

PROPOSED TRANS-ANDINE ROUTE.

No. 103.

[News Extract, 16th March, 1910.]

THE TRANS-ANDINE RAILWAY.

(Telegram.)

Melbourne, 15th March, 1910.

THE Federal Postal Department is considering a Colonial Office despatch dealing with the question of the opening of the Trans-Andine Railway, and suggesting a shorter mail route between Australia and England. It is estimated mails from England could be landed in Sydney in twenty-seven days.

[P.O. 10/1213.]

No. 104.

PROPOSED TRANS-ANDINE ROUTE FOR NEW ZEALAND—UNITED KINGDOM MAILS—DISTANCES AND TIMES.

			Days.	hours.
Wellington to Valparaiso (5,080 miles)	at 14 knots	=	15	3
	at 15 ..	=	14	3
	at 16 ..	=	13	5½
Plymouth to Monte Video (5,900 miles)	at 16 knots	=	15	9
	at 18 ..	=	13	16
	at 20 ..	=	12	7
Melbourne to Valparaiso (6,740 miles)	at 14 knots	=	20	1
	at 16 ..	=	17	13
	at 18 ..	=	15	14
	at 20 ..	=	14	1
From Valparaiso to Buenos Aires by train			1	11
Wellington to Vancouver (6,660 miles)	at 14 knots	=	20	0
	at 15 ..	=	18	12
	at 16 ..	=	17	8

[P.O. 10/1213.]

No. 105.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the Hon. R. H. J. REEVES, M.L.C., Nelson.

SIR,—

General Post Office, Wellington, 12th April, 1910.

I have the honour to refer to the proposal put forth in the attached letter [not printed] to you from Mr. L. G. Reeves for establishing a mail-service between Australia and England by way of the Trans-Andes Railway between Valparaiso and Buenos Aires.

I have gone carefully into this matter, and cannot understand why it should be reported that the route would be a short one to New Zealand and Australia. The distance between Wellington and Valparaiso is 5,080 miles and between Monte Video and Plymouth 5,900 miles. The whole of the 5,080 miles between Wellington and Valparaiso would require to be run without stoppage, which would mean that a very large supply of coal would require to be carried. This would to a large extent prevent the use of fast steamers.

The time occupied by railway between Valparaiso and Monte Video, the Governments concerned hope, will be thirty-five hours. Allowing fifteen hours at each end for transhipment, &c., the land journey may be set down at nearly three days.

A fourteen-knot service between Wellington and Valparaiso would occupy fifteen days three hours, and the railway journey three days. At present the course of post between London and Monte Video is twenty-one days, and I understand fairly good steamers are running. This would mean between thirty-nine or forty days for the through journey. If the speed between Wellington and Valparaiso were accelerated to fifteen knots, the through journey would be done in about thirty-eight days. (For the voyage Auckland to Valparaiso add 140 miles, or nine hours.)

Comparing the trans-Andes service with the present direct service, it will be found that the total sea-mileage between Wellington and Plymouth *via* Cape Horn is 11,860 miles. The distance from Wellington to Valparaiso and from Monte Video to Plymouth together is 10,980 miles. Add three days, equivalent to the time taken to cross the South American Continent, and it will be found that a service by the direct route *via* Cape Horn could be performed in equally good (or in even better) time under almost any circumstances, without the heavy cost of a railway journey.