

# The Montreal Philatelist.

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## NEWS OF THE MONTH.

The greater part of our space is taken up with philatelic news from Africa. The facts in regard to recent issues of "war stamps" are now coming to light. The first wild quotations for "V. R. I." surcharges are giving place to more reasonable figures, as can be seen from our advertisers' announcements. Australian Federation is assured by the Queen's signature to the act passed by the British Parliament. The colonies have now to take action and get their new system of government into working order. When the elections are held and the Government organized we may expect new stamps from the Commonwealth of Australia.

### ENTRANCES AND EXITS.

**BAVARIA.**—(*Provisional 5 pf. cards*). In order to use up the stock of obsolete 3 pf post cards, they are to be impressed with an additional stamp of the new 2 pf type in slate. Both the single and reply cards are to be so treated making them 5 pf cards.

**BELGIUM.**—(*Change of color 10c cards*). To correspond with the recent change in color of the 10c stamp, the post cards single and reply and letter cards of that value are to be in future printed in carmine.

**BOSNIA.**—(*10 h Reply cards*). The 10 heller cards reported in our June number come as reply cards as well as single, as there stated.

**BRITISH HONDURAS.**—(*Surcharged 10c.*) The current 10c mauve and green has been issued surcharged with the word "Revenue" like the 5c, 25c and 50c. This surcharge does not indicate, as has been surmised by a correspondent, that these are simply revenue stamps, but it means that they can be used for fiscal purposes as well as for postage.

**CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.**—(*Mafeking Locals*). The *bona fides* of these "siege stamps" has been questioned by some of our English contemporaries, and quite a controversy is now raging over them in *Evening W. S. News*. We reproduce in another column an interesting report on the issue, which is endorsed by the eminent authority of the great house of Stanley Gibbons, Limited. The principle point made against these stamps was—why surcharge an *increased value* instead of using two or more low value stamps to make up the required amount. This is explained by the small supply of stamps, of any value, obtainable. *Evening W. S. News* maintains that the issue was entirely unnecessary, as letters arriving from Mafeking during the siege would have been delivered free of charge in any part of England, whether stamped or unstamped and it considers the stamps as merely patriotic labels commemorative of the gallant defence of the beleaguered town, intimating that they did not really frank the letters despatched by native runners through the Boer lines. It seems to us that if the stamps represent the charge made by the military authorities, for despatching private letters along with despatches conveyed by runners employed by military authority, it is immaterial whether the charge was sufficient to pay the cost of the runner or not. The stamp indicated that the charge, whatever it was, had been prepaid and that is all that is necessary to constitute them veritable *bona fide*, postage stamps. Whether it was absolutely necessary that such prepayment should be indicated by stamps, has "nothing to do with the case." That could be said about any postage stamp, and we might go back to the system of prepaying every letter over the counter, but think of the inconvenience. Without guaranteeing their authenticity the complete set of these stamps so far as known is as follows :