

I also do myself the honour to suggest to Your Excellency that a certificate recording the exchange of the approvals should at the same time be signed in duplicate, one of which I shall transmit to His Majesty's Principal Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, together with Your Excellency's Ministerial approval.

I avail, &c.,

A. C. GRANT DUFF.

His Excellency Monsieur Zemp, President of the Swiss Confederation.

MONSIEUR LE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES,—

Berne, le 8 Juillet, 1902.

Répondant à la note que vous avez bien voulu adresser, eu date du 25 Juin dernier, à Monsieur le Président de la Confédération Suisse, nous avons l'honneur de vous faire part de ce qui suit :—

Endate du 11 Janvier, 1901, la Direction Générale des Postes, répondant à une lettre que lui avait adressée le 23 Novembre, 1900, le General Post Office à Wellington s'est déclarée disposée à faire délivrer jusqu'à nouvel ordre aux destinataires sans perception de taxe, à la condition qu'elles ne portent aucun signe les désignant comme insuffisamment affranchies, les lettres de la Nouvelle Zélande à destination de la Suisse affranchie d'un penny par 15 g.

Au nom du Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi du Royaume Uni de la Grande Bretagne et de l'Islande et des Possessions Britanniques d'outre mer vous nous avez demandé de ratifier cet arrangement.

Nous avons mûrement examiné cette question et sommes arrivés à la conclusion qu'ensuite de la position prise par les Administrations des pays voisins comme aussi pour ne pas engager l'avenir il ne convenait pas de maintenir la concession faite par l'Administration des Postes Suisses, mais, au contraire de revenir à l'état existant avant le 1er Janvier, 1901, eu ce qui concerne la taxe des lettres originaires de la Nouvelle Zélande à destination de la Suisse.

Afin de ne pas poster préjudice aux expéditeurs soit aux destinataires, la taxe réduite d'un penny par 15 grammes sera toutefois encore considérée comme valable pour les lettres provenant de la Nouvelle Zélande qui seront mises à la poste jusqu'au 30 Septembre, 1902, inclusivement.

Passé de délai, l'Administration des Postes Suisses devra, en revanche, taxer toutes les lettres provenant de la Nouvelle Zélande qui ne seront pas affranchies aux conditions générales fixées par la Convention Postale Universelle de Washington du 15 Juin, 1897.

Nous saisissons, etc.,

Au nom du Conseil Fédéral Suisse,

Le Président de la Confédération,

ZEMP.

Le Chancelier de la Confédération,

RINGIER.

Monsieur A. C. Grant Duff, Chargé D'Affaires,
De Sa Majesté Britannique.

MY LORD,—

Rome, 20th July, 1902.

I have the honour to report that I duly submitted to the Italian Foreign Office the proposal contained in your Lordship's despatch in this series, No. 13, of the 17th May last, for placing on record a Ministerial approval of the arrangement entered into between the Postal Departments of New Zealand and Italy, with a view to effecting certain changes in postal rates. From the reply of the Italian Government, copy and translation of which is enclosed herein, Your Lordship will perceive that the Minister of Posts and Telegraphs demurs to treating the working arrangements entered into between the two Departments as an actual international agreement in the nature of an "union plus restreinte," as defined by Article 21, paragraph 2, of the Washington Convention.

The Minister, while prepared to maintain the understanding arrived at with the Postal Department in New Zealand, in accordance with which letters sent from New Zealand with a penny stamp are now accepted and delivered in Italy, does not feel justified in treating as a formal contract what is purely a unilateral arrangement, which lacks, in his opinion, the characteristic quality of reciprocal advantage.

I explained to the Under-Secretary of State that His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the view of the International Bureau at Berne was justified technically by a literal construction of the second clause of Article 21, and that I found some difficulty in understanding the scruples of the Minister of Posts to sanction formally what he had already sanctioned administratively. Monsieur Malvano asked me to ascertain what views other European countries to which the same application had been addressed had taken, and promised, if it could be shown that a similar unilateral arrangement had received formal Ministerial approval elsewhere, he would invite consideration of the point at issue.

I have, &c.,

The Right Hon. the Marquess of Lansdowne, K.G., &c.

RENNELL RODD.

[TRANSLATION.]

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, 19th July, 1902.

MONSIEUR LE CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES,—

I duly communicated to the Ministry of Posts the substance of the note which you addressed to me on 6th June last, informing me of the opinion expressed by the British Government as to the advisability and the measures to be taken for the conclusion of an agreement to be founded on an exchange of notes between the Postal Administrations of Italy and New Zealand for the reduction of the postal tariff on letters from that English colony to Italy.

I now have the honour to transmit to you herewith a copy of a note, dated the 17th of the aforesaid month (?), in which the Ministry of Posts point out the reasons for which, in their