

APPENDIX A.

PROPOSED EMPLOYMENT of Special Trains for Mails arriving at the Semaphore, South Australia, (a) up to 2 P.M. on Saturdays, (b) between 3 P.M. on Saturday, and 2 P.M. on Sunday, and (c) between 2 P.M. and 7 P.M. on Sundays.

MAILS from Europe per British mail packets arriving at the Semaphore on Saturday up to 2 P.M. leave Adelaide at 4.30 P.M. the same day, arriving in Melbourne on Sunday at 9.55 a.m., where they now remain until 6.15 A.M. on Monday, arriving in Sydney on Tuesday at 6 A.M., the mails for Europe closing in Sydney at 4.30 P.M. on the same day.

It has been suggested that, with a view to obviate the detention of the mails in Melbourne for about 21 hours, and thus afford the Sydney public more time in which to reply to their London correspondence, *a special train might on such occasions be employed to leave Melbourne on Sunday, at 11 A.M., arriving in Sydney between 4.15 and 6.0 A.M. on Mondays.* The mails for Queensland, under such an arrangement, would then leave Sydney on Monday instead of Tuesday, at 6.15 P.M., and arrive in Brisbane at 10.30 P.M. on Tuesday instead of Wednesday. The cost of such a special train would be £226 0s. 6d., namely:—

	£	s.	d.
Melbourne to Albury (191 miles), at 7s. 6d. per mile	71	12	6
Albury to Sydney (386 miles), at 8s. per mile	154	8	0
	£226	0	6

It was thought that the cost of such a train might be borne by Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland, but the Melbourne Office states that it would not be prepared to bear any portion of such cost, as the train would be of no value so far as that office is concerned, there being no pillar clearances after 3.30 P.M. on Saturday, and all the business places being closed; that office thinks that under the circumstances the Intercolonial correspondence to be forwarded by the special train would be very trifling, not exceeding 100 letters.

A second point for consideration is, in the event of a steamer reaching Adelaide after 2 P.M. Saturday, and not later than 9.30 A.M. Sunday, to arrange for special train to reach Melbourne by 5 A.M. Monday, securing delivery in Melbourne at 8 A.M. Such an arrangement might be joined by Victoria, New South Wales, and Queensland. Victoria has already agreed that, in the event of the South Australian Department conveying the mails by special train to Serviceton free of charge on occasions when the steamers may happen to reach Adelaide on Sunday up to 2 P.M., to favourably consider the running of a special from Serviceton to Melbourne, to enable the mails to reach Melbourne 9.55 A.M. on Monday, provided the other Colonies share the cost of the special. In such a case it is thought that South Australia will run a train to Serviceton free of charge. Probable cost from Serviceton to Melbourne, £107 12s.

A third point for consideration is the employment of special trains when the Mail steamers reach the Semaphore on Sunday by 7 P.M. In such a case it is also considered that the South Australian Government will, free of charge, run a special train to leave Adelaide Sunday 9.30 P.M. (or earlier as required), connecting at Serviceton with a special train arriving in Melbourne on Monday at 2.55 P.M. The mails to then come on by express train leaving Melbourne on Monday at 5.15 P.M., arriving in Sydney on Tuesday at 10.40 A.M. Mails for Queensland, leaving Sydney on Tuesday at 6.15 P.M., arriving in Brisbane on Wednesday at 10.30 P.M.

Under such an arrangement as this mails arriving at the Semaphore up to 7 P.M. on Sunday would reach Melbourne about 19 hours, and Sydney, and Brisbane, 24 hours, earlier than at present. The cost of the special train from Serviceton to Melbourne would be £107 12s., the charges for such train on other week days being only £71 15s.

It now seems necessary to ascertain—

1. Whether Queensland is willing to share with New South Wales the cost (£226 0s. 6d.) of the suggested special train from Melbourne to Sydney on Sundays to convey the mails arriving at the Semaphore on Saturdays up to 2 P.M., Melbourne Sunday morning, and if so, what proportion of such cost Queensland will bear.
2. Whether the three Colonies will share the cost of special Serviceton to Melbourne leaving Adelaide between 3 P.M. Saturday and 9.30 A.M. Sunday, or leaving Adelaide up to 4.30 P.M. Sunday.
3. Whether any arrangement can be made for the employment of special trains from Adelaide to Melbourne to convey the mails from Adelaide between 4.30 and 9.30 P.M. Sundays, and if so, what proportion of the cost (£107 12s.) Victoria and Queensland respectively are prepared to bear.