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TORONTO PHILATELIC JOURNAL



DEVOTED TO THE INTEREST OF STAMP COLLECTORS.

VOL. I.

TORONTO, CANADA, DECEMBER, 1885.

No. 10.

THE POSTOFFICE AND POSTAGE STAMPS OF CHINA.

In China the postal service is divided into two branches—one in the interests of the government, the other in the interests of the people; the first issues no postage stamps, the latter does, therefore I shall treat principally with the postoffice of the people, or local postoffice as it really is, and its stamps.

The Chinese postoffice is ancient. Marco Polo first described it in his voyage there. It probably existed before his visit, but his account is the first authentic one. I will not stop to give an account of its workings, as he describes it, so those of my readers wishing further information can do so by reading the great voyager's writings. I shall treat of the workings of the Chinese postal service of to-day.

The Chinese are rather slow in the advancement of their postal service, and until some years ago it remained about the same as it was at the time of the visit of Polo.

The government post is entirely under the control of the government, and is used for the conveyance of the "Imperial Gazettes, official notices of promotion, suspension, furlough, the formal announcements of names of candidates who have succeeded in gaining literary honors at Peking," and a hundred other things connected with official business. It is seldom used by the people at large, although persons having influence at court are at times permitted to do so.

The people's post is in the hands of "co-operative societies of letter carriers, who bear to and fro all the missives sent upon affairs of trade or family interest from Chinaman to Chinaman."

Each city has a certain number of licensed companies, and the companies of the different cities are in partner-

ship or communication one with the other, thus making a network of communication of a most efficient character, considering its materials. The people place great reliance upon these companies and large sums of money frequently are posted by them. Robberies at times occur, but not frequently, and the offenders are generally brought to bay. To show the workings of the companies we abstract the following description by a traveler of the one at Shanghai.

"Outside the small east gate of Shanghai, and in one of the most popular thoroughfares, stand the offices of a letter and parcel delivery company, called the Tienshun house. It transmits letters through four postal lines, connected with the first cities in the central provinces, Kiangnan, Kiangsi, Horan and Chihkiang, indirectly also, with the remote country parts in those directions. Each of these lines is served separately by its own particular firm; but the junction of the four at Shanghai is completed by the union of these four firms in a general partnership, limiting its own liabilities. Its mode of working will be understood by following it on any single line, say that which runs along the coast of Chihkiang, and extends to the Northeast corner of the Fokian province, a distance of not quite seven hundred miles. There are employed upon it sixteen postmen. The names of these are written in large characters upon a board hung up in the receiving house, and most of them are partners in the business. There are fixed days for the receipt of letters on this line, making about twenty post-days in the month. For each post-day one man is nominated as carrier, and his name is regularly advertised upon the letter board, one day at least previous to his departure."

Now, concerning the stamps of

these Chinese local posts. I will not consider here the stamps issued by Shanghai, and the other cities of China, as the number of them being more than space will allow, I shall have to note them at some future time. The stamps that I will consider are the Chinese stamps headed "China," that are in general use to-day all over the country, but whether the different companies are required by law to use these particular stamps (which seems to be the cause of their general use) I cannot say.

In April, 1883, I took the trouble to find out the meaning of the inscriptions on these stamps, and visited Wong Chin Foo, at that time editor of the *Chinese-American*, and Wah Sing, a Chinese tea merchant in Pell street. From the two men I procured the information that the Chinese characters in the upper corners in the one candarin meant the value which was in United States currency, "nearly a cent and a half." Those in the three candarin meant that the value of that stamp in United States money is five cents and the five candarin I found to be worth in our currency eight cents.

The characters on the right side of the stamps mean "Large country in China," those on the left, "Started from that country." The dragon in the centre of the stamps is far better looking than on some of the Shanghai, etc., stamps. These stamps first appeared in 1877.—*From The Gem.*

The postal authorities have issued a notification that the Direct Spanish Company's communication with Spain and places beyond is now restored.

Mr. Ph. Heinsberger, 151 Franklin Street and 89 Delancey Street, New York, is our authorized agent to receive advertisements and subscriptions.

TORONTO PHILATELIC JOURNAL

Published on the 15th of every month by

TORONTO PHILATELIC CO., 76 Baldwin St., TORONTO,
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H. MORELL, - - - EDITOR.

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Remit money by P. O. Order, or small
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TORONTO, DECEMBER, 1885.

NEW STAMPS FOR GREAT BRITAIN.

An interesting issue will shortly be in the hands of the public. Our postage stamps have long been in a transitory state. It seems strange that the country that was first to use the postage stamp, has gone on for so many years, using the most inartistic stamps in the world.

The present penny stamp was merely the extension to postal purposes of a label designed for the revenue department. The original penny stamp, since stamps have been printed on fine paper, was of a salmon color, with a half-penny label in green. These did not give satisfaction. An indigo label was introduced for the latter, while the rather sombre heliotrope-colored revenue stamp did duty both for penny postage and receipt.

In the meantime, the Post Office Savings Bank receiving deposits in stamps made the considerable alteration of turning stamps into money, and Government required to be safeguarded against the machinations of a novel kind of coiners and "smashers."

There was much less risk in experiments chemically to discharge the obliterating marks on a used label, than in the ordinary operations of the coiner with his dies and his batteries.

The late Postmaster-General set experts to work, made experiments on the stamps used by other nations, and considered all the most recent scientific improvements. It was obvious that the most artistically designed stamps in existence are the French, which are at once engraving

of great beauty, and mark the value of each label clearly and legibly.

In the meantime, we went on with our stopgap circulation. Our new collection will soon be issued, and will embrace all values, from a half-penny to £5.—*The Philatelic Magazine*.

NOTES.

The Parcel Post is about to be extended to Ceylon and Labuan.

Readers will notice the change in the management of this paper. Mr. Lowe having gone to reside in England.

**Publishers will confer a favor on us by sending two copies of their paper, and we shall be happy to do the same in return.

The PHILATELIC MONTHLY has finished its eleventh volume this month.—Well done, Mr. Durbin, may the monthly live to see eleven more years.

Recent statistics show that last year in the number of newspapers conveyed in domestic mails, the United States was first with 852,180,792; Germany next, with 439,089,800; France third, with 310,188,636; Great Britain fourth, with 152,739,100; while Italy follows with 99,509,179. In the number of letters despatched in the international mails the positions are reversed, Great Britain ranking first with 46,051,500, and the United States fifth with 22,569,120.

We have received the following papers up to date, publishers accept our thanks:—The Youth's Ledger, The Excelsior, The Philatelic World, Philatelic Monthly, Collectors Companion, Stamp Collectors Journal, Tidings from Nature, Philatelic Journal of America, Empire State Philatelist, Stamp World, Briefmarken-Zeitung, Philatelic Tribune, Philatelic Observer, Foreign Stamp Collectors News, Capital City Philatelist, Philatelic Magazine, Michigan Philatelist, The Hermes, Stamp and Coin Gazette.

NEW ISSUES.

Argentine Republic.—The engraved 12c. has made its appearance of the same design as ½c. and 1c. of 1884.

Azores.—The 500 reis and 1000 reis black of Portugal are surcharged in small red letters, for use in the Azores.

Bangkok.—The 32c. of Straits Settlements 1867, was in use for a

short time with surcharged "B." Mr. Bogart has received also of the 30 of 1873 similarly surcharged.

Bolivia.—A new series of stamps is reported.

Brazil.—A new 100 reis was issued October 3rd with figures of value in a square.

Ceylon.—The 2 cent card is announced surcharged "10" cents and the 8 cent card "5 cents."

Congo Free State.—Stamps will be issued January 1st, 1886. They bear the bust of Leopold of Belgium, and the inscription "Etat Independent du Congo," with values below in centimes, 5c. green; 10c. carmine; 25c. blue; 50c. lilac; post card 15c. brown on buff.

Dutch Indies.—An envelope, 10c. brown, has been issued.

Labuan.—The 8c. red has been surcharged 2c. in black same as the 16c. The color of the 2c. has been changed to red and the 8c. to violet.

Malta.—An ½d. band green is reported, the color green.

Mexico.—Mr. Durbin has received the following of the new issue: 2c. carmine; 3c. brown; 4c. red; 5c. blue; 10c. orange; 12c. brown; 25c. blue. Post cards of 2, 3, and 5 centavos, single and double are also in use. The color of the official stamp has been changed to green.

Persia.—Bands of 1sh. and envelopes of 6sh. and 12sh. are to be issued soon, also a new series of stamps effigy of the Shah in profile.

Puttialla.—The 2 annas service stamp of India has been surcharged for Puttialla State.

Reunion.—The 4c. violet is surcharged 5c. in black.

Roumania.—A 15 bani red brown stamp is issued of the new type.

Siam.—The ½ att stamp surcharged. "1 TICAL".

St. Lucia.—A new stamp has been issued, 1 shilling, orange.

Straits Settlements.—The 5c. blue has been surcharged ^{cents}.

Surinam.—A series of unpaid letter stamps has been issued of similar design to those of Holland, red, violet on white, 2½, 5, 10, 20, 25, and 40c.

Victoria.—The 1d. card of the new type is carmine on white and on buff also.

SAMOA.

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	1c. red	1 0	7 0
Bahamas, 1884, 1d. rose	1 4	10 6	
Bangkok, 2c. rose	2 6	20 0	
	4c. brown	4 0	
British Honduras, 1884, 1d. rose	1 4	10 6	
	Levant, 40 paras	3 9	
	80 paras	7 6	
Bulgaria, 1885, 1 stotinki	0 4	2 0	
	2 stotinki	0 6	3 6
Ceylon, 5c. on 4c.	2 6	20 0	
	5c. on 8c.	2 3	17 6
Dominican Republic, 1885, 1c.	1 0	7 6	
	2c.	2 0	14 0
Egypt, 1884, 20 paras, provisional	2 6	17 6	
French Levant, 1 piastre	3 6		
German Levant, 1884, 10 paras	1 0	7 0	
	20 paras	1 9	13 0
Johor, 2c. assorted types	2 0	15 0	
Johore, 2c. rose, with final "e"	5 0		
Levant, 1885, 1 kop, orange	0 8	5 0	
Macao, 1884, 5 reis, black	1 0	7 6	
	10 reis, yellow	2 0	14 0
	20 reis, bistre	3 0	
	25 reis, rose	4 0	
	80 reis, grey	10 0	
	5 reis on 25 reis, provisional	2 6	20 0
	10 reis on 25 reis, "	3 6	
	20 reis on 50 reis, "	4 0	
	80 reis on 100 reis, "	14 0	
Monaco, 1c. blue	0 3	1 9	
	2c. rose	0 5	3 0
	5c. green	0 9	5 6
North Borneo, 2c. brown	2 0	15 0	
Paraguay, 1884, 1c. green	1 0	7 6	
	2c. red	2 0	15 0
	5c. blue	4 0	
Persia, 1885, 1 shahi, green	1 3	10 0	
	2 shahi, red	2 0	15 0
Portugal, 1884, 2 reis, black	0 3	1 8	
	5 reis, grey	0 9	5 0
Puttiala, 1885, 1-2 anna	2 0	15 0	
	1 anna	3 0	
	Service, 1-2 anna	2 0	
	1 anna	3 0	
Roumelia, 1884, 5 paras, violet	0 9	5 0	
	10 paras, green	1 3	9 6
Shanghai, 1885, 20 cash, green	1 6	11 0	
Sierra Leone, 1884, 1-2d, green	0 10	6 0	
Sirmoor, 1885, 3 pies, brown	0 10	6 0	
South Australia, 1-2d, provisional	1 0	7 0	
	1883, 1-2d, brown	0 10	6 6
St. Christopher, 1885, 1-2d, provis'l	4 0		
St. Helena, 1884, 1-2d, green	0 10	6 0	
St. Lucia, 1885, 4d, brown	6 0		
St. Thome & Principe, 10 reis, gr'n.	1 3	10 0	
St. Vincent, 1-2d, orange	2 0	14 6	
	1d. lake	1 6	12 0
	2d. surcharged	4 6	
	1884, 1-2d, green	1 0	7 6
Tasmania, envelopes, 2d	3 3		
	registered envelopes, 4d.	6 0	
Uruguay, 1884, 1c on 10c, provis'nl	2 6		

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