

That clause 7 of the P. and O. contract be amended in regard to the conveyance of the Indian-China mails connecting at Colombo. Should it be deemed necessary for the Australian steamers to carry mails in connection with the new contract between Colombo and Brindisi, we consider the Postal Union rates should be paid by the countries despatching those mails, such rates to be dealt with in manner provided for above.

That the day of departure from Adelaide be Thursday, at 1 p.m., reaching Albany in 72 hours.

It is necessary that early steps be taken to confer with the Imperial Government on the subject of the new contracts, in order that tenders may be invited with as little delay as possible.

3. FUMIGATION OF MAILS AT FIRST AUSTRALIAN PORT AT JOINT EXPENSE.

We are of opinion that any fumigation of mails should be at Adelaide, and not at Albany, the first port of arrival. If a thorough fumigation is considered advisable it would be necessary to open the 700 or 800 bags, containing about 250,000 articles, arriving by each steamer, to untie the bundles, and fumigate each article. It is hardly needful, however, to point out that such a course as this would probably delay the mails 48 hours, to say nothing of the large expense in providing a staff for opening, retying, and reclosing the mails, the beneficial results as a preventative being, as we understand the opinion of many medical officers, very doubtful.

7. POSTAL UNION.

(a) (1) Newspaper rates, and (2) printed paper rates to the United Kingdom—

As it is imperative under the Postal Union Convention that newspapers exceeding 4 oz. in weight should bear an additional rate of postage,

we recommend that from the 1st July next the rate to the United Kingdom be—

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| Each newspaper not exceeding 4 oz. | ... | ... | ... | 1d. |
| Every additional 2 oz. or fraction thereof | ... | ... | ... | $\frac{1}{2}$ d. |

(b) Proposal by Italy, paragraphs 3 and 4, Article 19 of Detailed Regulations, as to deterioration of articles sent as samples—

Italy proposes that the following paragraph be inserted between Nos. 3 and 4 as paragraph 4—

“Articles of an intrinsic value must be defaced in such manner as to make them lose their mercantile value.

“Provided, however, that odd articles which taken singly would have no appreciable value, as also articles of insignificant value clearly sent as specimens, may be despatched in perfectly sound condition, when any defacement whatever would make them lose their character of type or specimen which is the cause of their being forwarded.”

We recommend the adoption of this proposal. Present No. 4 paragraph to be No. 5.

(c) Proposal by Italy, Article 16 of Convention, subsection (a), *re* transmission of coin, &c., also alteration No. 2 of paragraph 3, same Article—

Proposed to substitute for section 2 :—“It is forbidden—

“(1) To insert in ordinary correspondence coin, gold, or silver bullion, precious stones, jewellery, and other precious articles, as well as articles of all descriptions liable to Customs duty.

“(2) To insert in registered correspondence gold or silver bullion, precious stones, jewellery, and other precious articles; but only in case their insertion or transmission is forbidden by the legislation of the countries concerned.”

We recommend the adoption of this proposal.

(d) Proposal by France, Article 16 of Convention, paragraph No. 1, subsection (a), *re* manuscript correspondence in commercial papers, &c.

Proposed that subsection (a) of Article 16 of Vienna Convention be modified as follows :—

“(a) Commercial papers, samples and printed papers which are not prepaid at least partially, or which contain letters or manuscript notes having the character of actual or personal correspondence, or which are so fastened as not to permit of an easy verification of their contents.”

We recommend that this be adopted.

(e) Vote required *re* proposition by United States concerning articles of natural history—

We recommend the adoption of the proposal of the United States, that in subsection 4 of Article 19 of Detailed Regulations, after the words “Live bees,” to insert “Specimens of Natural History.”

And to add a new subsection, No. 5, to read as follows :—

“Natural History specimens, such as dried insects and cocoons, shells, botanic and geological specimens, must be sent for non-commercial purposes, and must be packed in accordance with the general conditions attaching to samples of merchandise.”

But that the extension proposed by France to insert “silkworms’ eggs” be not agreed to, for the reasons that silkworms’ eggs are articles of value, and can be sent at a slightly increased cost by letter or parcel post, and it is undesirable to further extend the concessions under the packet regulations.

(f) Correspondence