

ulation than ever, as in either case the specimen is worthless.

There is not the slightest doubt that if the prices of rare stamps go on increasing in proportion to the way they have increased during the last ten years, a good collection will be a very paying speculation.—Detroit.

THE STAMPS OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

The first postage stamp of this colony were issued on Sept. 1st, 1853. They consisted of two values only, 1d. red and 4d. blue. The design is of a triangular shape, figure of Hope in centre, "Postage" on left, value on right hand side and at bottom, "Cape of Good Hope," the three corners being filled with ornaments. The stamps were printed from steel plates consisting of 240 specimens and 15 horizontal rows of 16 stamps, which were arranged in 8 squares. The original die, which had the value of "One Penny" upon it, and from which the dies for the other values were afterwards made, was engraved by Mr. W. Humphreys, an artist in the employ of Messrs Perkins, Bacon & Co. London, who were the printers of these stamps. The paper used for printing was white, and watermarked with 240 anchors, placed in position so that each stamp would get one, but owing to careless printing some stamps have got two halves, a few have got two anchors, and as many have no watermark excepting perhaps the tips of the anchors. The last two varieties I find are very scarce. The paper which was originally white appears now on stamps of this issue as blue, which is owing to the combined action of ink, gum and paper. It is not yet known with certainty which ingredient caused

this change, nor when the use of them ceased: but it was very likely that their use was discontinued before as none of the stamps first issued in that year are found on blue paper.

The inland postage was 4d. per 1-2 oz. for letters and 1d. for each newspaper, and the rate to England was 6d. for 1-2oz.

In December, 1857, two new values 6d. lilac and 1s. green, were printed in London from new plates of same pattern as the 1d. and 4d. values, on white paper watermarked anchor, as before. These were issued to the public in the colony in February 1858, the 6d. being intended for correspondence to England and the 1s. for some foreign countries. These stamps remained in use for about six years. The paper varied much in that time, being rough and thin in the beginning getting finer and more glazed afterwards. Specimens of all values are also known rouletted. I have only the 4d. in this state, but this was only officially, when, where and by whom is not known. The colors varied greatly, the 1d. from a dark red to a very light rose, the 4d. from light to very dark. The so-called black specimens known as errors of printing are only chemical changings although I have a specimen on part of original envelope which shows that time has also discolored some; perhaps the ink and gum did not agree, thus causing the blue to turn black. The 6d. lilac and 1s. green stamps do not vary so very much, owing, no doubt, to that but a few printings of these took place. I know of only three distinct shades of each—very high, middle and dark color. On 15th September, 1860, a local delivery of letters was established in Cape Town, and the rate fixed at 1d. per 1-2oz. On 1st May, 1861 the same was established in Port Elizabeth, and after that the cheap rate was gradually extended till, on 1st January, 1889, the rate of 1d. became uniform for the whole colony.

In the beginning of 1861 the authorities ran short of 1d. and 4d. stamps, and while awaiting the new supply ordered in England they had recourse to a local printing firm, Saul Solomon & Co., in Cape Town, who printed a supply of both values, and these were issued to the public about the middle of April, 1861.