

FROM THE STAMP NEWS ANNUAL.

## THE STAMPS OF GREECE.

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The date is given as 1862 by Herr Glase-wald, and we find the stamp thus described by him in the translation of M. Huart: "Le 2 lepta (1862) pourrait être confondu comme aspect general avec celui de la 1re emission, si la couleur ne venait lever tous les doutes; elle va notamment du jaunatre le plus clair jusqu'au brun argile le plus fonce, tandis que je n'ai encore rencontre aucun exemplaire olivatre."

Collectors will find the best guides for separating the two printings in the olive color of the first and the reddish tints in the second, as well as in the difference of paper, which is very marked. It is not at all a rare stamp, and I have a number of blocks in my collection showing a good many varieties of shade.

Before leaving the Paris-printed stamps altogether, I should like to say a word or two with regard to the colors usually given them by some of the early fathers of Philately. I need hardly say that no two writers ever use the same term for the color of any one stamp, a peculiarity by no means confined to descriptions of the stamps of Greece. In the *Stamp Collectors' Magazine* of December, 1866, there is a most instructive article by the editor, entitled "The Colors of Postage Stamps," which may be read with much profit by philatelists of the present day, in which he gives many instances of the great differences that existed in the lists of that day when colors were being described. The article is too long to quote entirely, but among other pertinent remarks he says: "The most frequent stumbling-blocks are the hues between magenta and lilac. These delicate colors, together with mauve, purple, and violet, are found in all shades. A little alteration in the ink will change a lilac into a mauve, or a purple into a violet. Rose, pink, and carmine are in like manner occasionally mistaken for each other. Thus the 80 lepta Greek is *carmine* in the eyes of Messrs. Moens and Mahe, *rose* in the opinion of Mount-Brown and Maury, and *crimson* according to Dr. Grey." Again a very observant writer in the *Philatelist* of April, 1867, gives the colors of Paris-printed Greek stamps as follows: "1 lepton, dark-brown; 2 lepta, yellow-bistre; 5 lepta, bright green; 10 lepta, golden-ochre; 20 lepta, cobalt-blue; 40 lepta, violet (delicate shade), and 80 lepta, carmine."

All these divergencies of opinion as to what any particular color should be called, in countries like Greece, where the different issues or printings are marked in no other way than by changes of shades, and where these changes are very numerous, form an enormous obstacle in the preparation of a reference list that will be intelligible, and convey the same ideas to all readers; I must therefore be forgiven if I do not altogether succeed where so many have failed before me.

Let us now proceed to consider the set of stamps printed in Athens in 1862. The most noticeable feature about them is that they all have figures on the back, with the ex-

ception of the 1 lepton and the 2 lepta, and the die or plate has been altered by the lines of shading on the cheek and neck being re-drawn. None of the lines are now made up of dots either wholly or in part, and they are of equal thickness throughout their whole length, but without being any thicker than the heaviest part of the lines of the Paris prints. They are very carefully printed, without the smudges seen in stamps of later printings, but they lack the smoothness of surface of the first issue, and I think the paper is a little coarser in texture in some of the values.

The 1 lepton is on cream-colored paper, and is a dark chocolate-brown, so that the color is identical with that of the commoner variety of the Paris printed 1 lepton. It is a very scarce stamp, indeed, either unused or used. There are only six single specimens in my collection, and I have never seen a pair or one with the original gum. It can only be distinguished from the Paris print by the shading on the cheek, but that is sufficient, and it cannot possibly be confused with any subsequent printings, as this dark chocolate-brown color was never repeated or even approached in any of the later issues.

The 2 lepta is a common stamp; it is of the same color and shade as the Paris-printed one, and is on the same pale straw-colored paper. The lines on the cheek and neck have been re-drawn, and as in the 1 lepton, the dots have disappeared. The 5 lepta is of a much duller green than before, and the green paper on which it is printed is also of a deeper tint than that used in Paris. On the back is a double-lined figure "5,"  $6\frac{1}{4}$  mm. in height, the body of the figure having the shape of an upright oval. It is a scarce stamp, not so rare as the 1 lepton of the same issue, but still difficult to find, and I have only ten unused specimens, all single ones. I have not got it used at all. There was only one other printing made of this stamp with the upright figure "5," and the two are distinguished by the much coarser printing and darker color of the second one.

The 10 lepta differs from all subsequent printings, in the impression, which is well done, and in the fineness of the lines on the cheek, which are just as fine as those of the Paris print, although they are now drawn right through, and the dots are gone. It is printed on paper of a much paler shade of blue than that of the Paris print, the color is paler and more dull—we may now call it dull orange; the figures on the back are smaller, being now  $6\frac{1}{4}$  mm. instead of 8 mm. in height. It is not nearly so scarce as the 5 lepta, but I have not been able to find an unused pair. Like all the stamps of this issue, it is distinguished from later printings by the fineness of the lines on the neck and cheek, and by the general excellence of the impression.

The 20 lepta is in very pale, washy ultramarine, on blue paper, identical in shade to that of the Paris print. I think it is rarer than the 10 lepta, at least I have fewer of them.

The 40 lepta is very like the Paris print, both in color and in the tint of the paper on which it is printed, but it has figures on the back, and the lines on the neck and cheek seem to be considerably deepened: still they are nicely drawn,