

[TRANSLATION.]

I HAVE the honour to acknowledge receipt of your letter of the 11th June last, in which you requested that offices of the Administration of Posts of the Congo Free State should consider as regularly prepaid on their arrival at destination correspondence emanating from your office prepaid with a stamp of 10 centimes per 15 grammes.

I hastened to examine the new proposal which you were good enough to submit, and regret to inform you that I am unable to comply with your request. In fact, all the correspondence which we receive from the offices of the Union is treated on its arrival within our territory in an identical manner, and the present situation of the postal service of the State does not permit of according a differential treatment to correspondence originating from your Administration.

I should feel obliged if you would kindly consider this decision as a corollary of the one which formed the subject of my mail of the 17th April last.

 No. 161.

The SECRETARY, General Post Office, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 15th August, 1901.

I have the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 13th June last, asking whether this Department was in a position to give your office full particulars of the result of the negotiations with foreign Administrations in respect of the proposal for establishing penny postage.

The request in your letter of the 12th October of last year had not been overlooked, and the matter was noted for attention during the present month, when, in the ordinary course, a report would be submitted to the Parliament of this colony. The Postmaster-General, however, regrets that, owing to pressure of parliamentary business, he is unable to reply fully by this mail, but hopes to do so by the Suez mail due London on the 30th proximo, and to enclose copies of all letters which have passed between this office and foreign Administrations. In the meantime I am to say that, in addition to the countries concerned in the Imperial penny-postage scheme, Chili, Costa Rica, Egypt, Italy, Liberia, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Peru, Portugal and Portuguese colonies, Servia, Siam, and Switzerland have agreed to consider our penny letters as fully prepaid.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

W. GRAY, Secretary.

 No. 162.

The Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington, to the SECRETARY, General Post Office, London.

SIR,— General Post Office, Wellington, 16th August, 1901.

I have the honour to refer to your letter of the 13th June last, requesting information in regard to the negotiations concerning this Department's proposals for the reduction in the letter postage to 1d. per half-ounce, and, in reply, I beg to enclose herewith copies of the correspondence which has been exchanged between the General Post Office, Wellington, and foreign offices in the matter. Apart from the offices which were previously parties to the penny-postage scheme, the Administrations which have agreed to accept our penny letters as fully prepaid were advised to you in the Secretary's letter of yesterday. The arrangement, as you will observe, is unilateral, except as regards Servia, which has agreed to the reduced rate in both directions. As further replies come to hand I shall be pleased to forward you copies of any that may be of interest.

I regret that it has not yet been possible to come to any arrangement with the Australian Commonwealth, which still refuses to accept our penny letters. It was hoped that with the meeting of the Federal Parliament the difficulties which existed would disappear, but so far this has not been the case.

I would add that the Department can scarcely be held responsible for newspaper reports in connection with postal matters affecting this colony, which in many instances appear to be based on altogether inaccurate information. I mention this, as I notice it is alleged, quite erroneously, in a London publication that New Zealand has been affixing the amount of deficient postage in stamps to letters for countries which have not agreed to the reduced rate.

I have, &c.,

The Secretary, General Post Office, London.

J. G. WARD, Postmaster-General.

 No. 163.

The DIRECTOR-GENERAL of POSTS and TELEGRAPHS, Constantinople, to the Hon. the POSTMASTER-GENERAL, Wellington.

Direction Generale des Postes et des Telegraphes, Constantinople, le 21 Août, 1901.

MONSIEUR LE POSTMASTER-GENERAL,—

Me referant à la lettre que vous avez bien voulu m'adresser le 22 Mai dernier, j'ai l'honneur de vous informer que vu les dispositions de ma lettre du 23 Mars, il ne m'est pas possible de faire considerer comme regulierement affranchies les lettres originaires de la Nouvelle-Zelande et soumises au tarif de un penny.

Agreez, &c.,

Monsieur le Postmaster-General, Wellington.

pr. Le Directeur-General,
M. FUAD.