

NOVA SCOTIA PROVISIONALS.

(By Henry Hechler.)

Having observed in several philatelic exchanges references to supposed provisional surcharged stamps of Nova Scotia, I have made particular investigation into the matter. I have questioned officers that were connected with the Post Office at the time that said surcharged provisionals are alleged to have been used.

After a very careful and minute examination I am in position to state positively, that none such ever existed. The only provisionals that were ever used in this Province were made by halving and quartering stamps of larger denominations, in the manner alluded to in No. II of this journal, therefore, any pretended surcharged Nova Scotia stamps must be forgeries.

In the matter of the halves and quarters above alluded to, connoisseurs will not recognise any as genuine unless they have sufficient of the envelope or wrapper attached to show the entire Post Office obliteration.

I hope that my philatelic friends will make special note of this.

Halifax, November 1882.

INSUFFICIENTLY PAID LETTERS.

The old rule that letters that are unpaid or not sufficiently prepaid by postage stamps shall be sent to the Dead Letter office is rapidly becoming obsolete. It is recognised that these deviations from the "letter of the law" are generally due to ignorance or inadvertance and that in many cases serious injury is inflicted on innocent persons by non-delivery of letters at their proper destination.

Most nations that are in the "Universal Postal Union" have, therefore, adopted the plan of tendering such letters to those to whom they are addressed, and exacting what may be due from the receiver. The original, though crude, plan was to mark with pen or pencil the amount due upon such letters on the envelope enclosing them. The postal authorities in some countries have, however, recently adopted the system of affixing unpaid stamps to letters of this class which show the exact amount due on them, and have issued special stamps for that use. This is, evidently, the more scientific plan, and we are surprised that it has not been adopted by Canada before now. The Dominion having abolished the use of bill-stamps and having a large supply of the same remaining on hand unused, could utilize the same by ordering them to be put on unpaid or insufficiently prepaid letters. They may be easily surcharged with the amount due, and the words in large letters "Due Stamps." In this way Canada will accomplish two good ends. It will occupy the same advanced position that other countries do in postal matters and it will make useful a lot of stamps that are now "dead stock" upon its hands.

We seriously commend the consideration of this matter to the proper authorities because we deem it important.

The excess of postal receipts over expenditures in the State of Maine, U. S. A., for the past year, is \$34,084.

THE GERMAN FIELD POST OF 1870-1.

An interesting return has recently been made of the work done by the German Land Field Post in connection with the Army during the late Franco-Prussian war; i.e., from the middle of July 1870 when the troops were first moved, to the end of March 1871, when the war was virtually closed.

The service was an arduous one, as may be imagined owing to the army being a very large one and constantly in motion, and letters, etc., had to be conveyed over wretched roads, running all sorts of dangers and encountering many difficulties, besides the dangers from the enemy. It was of inestimable benefit and comfort not only to the soldiers in the field but to those who remained at home and suffered from the most intense anxiety and suspense after each daily battle, until they heard from or of their absent ones. Field post cards were first used in that war and were thoroughly appreciated by thousands of men who could not have taken the time from their fierce duties to write a formal letter, but could scribble off a hasty card to assure their loved and loving ones at home that all was well with them.

From this return we extract the following statistics, which, we believe will be read with interest.

(1.) NORTH GERMAN FIELD POST.

89,659,000 letters and post cards.
2,354,310 newspapers.
42,024,460 thalers of service money.
16,842,460 do of private do.
125,916 service packages.
1,853,686 private do

(2.) BAVARIAN FIELD POST.

32,400,000 letters, post-cards and newspapers.
72,000 registered and money letters.
99,000 packages.

(3.) WURTEMBERG FIELD POST.

(From the out-march to the home return.)

6,890,000 letters, post-cards and newspapers.
454,233 { packages and money to the
value of 4,834,983 florins that
were forwarded.

(4.) BADEN FIELD POST.

1,470,500, { letters, post-cards and registered
letters.
114,400 newspapers.
1,908,100 fl. of service money.
1,023,110 fl. private money.
63,067 packages.

The German field post also carried the letters, money, etc., sent by friends in France to prisoners of war detained in Germany. The amount of money thus conveyed and paid over to prisoners exceeded five (5,000,000)