

No. 37.—*Telegraph Money Order Regulations.*

It appears that since the Conference at Wellington, at which it was decided that each Colony should adopt within its own territory such rules as it might deem fit for its own and the public protection, and that the result of the working be reported to the next Conference, we find that no fresh rules have been prepared by any of the Administrations, although some have been drafted and suggestions made by New South Wales and Victoria, the result of the working of which will be reported in due course.

No. 38.—*Issue of Duplicate Money Orders.*

A case having been brought under notice in which Orders were fraudulently negotiated after the issue of duplicates, it was decided the matter receive consideration when fresh regulations for the guidance of Postmasters are framed.

No. 39.—*Universal Postage Stamp: Federal Postage Stamp.*

The question of a universal or international postage stamp having been brought before the Vienna Congress by the Administration of Luxemburg, the Berne Bureau has asked the opinion of the other Administrations of the Union on the matter, and has been informed in reply that it would be considered at the Conference at Hobart, unanimity being desirable among the Colonies.

The Berne Bureau has furnished a great many opinions gleaned from other countries, most of which are adverse to the proposal at present, and the Director of the Bureau himself sums the matter up as follows:—

“I consider that under present conditions, and especially with regard to the diversity of currencies, the difficulties in the way of the creation of a universal postage stamp are too considerable to admit of the introduction of this innovation.”

We entirely concur in the above opinion.

With regard to a “Federal” Stamp, we are of opinion that it is undesirable at present to adopt a Federal Stamp for Australasia.

No. 40.—*Marking Stamps, “Specimen.”*

Under the Vienna Convention each Administration belonging to the Postal Union has to forward to the Berne Bureau, for distribution among the other Administrations, five specimens of its postage stamps (including, of course, stamped envelopes, newspaper wrappers, postcards, &c.), the number required being 730 of every kind, *i.e.*, a quintuple set for each of 146 Administrations. In return, the Departments receive through the Bureau a supply of specimens from all the other Administrations. It is a vexed question whether the stamps sent from Australasia should be unmarked, or bear the word “specimen.”

The Berne Bureau in 1892 intimated that a number of Administrations much preferred that the stamps sent to them should be unmarked, as it is considered that the overprint “injures the clearness of the design,” and that the number sent for this official purpose is “so small as to preclude all danger of abuse.” The New South Wales office thought the stamps should be marked in some way, but asked the opinion of Melbourne and Adelaide offices. In reply, Melbourne stated that it sent stamps unmarked, but not of any denomination higher than 5s. Adelaide replied that it had sent unmarked stamps, but nevertheless considered that they should have “specimen” printed on them.

On further representations from the Bureau a statement was prepared showing what was done in other parts of the world, from which it appeared that Forty-eight Administrations placed the word “specimen” or some other imprint upon the stamps. This included Great Britain, which country, however, last year abandoned the custom of marking, at the same time expressing an opinion that the matter was not of sufficient importance to justify interference with the local regulations of other countries, and suggesting that every latitude be allowed to each in this respect. and of the forty-eight above mentioned, several have since left off marking their stamps. On the other hand, eighty-four administrations then (more now) sent unmarked stamps, and it was noted that the face value of the unmarked stamps sent by the United States amounted to over £31,000.

Of the colonies, Tasmania, South Australia, Western Australia, and New South Wales cancel by the word “specimen” or otherwise; whilst Victoria, Queensland, and New Zealand supply unmarked stamps.

Further representations continued to be made by the Berne Bureau, including a very strong request from Austria that “the custom of disfiguring stamps intended for distribution in the Postal Union be abandoned.”

The question was considered at the Brisbane Conference, 1893, when it was agreed that “all stamps sent to the Berne Bureau be cancelled or marked “specimen.” This decision was communicated to the Bureau, and a proposal has since been made to date-stamp the stamps instead of overprinting “specimen.”

The majority of us are of opinion that these stamps should either be marked “specimen” or defaced with the date-stamp.

*Importation of Electrotypes fac-similes.*

It was reported that the New South Wales Post Office had stopped a number of packets addressed to a firm in Sydney containing electrotypes of some of the postage stamps of the various