourne and Sydney will then be made over 320½ miles of railway and 217 miles of road. That part of the journey which is by rail can be done easily in ten hours, and that by road in thirty-one hours, making the whole time between Melbourne and Sydney forty-one hours. The present average passage of the P. and O. mail steamers is fifty-six hours.

The New South Wales Government has determined to extend its Southern Railway from Goulburn to Wagga Wagga, which is 310 miles from Sydney. This extension is to be commenced at once, and completed in three years. Wagga Wagga is seventy-nine miles from the terminus of the North-Eastern Railway at Belvoir. At the end of three years, therefore, the journey between Sydney and Melbourne will be made by rail for 496½ miles, and by road for 79 miles. That part of the journey which is by rail can be done easily in fifteen hours, and that by road in eleven hours, making the whole time between Sydney and Melbourne twenty-six hours, as against fifty-six hours by the mail steamers.

To state the matter shortly: Fifteen hours can be saved in transmitting the mails between Sydney and Melbourne after next August, by adopting the North-Eastern Railway instead of the sea route; and when the Southern Railway of New South Wales is completed to Wagga Wagga, thirty hours can be saved. If express speed were used for the mail trains, the saving of time would be still greater.

T. HIGGINBOTHAM,

Engineer-in-Chief.

2. Mr. Palmer gave notice of the following motion, to be moved by him on a future day, viz.:—
“That the circular letter of the Colonial Secretary of Queensland, annexed hereto, on the subject of Intercolonial Telegraph Messages, be taken into consideration.”

(Circular.)

SIR,—

Colonial Secretary's Office,

Brisbane, Queensland, 11th January, 1873.

With reference to former correspondence on the subject of the tariff for Intercolonial telegraph messages, I have the honor to inform you that, in order to simplify arrangements, it is considered desirable to adopt, as nearly as possible, the system and manner of working now in general operation throughout the world. To effect this it will be necessary for the several Colonies to agree to a terminal and transit rate, and to charge for the address and signature; but it is proposed to extend the message