

A UNIVERSAL POSTAGE STAMP.

AT the first blush, the idea appeared excellent ; but unfortunately, the postal Union Convention itself was the first to interpose an insurmountable obstacle. As already stated, one of the vital principals of the original convention is that each country shall retain the postage which it collects. If a universal stamp were used, then, what guarantee would there be that the country who sold the stamps and got the profit had done the work for which it had been paid ? None whatever. And moreover, it was found on closer examination that the monetary system in force in some of the countries of the Postal Union would not lend themselves to a universal stamp. Thus for example, the 25 centime stamp that prepays a half ounce (or 15 grammes) letter from France to Italy or England, is represented in Germany by a 20 pfennig stamp ; but 20 pfennig are, in reality worth a quarter of a centime less than 25 centimes ; and so with the ten kreuzer Austrian stamp, which although it does duty in Austria-Hungary for 35 centimes in prepaying a letter, is actually 4 centimes less in value. The idea, therefore, of the universal postage stamp, to which the originator clung fondly to the last, had, after all to be abandoned.

At the various postal congresses, which have from time to time been held, it has always been agreed among the several administrations concerned that three special exceptions should be made to the system of accounting for foreign mails at the ordinary fixed rate and by periodical statistics. These exceptions are : for the conveyance of British and other mails across the Isthmus railway between Panama and Colon, for the transmission of foreign mails across the Continent of America by express service from San Francisco to New York, and for the overland Indian mail via Brindisi. All these are paid for by net weight.—[From the "National Review."

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 —Every description of printing neatly executed at this office. Prices reasonable.

STEALINGS.

PESSIMISTS and opponents of Philately may write and say what they like about stamp collecting being nothing but a craze, a mania. Their opinions are far out-weighted by the prima facie evidence of the universal dissemination of Philatelic principles, and the almost incredible growth of stamp firms, of which a goodly number spring into existence almost every week. There is not the shadow of a doubt that philately is making rapid progress towards the goal of universalization, and its worth as an educational medium is being appreciated and acknowledged by all who have been brought in contact with it.—[From the "Philatelic Advertiser."

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 AN entire'y new machine has been invented for printing postal cards from the roll, and to turn them out packed in bundles of 25. It prints the cards at the rate of 300 a minute, in the usual way, by means of a rotary pre-s. A set of knives then cut the cards off and drops them, four abreast, into little cells especially prepared for them. When 25 cards have dropped out, a set of steel fingers turn the pack over, twines a paper band about it, and pastes it together. The packages are caught in an endless belt of buckets, which carry them into an adjoining room, where they are received by girls, who place them in boxes for delivery. One man runs two machines.—["Times."

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 THE word "Post Office" was derived from the latin word "positum" which means placed or fixed. This word originated in the post placed at intervals along the roads of the Roman Empire, where couriers were kept in readiness for the conveyance of dispatchs. This was first established by Cyrus 509 B. C.—["Collectors' Exchange."

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 HARD LUCK.—"I'm sorry you split the ink," said the poet's wife. "Has it gone over your poem ?"

"No, confound it !" returned the poet, sadly "it went over my postage stamps."