

BRISBANE-ADELAIDE MAIL TRAIN.

SIR,

11th May, 1894.

You may remember that the question of the acceleration of the mail train between Brisbane and Adelaide was brought up at the recent Conference, and that the Hon. Mr Wilson, the delegate from Queensland, suggested that your Government might be requested to take action in the matter. Mr. Wilson, in course of his remarks, stated that the present arrangements, especially between Brisbane and Sydney, were very unsatisfactory, and that it was possible that a further acceleration between Victoria and South Australia might, on enquiry, be found advisable. I therefore refer the matter to you for consideration and action.

I have, &c.

J G. WARD, President.

The Hon. the Postmaster-General, Sydney

ITALIAN SURCHARGES.

SIR,

11th May, 1894.

I HAVE the honour to inform you that the question of the sea surtax charged by Italy on letters for Australasia was considered at the Australasian Postal and Telegraph Conference, which sat at Wellington in March last, and the following recommendation was agreed to:—

“Complaints having been made of a surcharge of $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ upon letters from Italy addressed to Queensland, which bore postage at the rate of $2\frac{3}{4}d.$, making the rate equivalent to that fixed for countries not within the Union, we recommend that the International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union at Berne be asked to explain why such letters are subject to this excessive charge, contrary to the principles of uniformity which should prevail amongst countries within the Union, the charge between which is $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, not $4d.$, as appears to be charged by Italy on letters to Australasia.”

I shall be glad to learn that you will give this matter your full consideration with a view to making representations to the Italian Administration for the abolition of the surtax on letters to Australasia, seeing that the Colonies, which have to maintain expensive systems of maritime transit, charge only the ordinary Postal Union rate of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ per half-ounce on letters for Italy

I have, &c.

J G. WARD, President.

The Director, International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union,
Berne.*Translation.*International Bureau of the Universal Postal Union,
Berne, 23rd June, 1894.

SIR,

By letter of the 11th May last, No. J 94-619, you were good enough to ask me to take steps to request the Italian Post Office to abolish the surcharge of 15 centimes ($1\frac{1}{2}d.$) levied on each single rate of letters, which, like those for Queensland, are subject to the maritime transit charges of 15 francs per kilo.

As I have already intimated to the Post Office and Telegraph Department of South Australia, at Adelaide, which had written me on the subject, I have the honour to inform you that paragraph 2 of Article 5 of the Principal Convention reserves to all the Administrations of the Union the right to levy on letters subjected to the above maritime transit charges a surcharge which may not exceed 25 centimes ($2\frac{1}{2}d.$) per 15 grammes. The Italian Administration makes, in conformity with that provision, a surcharge of 15 centimes per single rate on letters. This is perfectly regular, as it does not exceed the maximum above mentioned.

In terms of the same paragraph the surcharges adopted by the Administrations of the Union must be levied in uniform manner in all the relations to which the transit costs are applicable. The Italian Administration could not, therefore, make an exception in favour of letters from Italy to the British colonies of Australasia without being obliged at the same time to abolish the surcharge levied on other letters under similar conditions.

I doubt, however, whether the Italian Administration would be disposed to abolish in a general manner the surcharge of 15 centimes in question, and I have the honour to beg of you to kindly re-examine the question, and to inform me whether, under the conditions stated, it does not appear to you inopportune to approach that Administration in the direction indicated in the aforesaid letter.

I have, &c.

ED HOHN, Director

The President, Postal and Telegraph Conference, Wellington.