

Besides all this there are two Societies,—may I venture to call them Learned Societies?—the headquarters of one of which is London, and the other Paris, founded for the express purpose of studying stamps and other things connected with them; the English Society has not yet published any of its work, but that of Paris issues a Quarterly Bulletin, containing accounts of its meetings and portions of a catalogue which it is preparing; the number laid before you contains a list of its members who may be seen to be of various professions and nationalities.

The early stamps of Mauritius, and more especially those produced by local talent, have always excited very great interest among collectors, partly as very curious specimens of engraving, partly on account of the great rarity of some of the varieties of them, and partly no doubt on account of the want of accurate information as to the origin and dates of issue, which led to all sorts of conjectures being formed about them and consequent discussions of the various theories on the subject; many articles upon them have been published from time to time both in English and foreign magazines, but it was not until quite recently that any really authentic information about them reached Europe. This information I was enabled to obtain through the kindness of the late, and of the present Colonial Secretary.

It appears that in 1846 a Postal Ordinance was passed in Mauritius in which Postage Stamps were first contemplated, and some time in 1847 a Mr. Barnard engraved two copper plates, one bearing a single stamp of the value of "one penny," the other a similar stamp of the value of "two pence," for in September 1847, the then post master reported that the stamps required for carrying out Ordinance 13 of 1846 were ready, 700 of them having been struck off, such being apparently his idea of an adequate supply; however he seems soon to have found out that the stamp consuming capacity of the Mauritius public, even at that date was very much greater than he expected, for in May 1848, he reported that certain improved plates, containing twelve types each, one plate of penny the other of two penny stamps, were ready, and requested that a supply of each value should at once be struck off; other paragraphs in the letter show, that 1000 stamps had been printed from the original single stamp plates, and that those plates had been at once found to be quite unable to produce a sufficient quantity of stamps to supply the demands of the public. These stamps were entirely for local postage, no stamps of higher value than two pence were issued here till some years later, but even in England penny and two penny postage stamps were the only ones in use up to 1847, in which year a shilling stamp was issued, followed in 1847 by a ten pence.

(To be continued.)

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AMERICAN envelopes are being well ventilated now with Scott in the *Am. Journal of Philately*; Casey in the *Stamp Collector's Figaro*, and Tiffany in the *Collector's Ledger*.