

1851. Head of Queen to the right, in an oval, Date indicated. 5 reales, rose, (Correos certificado). Rect.

GENUINE.

The ornaments in the four corners are intricate, being composed of several very thick white lines, which contrast strongly with the red ground on which they are.

All the letters in 'Reales' are of the same size.

The 'I' in 'Cinco' is thin.

None of the letters in 'Correos' touch.

The enclosing line above 'TIPO' of 'Certifo' is thin, and does not anywhere touch the letters below it.

The 'S' in 'Correos' and the 'S' in 'Reales' both look natural.

FORGED.

The corner ornaments are composed of three or four *very slight* white lines, which do not contrast with the background.

The letters 'EAL' of 'Reales' are larger than 'R' and 'S.'

The 'I' in 'Cinco' is *unnaturally thick*.

The two 'R's' and 'E' of 'Correos' touch.

The line above 'TIPO' of 'Certifo.' is much thicker, and just touches the 'I' of 'Certifo.'

The thick down stroke of both the 'S' in 'Reales' protrudes beyond the rest of the letter.

The marginal white line is thinner at the top, than at the bottom.

1853. Head of Queen Isabel II. to the right in an oval. 5 rs., green. Date indicated.

GENUINE:

The 'C' of 'Correos' is on a level with the rest of the letters.

The small circles of which the oval is composed, are all equal in size.

FORGED.

The bottom of the 'C' just touches the line beneath it.

The circles are *unequal* and irregular.

Head of Queen Isabel II., to the left, in an oval. Rect. 6 cuartos, lake. Date indicated.

The forgery of this Stamp is one of the unsuccessful ones from Hamburg, and is perhaps the wretchedest imitation I have ever come across. Beyond the colour, value, and head in an oval, it cannot lay claim to a semblance of the real stamp, which, being comparatively common, no description is necessary.

OFFICIAL STAMPS.

Arms of Spain. Date indicated. Rect. 1854, ½ onza, yellow; 1 onza, rose; 4 onzas, green; 1 libra, bluish-lilac.

GENUINE.

Full Stop after '1854,' is just between the thick outer line and the thin inner one.

Cross above the crown almost, but not quite, touches the black line above it.

The bottom paw of the lion is longer than the top.

The left hand top corner of the arms, does not touch the border line.

GENUINE.

The crown on the lion's head, though small, is distinct.

GENUINE.

The paws of the lion are both of the same length.

FORGED.

Full stop after '1854,' is just above the thin inner line.

The cross touches the black line above it.

The top paw of the lion is longer than the bottom.

The left hand top corner of the arms touches the border line. Full stops after '1854' and value, are scarcely perceptible.

FORGED.

Only a black smudge is visible on the lion's head.

FORGED.

The upper paw is considerably longer than the lower one.

The lion looks more like a monkey than a lion.

THE ITALIAN POST OFFICE.—From Frances Power Cobbe's works of Italy we gather the following information concerning the recent improvements in postal matters in that country:

The post-office service has been vastly improved and relieved from government espionage. In the "good old times" of Bonba and Bonbalino, at Rome, and throughout Italy generally every difficulty that could be devised, short of absolute prohibition, was "prudently" laid in the way of epistolary correspondence. Railroad and postal facilities are among the most active of democratic agencies in these days, and his Holiness and the other despotic princes of Italy were wise in their generation in refusing to encourage them. Outside of the Papal States, everywhere throughout the kingdom of Italy, there are now abundance of offices and pillars for letters, letter-carriers, and the proper machinery of the post. Special conveniences are even given for the transmission of local newspapers by the issue of stamps worth only one centesimo, (the fifth of a cent); the general postage throughout the kingdom for letters being fifteen centesimos, or a cent and a half. It is admitted, also, that persons losing letters have a right to make complaints—an immense step for Italy!—and the strictest engagements are given on the part of the government that all correspondence is sacred and free from examination.

But with all these improvements, the postal system of Italy is still very far behind the