

Convention for the Amelioration of the Postal Intercourse between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation.

THE post department of the United States, by its special commissioner, John A. Kasson, esq., and the federal council of the Swiss Confederation, by Dr. Jaques Dubs, vice-president of the federal council and chief of the federal post department, have agreed upon the following articles, subject to ratification by the respective authorities of the two countries:

October 11, 1867.
Contracting parties.

ARTICLE I. There shall be an exchange of correspondence between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation by means of their respective post departments, and this correspondence shall embrace:

Correspondence to be exchanged; to embrace what.

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

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 these may respectively serve as intermediaries.

ARTICLE II. The offices for exchange of mails shall be, on the part of the United States: New York.

Offices for exchange of mails.

On the part of the Swiss Confederation:

(a.) Basle.

(b.) Geneva (when the Swiss Confederation shall find it expedient).

The two offices, by agreement, may at any time establish additional offices of exchange.

ARTICLE III. The principle is agreed, that 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 frontiers of the two countries 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 which shall effect such transport in that case in both directions; 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 international postage, and rule of progression, shall be:

Weight for single rate of international postage.

1. For letters, fifteen grammes.

2. For all other correspondence, mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article, that which the despatching office shall adopt for the mails which it despatches to the other, adapted to the convenience and habits of the interior administration. But each office shall give notice to the other of the standard weight it adopts, and of any subsequent change thereof. The rule of progression shall always be an additional single rate for each additional standard weight, or fraction thereof.

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

ARTICLE V. The single rate of postage on the direct correspondence exchanged between the two administrations, subject to the reserve mentioned in Article VII., shall be as follows:

Rates of postage.

1. On letters from the United States, 15 cents.

Rates of postage.

2. On letters from the Swiss Confederation, 80 centimes.

3. On all other correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article, the rate shall be, for the mails despatched, that which the despatching office shall adopt, adapted to 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.

Prepayment optional on ordinary letters; when required.

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

Proceedings when postages are unpaid or are insufficiently paid.

ARTICLE VII. If, however, the postage of any correspondence shall be prepaid insufficiently, it shall nevertheless be forwarded to its destination, charged with the deficient postage, adding full amounts, instead of fractions, of 1 cent or 5 centimes.

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 not exceeding five cents, and in Switzerland not exceeding 25 centimes. This fine, and also the deficient postage on all other correspondence than letters, shall not enter into accounts between the two offices, but shall be retained to the use of the collecting office.

Registered correspondence.

ARTICLE VIII. Registered correspondence shall, in addition to the postage, be subject to a register-fee not exceeding ten cents in the United States, and not exceeding fifty centimes in Switzerland, and this fee shall always be prepaid.

What may be registered.

ARTICLE IX. Any correspondence may be registered, as well international correspondence as that originating in or destined for other countries to which these two administrations may respectfully serve as intermediaries in either direction 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 X. Accounts between the two offices shall be regulated on the following basis: From the total amount of postages and register-fees collected by each office on letters, added to the total amount of prepaid postages and register-fees on other correspondence which it despatches, the despatching office shall deduct the amount required as the agreed rate for the cost of intermediate transit thereof between the two frontiers, and the amount of the two net sums shall be divided between the two offices in the proportion of three-fifths ($\frac{3}{5}$) to the United States office and two-fifths ($\frac{2}{5}$) to the Swiss Office.

Regulations for despatch of correspondence.

ARTICLE XI. The correspondence mentioned in the second paragraph of the first article shall be dispatched under regulations to be established by the despatching office, but always including the following:

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

Second. No packet may exceed two feet in length, or one foot in any other dimension, or the equivalent in Swiss measurement.

Third. 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.

Fourth. So long as any customs-duty may be chargeable on any article exchanged in the mails, such duty may be levied for the use of the customs.

Fifth. Except as above, no charge whatever, otherwise than as herein expressly provided, shall be levied or collected on the correspondence exchanged.

Exchange of correspondence by open mails.

ARTICLE XII. The two post departments shall establish, by agreement, and in conformity with the arrangements in force at the time, the

conditions upon which the two offices may respectively exchange, in open mails, the correspondence originating in, or destined to, the other foreign countries to which they may reciprocally serve as intermediaries. It is always understood, however, that such correspondence shall only be charged with the rate applicable to direct international correspondence, augmented by the postage due to foreign countries, and by any other tax for exterior service.

ARTICLE XIII. Each office accords to the other the privilege of transit of closed mails exchanged, in either direction, between the latter and any country to which the other may serve as an intermediary, by its usual means of mail transportation, whether on sea or land. Such transit across its own territory shall be reciprocally free of expense.

Transit of closed mails through other country.

For such transit by sea the United States office shall receive as follows: —

- 1. For transit across the waters of the Atlantic Ocean :
 - a. For letters, 8 cents per single letter rate.
 - b. For other correspondence, 12 cents per kilogramme, net.
- 2. For transit across the waters of the Pacific Ocean :
 - a. For letters, 10 cents per single letter rate.
 - b. For other correspondence, 20 cents per kilogramme, net.

Rates.

For such transit by sea the Swiss office shall receive as follows :

- For transit across the waters of the Atlantic Ocean :
 - a. For letters, 8 cents per single letter rate.
 - b. For other correspondence, 12 cents per kilogramme, net.

For intermediate territorial transit each office shall receive the amount it actually disburses for such transit.

ARTICLE XIV. The postal accounts between the two offices shall be stated quarterly, and 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 Paris, or at the debtor office, as the creditor office may desire.

Postal accounts, when to be stated, &c.

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

ARTICLE XV. When, in any port of either country, 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 XVI. Official communications between the two offices shall not be the occasion of any accounts on either side.

Official communications.

ARTICLE XVII. Letters wrongly sent or wrongly addressed, or not deliverable for whatever cause, shall be returned to the originating office, at its expense, if any expense is incurred. Registered correspondence of all kinds, not deliverable for any cause, shall also be returned in like manner. All other correspondence which cannot be delivered shall remain at the disposition of the receiving office.

Missent letters, &c.

Any postages, upon correspondence returned, which shall have been charged against the office of destination, shall be discharged from the account.

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

Detailed regulations.

ARTICLE XIX. This convention shall take effect at a time to be fixed by common accord of the two administrations, and shall continue in force until terminated by mutual agreement or otherwise, until one year from the date when one office shall have notified the other of its desire to terminate it.

When this convention to take effect.

Executed in duplicate at Berne, this eleventh day of October, A. D. 1867.

[SEAL.]

JOHN A. KASSON,
Special Commissioner, &c., &c.
DR. J. DUBS.

[SEAL.]

POST-OFFICE DEPARTMENT,
Washington, November 12, 1867.

Approved by
the Postmaster-
General;

Having examined and considered the foregoing articles of a convention for the amelioration of the postal intercourse between the United States of America and the Swiss Confederation, which were agreed upon and executed in duplicate at Berne on the eleventh day of October, one thousand eight hundred and sixty-seven, by Hon. John A. Kasson, special commissioner, &c., &c. on behalf of this department, and by Dr. Jaques Dubs, vice-president of the federal council and chief of the federal post department, on behalf of the federal council of the Swiss Confederation, 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 Presi-
dent 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.]

By the President :

ANDREW JOHNSON.

WILLIAM H. SEWARD, *Secretary of State.*

WASHINGTON, November 12, 1867.