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WHOLE NO. 21,

Perforation.

By "STOKES."

The means for dividing or separating stamps are numerous.

When stamps were first issued in England in 1840, they were usually separated with a pair of scissors; the same method has been adopted in all the early issues of a great many countries, although a large number of the stamps look as if they had been separated with an axe or hoe. In 1848 an Englishman by the name of Henry Archer tried to remedy this defect by having thinner paper between the stamps which were to be torn apart resulting in the stamps having very rough and irregular edges. After several other attempts, he finally succeeded by having rows of small holes punched out in straight lines between the stamps.

There are two methods of separating namely "rouletting" and "perforating." By rouletting, the paper is cut partially through but removing no paper. First there is the "English roulette" when the paper is cut in short straight lines, commonly found in the Chilian stamps; sometimes the lines are inked, as in some of the early Luxemburg issues. Another form is "pin perforating" the name of which is misleading, as this separation is made by holes being pricked in the paper, but no paper is removed, and it is therefore a rouletation and not a perforation. This method is commonest among Mexican stamps

(See Mexico in Scott's 58th numbers 423 to 431.) Other forms are, "sawtooth" roulette in which the cuts form small triangles, "Serpentine" or wavy impressions "Lozenge" or diamond shape impressions.

The other method namely "perforating" is best and almost universally used. By this process the paper between the stamp is cut away in a line of holes, leaving little bridges joining the stamps together; when the stamps are torn apart these bridges are separated, leaving little projections or teeth; the diameter of the holes and the width of the teeth are usually the same. The diameter of the holes vary in the different stamps; and we say a stamp is perforated ten or eleven, it does not mean that there are ten or eleven holes in the top or side of the stamp, but that there are ten or eleven perforations in the space of two centimeters, which is about four fifths of an English inch.

When the holes are small and close together it is called "fine" perforations; when they are large and far apart they are known as "coarse" perforations; when the holes are not cut clean through, it is called "rough" perforation; when the gauge of the top differs from that of the side, its perforation is "compound" When the measurement of the top and side are given the top always comes first.

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This paper one year and the latest perforation gauge and millimetre scale for only twenty-five cents. Canadian or U. S. stamps taken.