

It was decided to admit letters containing dutiable articles subject to the country of destination agreeing to admit letters containing such articles. In order to facilitate handling through the Customs, the letters must bear a special green label. Provision was also made for the country of destination to charge on letters containing dutiable articles a Customs clearance fee not exceeding 50 centimes (5d.).

Under the Madrid Convention the use in the international service of panel envelopes—*i.e.*, envelopes with transparent panels through which the name and address of the addressee can be read was prohibited unless the panels formed an integral part of the envelope. In so far as unregistered correspondence is concerned, this provision has been relaxed to permit of the use in the international service of a “two-piece” panel envelope.

It is now forbidden to forward by post samples forwarded in numbers with a view to avoidance of Customs duty, money, bank-notes, jewellery or precious stones, sent in unregistered packets, and any articles used in wrapping which is likely to injure postal officers.

In order to conform with the revised postage-rate the minimum selling-price of the Reply Coupon has been reduced from 50 gold centimes to 40 gold centimes. The accounting in connection with reply coupons has been simplified. Congress rejected a proposal to substitute in place of the Reply Coupon a Reply stamp.

Many Administrations make a practice of charging “late fee” on correspondence posted after the usual hour of collection. The right so to do was recognized by Congress.

A proposal to introduce into the letter-post a new class of postal packet called “small packets,” intended to contain small quantities of merchandise and to be transmissible at a reduced rate, was strongly opposed by the delegates of the British Post Office. It was ultimately decided not to admit the new class of packet, but to permit of the inclusion of dutiable articles in packets prepaid at the letter rate provided the country of destination agrees to admit packets containing such articles.

It is forbidden to affix to the address side of correspondence non-postal stamps, charity stamps, &c., liable to be mistaken for postage-stamps, and impressions of stamps liable to be confused with impressions of franking-machines.

The regulations regarding the method of packing of samples, and the regulations regarding manuscript additions to printed papers and commercial papers, were subject to minor modifications. It is now permissible to add in manuscript to illustrated cards, good wishes, congratulations, thanks, condolences, and other formulæ of courtesies expressed in five words at most or by means of five conventional initials.

Letters intended for registration must not bear any indication of having been opened and reclosed before posting.

Administrations are now required to make provision for punishing individuals found guilty of counterfeiting international reply coupons and identity cards, or for the fraudulent use of such.

The Congress authorizes countries to stop correspondence originating in its own territory from being sent abroad to be posted in a foreign country.

The Madrid Congress decided to dispense with the date-stamping of correspondence on receipt at the office of destination. The office of destination must now date-stamp, on the front, redirected letters and redirected and undelivered post-cards, and on the back, undelivered letters.

The question of transit rates (*i.e.*, charges made by one country for conveying over its territory mail-matter from a second country for a third country) has always been one of the most contentious and difficult matters requiring the attention of Congress. At Stockholm, representatives of countries that deal with only limited quantities of transit mail-matter made very strenuous efforts to secure the abolition of transit charges. The adoption of such a proposal would have been unfair to many countries. After a long discussion reduced rates were agreed to.

The statistics for calculating the payment due for the transit of correspondence are to be taken every five years instead of every three years. The result of the statistics taken in October–November of 1924 will be applied to the years 1924–28 inclusive, and the statistics of May, 1929, to the years 1929–33 inclusive. Provision is made for the transit rates payable under the Madrid Convention being applied up to 1st October, 1925, the date on which the Stockholm Convention comes into operation.

The Madrid Convention provided for a charge of 50 centimes (5d.) per bag for the warehousing of mails belonging to another Administration. This charge has been applied to mails transferred from one mail-ship to another where the country concerned does not receive a land or sea transit rate for the mails.

The failure on the part of an Administration to return empty mail-bags to the country of origin will in future render the Administration concerned responsible for the value of the bags not returned.

Congress decided that, as far as possible, the various forms used in the international postal service were to be of a given uniform size and shape. One of the principal forms concerned was the letter-bill. This form was specially modelled, and now shows in a convenient manner the various details concerning the mail to which it relates.

In future documents relating to the international postal service are to be retained for a minimum period of two years before being destroyed.

At the present time the insured-letter service is restricted to letters containing bank-notes, coupons, unobliterated postage-stamps, securities, and other documents of the kind. From the 1st October documents of value such as deeds, plans, contracts, autographs, rare manuscripts, &c., may also be sent by insured-letter post with the proviso that where documents have a value by reason of the cost of their preparation the insured value may not exceed the cost of replacing them in case of loss. Accounting in connection with insured-letter post has been suspended since 1915. It was decided at Stockholm to abolish accounting for insured letters. Congress also decided to adopt a flat scale of insurance fees. The insurance fee was fixed at 50 centimes (5d.) for every 300 francs (£12) of insured