

ART. 19TH. For the establishment of the Line of mail steam-ships mentioned in this convention, the Governments of the two Republics may conclude with some individual, or company, the contract relative thereto, but it shall not be valid nor take effect, in any case, until it shall have been approved by each one of the said Governments.

ART. 20TH. The steamers' crews shall consist one half of Mexicans and the other half of Americans. The company obliges itself to maintain, on board of each vessel, two youths, to be named by the Supreme Government of Mexico, to learn the management of the machinery and they shall have their meals furnished gratuitously at the table of the Engineers.

ART. 21ST. The contractor chosen for the conduct of the enterprise, in conformity with the stipulations of this convention, shall oblige himself to determine within the term of sixty days reckoned from the time of the approval of the contract, which of the two ports, whether that of New Orleans or of Mobile shall be selected for the terminus of the Line in the United-States: and in order that it may have effect he shall communicate his decision to the Minister of Mexico, in Washington, and to the Minister of the United-States, in Mexico, who shall advise their respective Governments thereof.

ART. 22ND. The present convention shall be ratified and the ratifications exchanged in Washington within the period of sixty days from its date, or before should it be possible.

In faith of which we the above named Plenipotentiaries have signed and sealed the same.

Done in Mexico this tenth day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and fifty-seven, in the eighty-first year of the independence of the United-States of America and in the thirty seventh of that of Mexico.

JOHN FORSYTH.
EZEQUIEL MONTES¹

On July 31, 1861, a postal convention between the United States and Mexico was signed at Washington by Postmaster General Montgomery Blair for the United States and Matías Romero, Chargé d'Affaires ad interim for Mexico (although that convention did not go into force, it is Treaty Series No. 210). That convention was submitted to the Senate; resolution of advice and consent in simple form was unanimously voted on August 6, 1861 (see Executive Journal, XI, 497, 505, 562-63). The Government of Mexico objected to certain provisions of that convention, the English version of which follows, and it did not go into force:

Postal Convention between the United States of America and the United Mexican States.

Articles agreed upon between the General Post office of the United States of America, by Montgomery Blair, Postmaster General, in virtue of his constitutional powers, and the General Post office of the United Mexican States, by Señor Don Matías Romero, Chargé d'Affaires, *ad interim*, of the United Mexican States, invested with special powers to that effect.

ARTICLE I.

An exchange of mails shall hereafter take place between the United States of America and the United Mexican States, by means of United States and Mexican or other mail Packets plying between New York and Havana (Cuba) and between

¹ Only the Spanish version bears the seals of the Plenipotentiaries.

Havana and Vera Cruz; and the expense of the sea transportation of such mails shall be borne equally by the respective Post Departments of the two countries.

ARTICLE II.

The Post office of New York shall be the office of Exchange of the United States of America, and Vera Cruz the office of Exchange of the United Mexican States for all mails transmitted under this arrangement.

Independently of the above designated offices of Exchange, others may be established by mutual agreement between the respective Post Departments of the two countries, whenever they may deem it advisable to establish other routes of Steamship communication between the sea ports of the respective countries.

ARTICLE III.

The international letter correspondence exchanged between the United States of America and its Territories and the United Mexican States and its Territories, shall be subject to the following postage charges, Viz:

Postage on each letter or packet under half an ounce in weight, twenty-five cents.

On each letter or packet weighing half an ounce, and less than one ounce fifty cents, and so on, charging an additional rate of twenty-five cents for each additional fraction of half an ounce.

The above charges shall be in full of the postage to destination upon all letters posted in either country, and addressed to and deliverable in, the other, and shall be prepaid at the office of mailing in each country, respectively.

ARTICLE IV.

Upon newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals and other kinds of printed matter mailed in the United States of America and addressed to the United Mexican States, or mailed in the United Mexican States and addressed to the United States of America, the Post office of the despatching country shall levy and collect its own inland postage, at the established domestic rates, and also a sea postage of one cent on each newspaper, and one cent on each ounce of pamphlets, periodicals and other kinds of printed matter, and shall retain the postage so charged. And the Post office of the receiving country shall levy and collect its own inland postage only, at the established domestic rates, and shall in like manner retain the postage so charged.

Said newspapers, pamphlets and other kinds of printed matter, must be sent in narrow bands, open at the sides or ends, and are to be subject to the laws and regulations of each country, respectively, in regard to their liability to be rated with letter postage when containing written matter, or for any other cause specified in said laws and regulations.

ARTICLE V.

The United States of America bind themselves to guarantee to the United Mexican States, the transit in closed bags, free of all duties, tax, detention or examination, through the Territories of the United States of America, or through any of their possessions or territories, of the letters, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals or printed matter of any kind, sent from the United Mexican States, or from any of their possessions or territories to any possession or territory of the United Mexican States, or to any foreign country; or from any foreign country, or possession or territory of the United Mexican States, to the United Mexican States, their possessions or their territories.

An agent of the United Mexican States, may, if deemed necessary, accompany the closed bags in their transit, and he shall receive proper protection from the authorities of the country.

ARTICLE VI.

The United Mexican States, on their part, bind themselves to guarantee to the United States of America, the transit in closed bags, free of all duties, tax, detention or examination, through the Territories of the United Mexican States, or through any of their possessions or territories, of the letters, newspapers, pamphlets, periodicals, or printed matter of any kind, sent from the United States of America, or from any of their possessions or territories, to any possession or territory of the United States of America, or to any foreign country; or from any foreign country or possession or territory of the United States of America, to the United States of America their possessions or their territories.

An agent of the United States of America, may, if deemed necessary, accompany the closed bags in their transit, and he shall receive proper protection from the authorities of the country.

ARTICLE VII.

The means of transportation of the closed bags, in pursuance of the stipulations of Articles V and VI, shall be furnished, and the cost thereof shall be paid by the party to which the bags respectively belong, and the carriages, cattle and men, exclusively employed in this service, shall be free from arrest, charges or molestation of any kind whatever, with the single exception of some flagrant violation of the laws of the countries, respectively.

But articles V and VI shall not be construed as requiring either country to furnish a military protection to the mail agents in charge of such closed mails, unless they are conveyed over routes upon which military escorts are furnished for the protection of the domestic mails of the country through which such closed mails are to be conveyed.

ARTICLE VIII.

No postage accounts shall be kept between the Post office Departments of the two countries, but, on the contrary each Department shall retain the postages it may have charged in accordance with the stipulations of this Convention.

ARTICLE IX.

The mail steamers which may be employed by the respective Post Departments, in the transportation of the mails between the two countries, as stipulated in Article I of this Convention, shall be entitled to the reciprocal protection of the two high contracting parties, and shall be considered by the respective Governments as national coasting vessels, and as such they shall enjoy all the privileges granted by the laws of the two countries, respectively, to vessels of that character.

ARTICLE X.

In case of war between the two countries, the mail Packets of the two offices shall continue their navigation, without impediment or molestation, until six weeks after a notification shall have been made on the part of either of the two Governments, and delivered to the other, that the service is to be discontinued; in which case they shall be permitted to return freely, and under special protection, to their respective ports.

ARTICLE XI.

The Post office Departments of the United States of America and of the United Mexican States, shall have full authority to introduce and put in force, by common agreement, all modifications in the arrangements of the present convention, and all measures of detail arising out of the stipulations thereof whenever, by mutual consent, the said Departments shall consider such measures of detail or modifications necessary.

And the said Post office Departments are also authorized and empowered to arrange hereafter for the interchange of mails on the frontier of both countries,

at such points upon the said frontier as they shall mutually agree upon; and also to agree upon and fix the rates of postage to be levied and collected in each country, respectively, on the correspondence which may be so exchanged between them.

ARTICLE XII.

The respective Governments of the two countries, and their respective Legations at the cities of Washington and Mexico, shall have the right to send their correspondence, interchangeably, free of postage, in pouches locked and sealed.

ARTICLE XIII.

The present convention is concluded for an indefinite period. It cannot be annulled by either of the two Governments except after the expiration of a year's notice given to the other Government.

ARTICLE XIV.

This Convention shall be ratified by the President of the United States of America, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate thereof, and by the President of the United Mexican States, with the approval of the Congress thereof; and the ratifications shall be exchanged at the City of Washington within six months from the date hereof. It shall go into operation as soon as possible after the exchange of the ratifications.

In witness whereof the respective plenipotentiaries have signed their names hereunto and have affixed their seals.

Done in the City of Washington this thirty first day of July A.D. 1861, and of the Independence of the United States of America the 86th.

M BLAIR P M Gen¹ [Seal]¹
M. ROMERO. [Seal]

Meanwhile Corwin, who had no written instructions for the making of a postal convention and no full power for that purpose, was engaged in negotiating a convention on that subject at Mexico City. Corwin's project was in the hands of the Mexican Government by July 17, 1861, when the Minister of Foreign Affairs wrote him that "the postal convention proposed by His Excellency [Corwin] has today been transmitted to the Postmaster General in order that he may express his opinion thereon" (D.S., 28 Despatches, Mexico, No. 3, July 29, 1861, enclosure E, revised translation). In the covering despatch (an excerpt from which is quoted in the editorial notes to Document 222) Corwin wrote that he had "nearly completed the arrangement for two treaties", one of which was a postal convention "in all essentials quite the same with that a form of which reached here from Mr Romero". Corwin's next despatch includes this statement (*ibid.*, No. 4, August 28, 1861):

I have this day concluded a Postal treaty with Mr. Lerdo the Minister appointed ad hoc which will be submitted to the State department to-morrow. I have no doubt it will be approved by that department, and sent to Congress for ratification at its second meeting which is to open next Monday.

The text of the instrument "concluded" on August 28, 1861, is not available. By that date Corwin had learned of the negotiations

¹ This is the seal of the Post Office Department, impressed on a green wafer.