

1903.
NEW ZEALAND.

UNIVERSAL PENNY POSTAGE

(PAPERS RELATING TO).

Presented to both Houses of the General Assembly by Command of His Excellency.

No. 1.

[Extract from Universal Postal Union Convention, dated Washington, 15th June, 1897.]

Article XXI.

1. The present Convention does not involve alteration in the legislation of any country as regards anything which is not provided for by the stipulations contained in this Convention.

2. It does not restrict the right of the contracting parties to maintain and to conclude treaties, as well as to maintain and establish more restricted unions, with a view to the reduction of postage-rates, or to any other improvement of postal relations.

No. 2.

[Extract from Report of London Conference on Postage within the British Empire.]

Second Day.—Tuesday, 5th July, 1898.

The minutes of the last meeting having been read by the Secretary and confirmed,

Mr. Mulock proposed, "That it is advisable, in the interests of the British Empire, that the rate of postage for the conveyance of letters (other than inland letters) throughout the entire extent of the Empire be reduced from the present rate of 2½d. per half-ounce to 1d."

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Sir David Tennant, in seconding the proposal, &c.

No. 3.

[Extract from Parliamentary Debates, No. 2, 27th June, 1900, page 90.]

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

Universal Penny Postage.

Mr. WARD (Postmaster-General) said the Government had shown their earnest desire in this matter by having placed upon the statute-book legislation to give effect when the time was opportune to this great reform. But the Government of the country had to recognise that which was so important in all matters—namely, the financial aspect of every reform. As honourable members knew, the country had recently received concessions computed by the Railway officers to the extent of £75,000 on the railways. He was strongly in favour of the penny post, but he thought the right course, as they all desired to see this reform effected, was to wait a reasonable time in order that they might see how far the concessions on the railways were going to be reimbursed.

No. 4.

[Extract from the Financial Statement of the Colonial Treasurer, the Right Hon. R. J. Seddon, 17th August, 1900.]

Penny Postage.

Parliament, during the session of 1891, passed an Act under which a penny postage within the colony could be established. From that time until the present, owing to the demand upon our funds, we have not been able to give to the public the boon such a cheap rate of postage would confer.

It is pleasing to be able to announce that, on and after the 1st day of January, 1901, a penny-postage system will be established within and without the colony.

This colony will therefore be the first in Australasia to have a universal penny postage.

I estimate that the loss of revenue by so doing will be about £80,000 per annum; but this will only be of a temporary nature, for there will be an increase in the correspondence which will in time bring up the revenue to the original level.

The loss to the revenue during the unexpired portion of the present financial year will be about £20,000.