

day so much resemble each other that many persons can distinguish them only by close examination. Take for example the three cent and the one cent stamps; in general design they are identical, and the figures 3 and 1 in each case are so minute as to be scarcely distinguishable in an artificial light, and more especially by persons advanced in years. It is true that with the intention of assisting the eye stamps are printed in different colours; red in one case, yellow in another, green in a third, and so on; but this mode of distinction in no way mends matters to those suffering from what is known as colour blindness. In truth it aggravates the evil, as some of the colours in use render the whole design, especially in certain lights, next to invisible. It is not surprising therefore, that one stamp is apt to be taken for another, as is frequently the case, unless care be taken to seek the aid of some person whose vision is in no way defective. It cannot be held that the class of persons who in various degrees are incapable of distinguishing colours, are of no account. According to the best authority it is estimated that one in every twenty is colour-blind. This rate would give for the whole Dominion not less than a quarter of a million souls who suffer from this incapacity. With justice and reason we may ask, why should this number, or any considerable number of the population, be disregarded in a matter which affects their daily lives? I can bear personal testimony to instances constantly arising from the difficulty in distinguishing the postage stamps in common use. In my own limited sphere scarcely a day passes without meeting with petty annoyances from the cause assigned. Personal inconvenience is of small consequence as a rule; but in this case it is an experience which suggests how enormous must be the aggregate inconvenience traceable to the same cause. Moreover, the sender of letters is not the only sufferer from these petty annoyances, as letters improperly stamped have been known to remain in the dead letter office, or have had double charges levied on delivery to the receiver.

I have, by implication, cast blame on the individual responsible for the details of the first stamp issued. Referring to some old memoranda I there find the original design or rather its *facsimile* in the first proof from the engraver's plate, and I am thus reminded that the blame must rest to a large extent upon myself, inasmuch as, at the request of the Postmaster General I furnished the design bearing date February 1851. It must however be said that the stamp then issued is not the same in all respects as the present stamp. Among the changes which have been made, an effigy of the Queen's head has been substituted for a *beaver*. Her Majesty's portrait is always seen with satisfaction and few will fail to recognize the appropriateness of this change if they keep out of view the process of cancellation by the post office officials. The objection