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THE ARGENTINE CONFEDERATION.

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The Argentine Confederation, sometimes also called La Plata, was composed of a group of South American States, situate on the borders of the rivers Parana, Paraguay, &c. These States comprise altogether an area of 540,000 square miles, and possess a population of 2,540,000. They were associated together, under the name of a Confederation, from 1853 until December 1861, when they were formed into a united Republic.

The use of postage stamps was commenced in these states in accordance with a decree issued in February, 1858; and the labels were issued in the month of April following. The stamps of the Confederation were withdrawn at the close of 1861, and superseded by those of the Republic.

The design on the stamps consisted of the Argentine arms, clasped hands carrying a cap of liberty and surmounted by a radiant sun. The stamps were lithographed, and printed in colors upon white paper. The label of 10 centavos was a bright green, and was frequently cut in half to serve the purpose of two stamps of 5 centavos, although a proper 5 centavo label was current printed in red. The series was prepared at Parana, and is not remarkable for elegance in execution.

The first stamps of the Republic were of far better pretensions to rank as works of art. The labels were issued on the 11th of January 1862, and were made current throughout the Republic. They were lithographed and printed in colors; The design being the shield of the Republic inclosed in laurel and with the radiant sun above. The stamp of 15 centavos was in blue of various shades.

By a decree of the 1st. of January, 1863, a new type was adopted. It was ordered that the Argentine labels should bear the effigy of Bernardino Rivadavia, first president of the Republic, and entitled to honor as the promoter of the abolition of slavery in La Plata, as well as for the general wisdom of his measures. The stamps of the new issue were prepared at Buenos Ayres, engraved and printed in colours on tinted paper, in which the letters R. A. (Republica Argentina) were woven

The design of these stamps differs in each value in the bordering by which the effigy is surrounded.

The label of 5 centavos was printed in red, varying from a pale brick color to a deep rose and that of 15 centavos in dark blue.

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BRAZIL.

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This country, although it cannot be regarded as among the foremost in civilization, was one of the first to follow the lead of Great Britain in the introduction of postage stamps. Their use was established by a decree passed in November 1842, and the issue took place in July, 1843.

The employment of the labels was from the first rendered compulsory.

The number of letters which passed through the officus of the chief town was in 1855, 2,065,423; and it had increased to 3,316,651 in 1860, when the population