

## Stamp Collecting.

An entire set of Mackering besieged stamps, 19 in all, realised £10 5/ by auction in London.

The New Zealand penny universal has now been issued in a distinctly bright, carmine shade, which shows up the design much better than formerly.

A curious discovery has been made in Paris in the archives of the Post Office, namely, an order authorising the use of an adhesive label for the prepayment of postage dated as far back as 1670, just 120 years before stamps are said to have been introduced in England. So far, however, no stamp used under that order at the date stated has been discovered.

Prior to regular postage stamps being issued in the Falkland Islands, postage on letters was prepaid in cash from 1871 to 1878. The letters were struck with a postmark indicating that the money had been paid. For this purpose the Post Office used two different marks. One had "Falkland—Paid—Islands" in three lines within an oblong square frame, struck in black ink; and the other "Falkland—Islands" in two curved lines within a circle, and "Paid" across the centre, struck in red ink.

A set of four values for Eastern ports where Russian offices are established has been issued, the Turkish values being printed diagonally in black for three stamps and in red on the 50 kopecks. The stamps are as follows:—Two pias on 20k. blue and red; 5 pias on 50k. purple and green; 7 pias on 70k. brown and orange; 10 pias on 1 rouble brown and orange.

Mauritius stamps sold at the following prices in London at auction:—Post Paid, 1848, 1d bright orange, a pair, early impressions, £40; an unused 1d orange on pale bluish, early medium impression, £9 10/; a lightly cancelled 1d orange on greyish, £7; a used 1d dull orange on white, £6 6/; a vertical strip of three 2d blue, the centre stamp being the error "Penoe," £33; a cleaned copy of the 2d blue, £6; one 2d pale blue with the error "Penoe," £5 5/; 1859, large fillet, 2d dark blue, large margins, £12; 1862, Britannia, 1/ dark green, unused, £5 5/; and 1870, halfpenny in black on 9d purple, with inverted surcharge, unused, but no gum, £5.

High prices were obtained at auction in London for Niger Coast stamps, sales being reported as follows:—1893-94, halfpenny in violet on 2d sideways, and halfpenny in violet on 2d, se tenant, £10; a similar pair surcharged diagonally, £9 15/; another pair, same surcharge, in vermilion on 2d, diagonally inverted, £10; half-penny, surcharged in black on 2d, £10; another, same surcharge in violet on 2d, £12 10/; another, same surcharge on 2d blue, one of the rarest of these provisionals, £19 10s; and one shilling in violet on 2d, a pair, one with inverted surcharge, £8 15/.

A writer in one of the London philatelic journals raises an interesting question, namely, that the designs of stamps of countries should be as unalterable as the flag. His opinions are expressed as follows:—"When it has once been realised that a people's stamp should be in all essentials as unalterable as its flag, the first and most important step towards the attainment of an ideal design will have been taken. Each stamp-using portion of the British Empire should have its own permanently assigned distinctive stamp, a stamp which it will learn to fight for the end if needs be, and to love as only a symbol of race and rights and home and hearth can be loved." One advantage to be derived

from such a scheme would undoubtedly be a lessening of the number of varieties.

Particulars came to hand by the mail steamer from San Francisco regarding the sale by auction in London of the 2d "Post Office" Mauritius stamp that was recently discovered in the collection of Mr James Bonar, of Hampstead, who had not gathered stamps for years, but fortunately for himself did not part with the few he collected, when a boy at school, in 1864. The auction room was crowded and bidding started at £500 and went by hundreds to £700, which latter sum was bid by Mr Vernon Roberts; it was then jumped to £1000 by Mr Field, who went as high as £1200. Messrs Griebert and Crawford then went up to £1400, at which point Mr Griebert dropped out, and it was eventually knocked down to Mr Crawford at £1450. This is believed to be the largest price ever paid for a stamp either privately or at auction.

Collectors of official stamps may be interested to learn that in the German Empire there are the following distinct issues, with probably still more to come:—

- Principality of Lippe-Deud, Schwarzburg - Vonderhausen, Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, Schaumburg - Lippe, Waldeck and Pyrmont, Reuss (elder line), do. (younger line), Grand Duchy's Saxe-Meningen, Hesse, Mecklenburg-Schwerin, Mecklenburg-Strelitz, Saxe-Coburg, Saxe-Weimar Baden, Oldenburg, Kingdom of Prussia, Duchies of Brunswick, Saxe-Altenburg, Anhalt Dessau, Military Orphanage, Potsdam, the General Administration of the Thuringian Association of Customs and Taxes at Erfurt, State of Bremen, Thuringian Provincial Court at Jena, Solicitor-General's Office at this Court, Officers of the Governor of Alsace-Lorraine, and Committee of the Grand Ducal and Ducal Saxon University at Jena.



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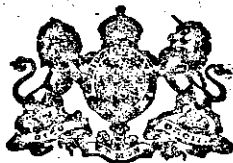
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