

Convention for the Regulation of the Postal Intercourse between the United States of America and Belgium.

The Post-Office Departments of the United States of America and of Belgium, being desirous to regulate by a new Convention the postal intercourse between the two countries, the undersigned, being duly authorized by their respective Governments, have agreed upon the following articles : —

Aug. 21, 1867.
Preamble.
Contracting parties.

ARTICLE I. There shall be an exchange of correspondence, by means of their respective Post Departments, between the United States of America and Belgium, and this correspondence shall embrace :

Exchange of correspondence;
to embrace what.

1. Letters, ordinary and registered.
2. Newspapers, book-packets, prints of all kinds, (comprising maps, plans, engravings, drawings, photographs, litographs, and all other like productions of mechanical processes, sheets of music, etc.,) and patterns or samples of merchandise, including grains and seeds.

And such correspondence may be exchanged, whether originating in either of said countries and destined for the other, or originating in or destined for foreign countries to which they may respectively serve as intermediaries.

ARTICLE II. The offices for the exchange of mails shall be (a) on the part of the United States :

Offices for exchange of mails.

1. New York.
2. Boston.

(b) On the part of Belgium :

1. Antwerp.
2. Ostend, (Travelling Office.)
3. Ostend, (local.)

The two Post Departments may at any time discontinue either of said offices of exchange or establish others.

ARTICLE III. Each office shall make its own arrangements for the despatch of its mails to the other office by regular lines of communication, and shall, at its own cost, pay the expense of such intermediate transportation. It is also agreed that the cost of international ocean and territorial transit of the closed mails, between the respective frontiers, shall be first defrayed by that one of the two Departments which shall have obtained from the intermediaries the most favorable pecuniary terms for such conveyance ; and any amount so advanced by one for account of the other shall be promptly reimbursed.

Arrangements for despatch of mails, &c.

Cost of transportation.

ARTICLE IV. The standard weight for the single rate of postage and rule of progression shall be :

Weight for single rate of postage.

1. For letters, 15 grammes.
2. For all other correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article, that which each Department shall adopt for the mails which it despatches to the other, adapted to the convenience and habits of its interior administration.

But each office shall give notice to the other of the standard weight it adopts, and of any subsequent changes thereof.

The rule of progression shall always be an additional single rate for each additional single weight or fraction thereof.

The weight stated by the despatching office shall always be accepted, saving the case of manifest mistake.

ARTICLE V. The single rate of postage on the direct correspondence exchanged between the United States and Belgium shall be as follows :

Rates of postage.

Rates of postage.

1. On pre-paid letters from the United States, 15 cents.

2. On pre-paid letters from Belgium, 80 centimes.

3. On all other correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article, the rate shall be, for the mails sent, that which the despatching office shall adopt in conformity with the convenience and habits of its interior administration. But each office shall give notice to the other of the rate it adopts, and of any subsequent change thereof.

Rates when direct steam lines are established.

ARTICLE VI. Whenever there shall be established a direct line of steam communication between the ports of the United States and of Belgium, adapted to the regular transportation of the mails between the two countries and acceptable to the two Departments, it is agreed that the international single letter rate applicable to this route shall be reduced to 10 cents in the United States and 50 centimes in Belgium, of which six cents (30 centimes) shall represent the maritime rate; and for the other correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article the maritime rate in such case shall be 10 cents (50 centimes) per kilogramme.

See *post*, p. 929.

But this article shall not be carried into effect until a time upon which the two Post Departments shall hereafter agree.

Prepayment optional.

ARTICLE VII. The prepayment of postage on ordinary letters shall be optional, subject to the condition in Article VIII. mentioned, but on registered letters, and on all other correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article it shall be compulsory.

Proceedings when postages are unpaid, or not sufficiently paid.

ARTICLE VIII. If, however, the postage on any article shall be pre-paid insufficiently, it shall nevertheless be forwarded to its destination charged with the deficient postage. Upon the delivery of any unpaid or insufficiently paid letter, or of any other insufficiently paid correspondence, there shall be levied a fine in the United States of five cents, in Belgium of 30 centimes. This fine, as well as the deficient postage on other articles than letters, shall not enter into the accounts between the two offices, but shall be retained to the use of the office collecting the same.

Registered articles.

ARTICLE IX. Registered articles shall, in addition to the postage, be subject to a register fee of ten cents in the United States, and of 50 centimes in Belgium, and this fee shall always be prepaid.

Each office is at liberty to reduce this fee for the mails it despatches.

What correspondence may be registered.

ARTICLE X. Any correspondence may be registered, not only for international correspondence but also for correspondence originating in or destined for other countries to which these two administrations may respectively serve as intermediaries for the transmission of such registered articles.

Each Department shall notify the other of the countries to which it may thus serve as intermediary.

Basis for settlement of accounts.

ARTICLE XI. Accounts between the two offices shall be fixed on the following basis: from the total amount of international postages and register fees, collected in each country on letters, added to the total amount of prepaid postages and register fees on other articles sent, the despatching office shall deduct the amount required at the agreed rate, for the intermediate transit thereof between the two frontiers, and the amount of the two net sums shall be equally divided between the two offices.

Regulations for despatch of correspondence.
Post, p. 928.

ARTICLE XII. The correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article shall be despatched under regulations to be established by the despatching office; but these shall embrace the following:

1. No packet shall contain anything which shall be closed against inspection; nor any written communication whatever, except to state from whom or to whom the packet is sent, and the numbers placed upon the patterns or samples of merchandise.

2. No packet may exceed two feet in length, or one foot in any other dimension.

3. Neither office shall be bound to deliver any article the importation of which may be prohibited by the laws or regulations of the country of destination.

4. So long as any customs duty is chargeable on any article sent to the United States it may be levied for the use of the customs.

5. Except as above, no charge whatever shall be collected on the mails exchanged, otherwise than herein expressly provided.

ARTICLE XIII. The Post Departments of the United States and of Belgium shall establish by agreement, and in conformity with the arrangements in force at the time, the conditions upon which the two offices may exchange in open mails the correspondence originating in or destined to other foreign countries to which they may respectively serve as intermediaries.

Exchange of correspondence by open mails.

It is, however, always understood that such correspondence shall only be charged with the rate applicable to direct international correspondence, augmented by the postage due to foreign countries and any other tax for exterior service.

ARTICLE XIV. Each office accords to the other the privilege of transit of the closed mails exchanged in either direction between the latter and any country to which the former may serve as intermediary, by its usual means of mail transportation, whether on sea or land.

Transit of closed mails through either country.

For such transit on its part, the United States office shall receive as follows:

1. For transit across its territory: for letters $1\frac{1}{2}$ cents per single letter rate; for other articles 12 cents per kilogramme, net weight.

2. For transit across the waters of the Atlantic Ocean: for letters 8 cents per single letter rate; for other articles 12 cents per kilogramme, net weight.

3. For transit across the waters of the Pacific Ocean: for letters 10 cents per single letter rate; for other articles 20 cents per kilogramme, net weight.

For such transit on its part the office of Belgium shall receive as follows:

For transit across its territory and the English Channel: 1. for letters 5 centimes per single letter rate; 2. for other articles 40 centimes per kilogramme, net weight.

ARTICLE XV. The postal accounts between the two offices shall be stated quarterly, transmitted and verified as speedily as practicable; and the balance found due shall be paid to the creditor office either by exchange on London, or at the debtor office, as the creditor office may desire.

Postal accounts, when to be stated, &c.

The rule for the conversion of the money of the two countries shall be established by common agreement between the two offices.

ARTICLE XVI. When in any United States or Belgian port a closed mail is transferred from one vessel to another without any expense to the office of the country where the transfer is made, such transfer shall not be subject to any postal charge by one office against the other.

Transfer of closed mails without expense.

ARTICLE XVII. Official communications addressed from one office to the other shall not be the occasion of accounts between the two offices.

Official communications.

ARTICLE XVIII. The two offices shall by mutual consent make detailed regulations for carrying these articles into execution; and modify such regulations in like manner from time to time as the exigencies of the service may require.

Detailed regulations.

See p. 927.

ARTICLE XIX. Letters wrongly sent, wrongly addressed, or not deliverable for any cause, shall be returned to the despatching office at its expense for the return if any shall be incurred. Registered articles in the second paragraph of the first article mentioned shall also be returned: other articles shall be left to the disposition of the receiving office. Any postages not collected upon the correspondence returned, but which shall

Missent letters &c.

have been charged against the receiving office, shall be deducted from the account.

Reduction in favor of the United States, in the transit of closed mails.

ARTICLE XX. In considerations of the concessions made by the United States Post Department, it is agreed that a reduction of 20 per cent. shall be made in favor of the United States office from the charge of forty centimes per kilogramme established in Article XIV. for the transit of the articles mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article of this Convention, and which shall be despatched from the United States.

Former conventions to cease to be of force. *Ante*, pp. 899, 918.

ARTICLE XXI. From the time this convention shall take effect, all former conventions between the two offices shall cease to be in force, except for the purpose of closing the accounts arising thereunder.

When this convention takes effect.

This Convention shall take effect on the first day of January next. It shall continue in force until cancelled by agreement of the two offices; or until one year from the time when either office shall have given notice to the other of its wish to terminate the same.

Subject to approval.

This Convention shall be subject to the approval of the Postmaster General of the United States and of the Minister of Public Works of Belgium.

Execution.

Executed in duplicate at Brussels this 21st day of August, in the year of our Lord 1867.

JOHN A. KASSON,
Sp. Com., &c., &c.

[L. s.]

M. FASSIAUX,

[L. s.]

Director-General of Railroads, Posts, and Telegraphs.

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON, }
October 8, 1867. }

Approval by the Postmaster-General;

Having examined and considered the foregoing articles of a Convention for the regulation of the postal intercourse between the United States of America and Belgium, which were agreed upon and signed in duplicate at Brussels on the twenty-first day of August, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, by the Hon. John A. Kasson, Special Commissioner, &c., &c., on behalf of this Department, and by Mr. Fassiaux, Director-General of Railroads, Posts, and Telegraphs, on behalf of the Belgian Post Departments, the same are by me hereby ratified and approved, by and with the advice and consent of the President of the United States.

In witness whereof, I have caused the seal of the Post Office Department to be hereto affixed, with my signature, the day and year first above written.

[L. s.]

ALEX. W. RANDALL,
Postmaster General.

by the President of the United States.

I hereby approve the foregoing Convention, and in testimony thereof, I have caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

[L. s.]

ANDREW JOHNSON.

By the President:

F. W. SEWARD, *Acting Secretary.*

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,
WASHINGTON, 9th October, 1867.